Distance Education Faculty Handbook

About this Handbook

The Clovis Community College (CCC) Distance Education Handbook has been developed based on the recommendations of the Distance Education Advisory Committee. Faculty may refer to this handbook to find mandatory policies and procedures for creating and teaching online courses and an overview of online support services. This handbook also includes best practices for supporting online students.

Distance Education Goals

The goals of this handbook are to:

- Inform and guide CCC faculty in the creation of online course materials
- Identify resources CCC faculty can use to evaluate and improve their online materials
- Assist CCC faculty in the creation and submission of courses that align or meet exemplary standards of the OEI Course Design Rubric
- Inform and guide CCC faculty and staff of the best practices for online student support services and describe the breadth of online resources available
- Identify the procedures for assessment and evaluation of online support services and courses

Support of College Mission and Vision

The mission of Clovis Community College is *Creating Opportunities – One Student at. Time:*

- We honor diversity and serve all students of our community.
- We promote opportunities for success and wellness through full access to programs and services, and we provide comprehensive student support to achieve equity.
- We foster critical, creative, and engaged thinking through education based on integrity, generosity, and accountability.
- We support student success along pathways to certificates, degrees, and transfer programs, preparing students for thriving futures.
- We build community partnerships to enhance student learning and success, thereby advancing economic vitality in the community.
- We engage in reflective research and innovation focused on learning and student success.

Vision Statement

Clovis Community College is the college of choice for academic excellence, innovation, and student achievement.

Education Master Plan Alignment: Access, Teaching & Learning, and Supporting Student Success

The Distance Education program aligns itself with these three overarching goals of the 2017-2027 Educational Master Plan:

- ACCESS: Expand opportunities and remove access barriers.
- TEACHING & LEARNING: Promote excellence and opportunities.
- SUPPORTING STUDENT SUCCESS: Provide comprehensive services while promoting equity.

Distance Education Policies and Procedures

Definitions

Distance Education Technologies:

- Technologies as defined by Title 5 Section 55200: "(1) The internet; (2) One-way and two-way transmissions through open broadcast, closed circuit, cable, microwave, broadband lines, fiber optics, satellite, or wireless communications devices; (3) Audio conference; or (4) Other media used in a course in conjunction with any of the technologies listed in paragraphs (1) through (3) of this subdivision.

Instructional

- *Asynchronous* Distance Education is defined by Title 5 section 55200: education that uses one or more of the technologies listed below to deliver instruction to students who are separated from the instructor(s) and to support regular and substantive interaction between the students and instructor(s) asynchronously.
- *Synchronous* Distance Education is defined by Title 5 Section 55200: education that uses one or more of the technologies listed below to deliver instruction to students who are separated from the instructor(s) and to support regular and substantive interaction between the students and instructor(s) synchronously.
- *Online with In-Person Proctored Assessment*: instruction involving regular and substantive interaction in which all instruction takes place synchronously or asynchronously and is supported by online materials and activities delivered through the college's learning management system, with in-person proctored assessments. All assessments are offered at approved locations proximal to the student and over a designated range of dates and times. No activities or assessments may be scheduled outside of a designated time or location.
- *Hybrid* instruction is a combination of distance education and face-to-face. All face-to-face time is formally scheduled and available to students when they register. This designation of hybrid is also given whenever students are required to come to a Clovis Community College site for any reason (testing, orientation, etc.).

Non-Instructional Faculty/Student Support Services
To ensure all students have equitable access to support services, CCC non-instructional faculty and student support services staff have developed comprehensive student support services both on campus and online. Through the work of the OEI, it is reiterated that the community colleges need to ensure quality online course design and online student support services. In addition to the on campus support we provide students, CCC provides students with a variety of online support services in various modalities. Although we define synchronous and asynchronous support services below, any combination of these services can be provided in a hybrid model to support the needs of students.

- *Synchronous* Support – support services that are live or real time allowing the student to receive immediate feedback in an interactive discussion. CCC offers online synchronous support through drop-in and appointment-based services through videoconferencing (zoom), live chat, and telephone communication.
- *Asynchronous* Support – asynchronous person-to-person support that is delivered through technology can be defined as anytime, anyplace advising. CCC offers asynchronous support through email, vmail, Chatbot/FAQ's, online workshops, guides, and instructional videos, accessible and organized web pages, canvas resources, and access to online resources that support learning, professional development, curiosity, and inclusivity.

Acceptable Use Policy

State Center Community College District ("SCCCD") owns and operates a variety of computer systems for use by its faculty, students, and staff, and they encourage the use of its computer systems for education, academic development, public service, and other educational related purposes. When using SCCCD computer systems, all users are required to abide by the rules of this policy and use the system in an ethical and lawful manner.
[SCCCD Acceptable Use Policy](#)

Student Privacy

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act – At Clovis Community College we are aware of students' rights to privacy and understand how to protect these rights.
Policy Guidelines: The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (see 20 U.S.C. § 1232g and 34 CFR Part 99) protects personally identifiable information (PII) from students' education records from unauthorized disclosure. FERPA defines education records as "records that are: (1) directly related to a student; and (2) maintained by an educational agency or institution or by a party acting for the agency or institution" (see 34 CFR § 99.3 definition of "education record"). FERPA also defines the term PII, which includes direct identifiers (such as a student's or other family member's name) and indirect identifiers (such as a student's date of birth, place of birth, or mother's maiden name) (see 34 CFR § 99.3 definition of "personally identifiable information"). For more information about FERPA, please visit the [Family Policy Compliance Office's Web site FERPA](#).

What this means at Clovis Community College

When FERPA privacy guidelines were created in 1974, they stated that any electronic information becomes student record. Since this was before the widespread use of computers

and the internet, this has wide-ranging implications for any form of learning which utilizes electronic delivery methods. Electronic information, therefore, refers not only to computerized educational records but also to email communication, comments in discussion boards, student projects uploaded to a website, etc. This makes it necessary to consider how course structure and materials will affect online learning regarding FERPA. FERPA regulations also refer to student workers. Any person who is not the Instructor of Record cannot have access to student records. Instructors may share notes with assistants, but not the educational records themselves. For faculty/course evaluations, evaluators are given access privileges that do not include viewing student grades within the LMS.

Instructional
Violations of these kinds are most likely to occur when adding other faculty or students to a course as observers or tutors, and when course recordings include identifiable student information (e.g., faces and names).

- When adding individuals to the course, please use the following roles to ensure that student privacy is not violated:
    - Observer – Faculty added through the peer-observer process (e.g., peer-evaluations) are added using the Peer or Observer role in Canvas and expected to observe and comply with FERPA requirements.
    - Tutor – Tutors can view course content, add announcements, and communicate with students using the inbox/messages in Canvas. Tutors should not be able to see student submissions or student grades. Tutors should be added using the Tutor role in Canvas.
- To share content with other faculty members, do not add them to active courses or concluded course shells. Instead, move content to a blank course shell and add faculty or use the share content feature in Canvas. For more information, please see the [Direct Share](#) instructions in the Canvas Community.

Non-Instructional Faculty/Student Support Services
In addition to FERPA, many student support services have an additional layer of privacy to abide by the discipline specific code of ethics and guidelines. Consultation with student services faculty and staff about the scope of privacy is advised. If a faculty member is considering a class assignment or project that will integrate with student services, please be sure to consult directly with the faculty and staff in that department to ensure services are provided in a way that is mindful of the scope of privacy required by that discipline.

Faculty Preparation

The Curriculum Process

1. Faculty seeking to create or adapt a course for online instruction should first contact the curriculum analyst, who will provide the forms and instructions.
2. Faculty will then attend Tech Review, where the Curriculum Chair, SLO Coordinator, and the Curriculum Analyst will review proposals before formal review by the Curriculum Committee.

3. New coursework, course revisions, and changes to distance education modalities require a first and second read in the Curriculum Committee.
4. New courses and distance education proposals can move through curriculum concurrently, and will be approved by ECPC, the board, Federal Student Loan Agency, and the California Community College Chancellor's Office. New courses usually take one year to complete the curriculum cycle. Courses being rewritten for distance education can be approved within one semester if submitted within the first six weeks of the fall or spring semester.
5. The DE Addendum for an online course is published in Curricunet with the Course Outline of Record.

Before Teaching Online

Prior to teaching online or offering student support services online, faculty are expected to have basic computer skills, and ensure their content is accessible. Title 5 Section 55200 explains that accessible "means a person with a disability is afforded the opportunity to acquire the same information, engage in the same interactions, and enjoy the same services as a person without a disability in an equally effective and equally integrated manner, with substantially equivalent ease of use. A person with a disability must be able to obtain the information as fully, equally, and independently as a person without a disability. Although this might not result in identical ease of use compared to that of persons without disabilities, it still must ensure equal opportunity to the educational benefits and opportunities afforded by the technology and equal treatment in the use of such technology."

In addition, faculty are expected to have the following basic computer skills:
- Operating microphones and webcams (configuring, playing, and recording)
- Managing files (saving, editing, and uploading to cloud-based systems)
- Communicating online through synchronous (i.e., web conferencing) and asynchronous (i.e., emailing) methods
- Word processing – creating, editing, and saving documents in various formats (.pdf, .docx, etc.); using structural formatting techniques (headings, sub-headings, lists, etc.) to create accessible documents; and inserting accessible tables, graphs, and images
- Managing videos (linking and embedding accessible media)
- Using the LMS – Uploading content; creating, designing, and editing course modules; creating accessible content; creating announcements, discussion forums, and assignments; and managing notifications

Faculty Certification

Before teaching online, faculty will need to complete CCC's Online Teaching Certification. CCC may also accept certifications from faculty who have been certified to teach online through another recognized distance education training program. The faculty must present a certificate of completion and a completed online course for the instructional designer and DE Coordinator to review prior to teaching online.

Recertification

Every three years, faculty will need to complete at least four additional hours of DE training to keep their Online Teaching Certification current. Recertification opportunities may include, but

are not limited to, earning a quality-reviewed badge through the Peer Online Course Review Process, participating in the Distance Education Flex Series, or other opportunities as recommended by the Distance Education Advisory and offered by the Center for Teaching and Learning.

Training and Support

The distance education program offers certification and continuing support for faculty teaching fully online and hybrid courses. Interested faculty may attend any of the following events each semester:

- DE Certification – Clovis Community College offers its own Online Teaching Certificate. The course is facilitated by our Distance Education Coordinator and Instructional Designer. Faculty can take a 12-week fully online training during the regular semester or, when offered, complete an accelerated training over the summer. Successful completion will require both participation and completion of the class, as well as completion of two or more modules for their online course. Faculty can earn up to two units toward salary advancement for completing the certification. Salary Advancement must be submitted to the Salary Advancement committee prior to starting the course.
- DE Series Flex Events – These training sessions cover a variety of topics related to distance education and are announced each semester in the Flex schedule.
- Online Support – The Center for Teaching and Learning has developed various Canvas courses that faculty can use to access additional training for DE policies and course tools. Faculty can use the following self-enroll links to access these Canvas training courses.
    - [Canvas Instructor Orientation](#)
    - [10-Day Accessibility Challenge](#)
    - [Peer Online Course Review Self-Review](#)
    - [Clovis Teacher's Toolbox](#)

Teaching Online

Interaction and Collaboration

Title 5 Distance Education Guidelines section 55204 states
In addition to the requirements of section 55002 and any locally established requirements applicable to all courses, district governing boards shall ensure that:

a. Any portion of a course conducted through distance education includes regular and substantive interaction between the instructor(s) and students, (and among students, if described in the course outline of record or distance education addendum), either synchronously or asynchronously, through group or individual meetings, orientation and review sessions, supplemental seminar or study sessions, field trips, library workshops, telephone contact, voice mail, e-mail, or other activities.
b. "Substantive interaction" means engaging students in teaching, learning, and assessment, consistent with the content under discussion, and includes at least two of the following:
- Providing direct instruction;
- Assessing or providing feedback on a student's coursework;

- Providing information or responding to questions about the content of a course or competency;
- Facilitating a group discussion regarding the content of a course or competency; or
- Other instructional activities approved by the institution's or program's accrediting agency.

c. Regular interaction between a student and instructor(s) is ensured by, prior to the student's completion of a course or competency:
- Providing the opportunity for substantive interactions with the student on a predictable and scheduled basis commensurate with the length of time and the amount of content in the course or competency; and
- Monitoring the student's academic engagement and success and ensuring that an instructor is responsible for promptly and proactively engaging in substantive interaction with the student when needed on the basis of such monitoring, or upon request by the student.

d. Regular and substantive interaction is an academic and professional matter pursuant to sections 53200 et seq.

e. For purposes of calculating instructional time in the context of asynchronous distance education, a week of instructional time is any week in which:
- The institution makes available the instructional materials, other resources, and instructor support necessary for academic engagement and completion of course objectives; and,
- The institution expects enrolled students to perform educational activities demonstrating academic engagement during the week. Distance education courses are required to engage in regular and substantive interaction with students. At Clovis Community College this means that all instructors will use the campus' LMS and keep a record of such contact. This contact should be at least weekly, instructor initiated and the modes of communication, where students can expect to receive communication in the course, and how often they should expect communication should be made clear to students in the syllabus.

Instructors can use tools like the following to communicate with students:
- Chat
- SpeedGrader
- Discussion Board
- Announcements
- Video Conferencing, like Zoom
- Collaborative tools

Course Design Elements

Clovis Community College values courses that are designed according to best practices. Each distance education course should follow the OEI Course Design Rubric and, at minimum, include the following elements:

Course Navigation:
- Students have a clear path when first entering your course.

- Course content is presented in distinct modules.
- Students are be given instructions for interacting with course content (e.g., watch this video and think about…).
- There is a course Q+A discussion board for students to ask questions.

Communication:
- Students are given multiple means of contacting their instructor and encouraged to do so.
- There are clear expectations for how students should interact with the instructor and their peers (quantity and quality).
- Communication is documented and verifiable.
  - If you are going to deviate from the stated communication policy, let your students know.

Class Assignments:
- Courses should include instructor designed material and should not exclusively rely on textbook publisher's material.
- Student feedback needs to be timely and substantive (frequency and response time should be stated in syllabus).
- There are a variety of assessment types (formative/summative, authentic, valid) included throughout the course.

Non-Instructional Faculty/Student Support Services

Recommended Trainings, Certifications, and Professional Development Activities
To ensure non-instructional faculty providing online support services are prepared and qualified, there are ongoing training opportunities, certifications, and professional development activities that are available. Some examples include department meetings, trainings, online certification courses, online list serves, networks, and professional associations.

Policies & Procedures
Online Student Services Standards of Practice The Higher Education Opportunity Act (HEOA) requirements cover several areas not addressed in Title 5, including ensuring that the student taking the course is the student enrolled in the course, more detailed definitions of instructor contact called "regular substantive contact, and institutional provision of program resources and support mechanisms that are equal to those available to FTF students."

Online Student Services
The matriculation process as defined in Title 5 Section 55502 as "a process that brings a college and a student into an agreement for the purpose of achieving the student's educational goals and completing the student's course of study." The purpose of Title 5 Section 55500 "is to implement the Student Success and Support Program to increase California Community College student access and success through the provision of core matriculation services, including orientation, assessment, counseling, advising, and other educational planning services, with the goal of providing students with the support services necessary to assist them in achieving their education goal and identified course of student."

Evaluation and Review Process for Instructional Faculty

Courses are reviewed on a regular basis and revisions documented. Instructional materials are reviewed periodically to ensure they continue to meet program standards. Course evaluation includes technical design, curriculum alignment, rigor, depth, breadth, student performance, and student participation and interaction. Peer evaluation of the instructor will be accomplished via approved methods as agreed to by the Academic Senate, the bargaining unit (SCFT Local #1533), and the District Office.

Faculty evaluated for distance education courses will follow this process to complete student surveys:

1. The evaluator will contact the faculty member being evaluated and ask to be added to the course as an observer for one week. The evaluator and/or faculty member being evaluated may contact the DE Coordinator to add/remove observers from the course.
2. Student surveys will be conducted using the Watermark Evaluation Kit. Surveys will be added to the course before the 15th week of the semester (proportionately adjusted for short-term courses). Students will receive an email notification that the survey is available and will receive one reminder email to complete the survey before the end of the survey period.
3. Survey results will be collected by the supervising dean's administrative aide after the survey period from the Watermark Evaluation Kit site.

Sample Notice to Students:

Dear Students,

Clovis Community College periodically evaluates instructors, and we value student feedback for this process. Please click on the link and complete the student evaluation of your instructor. Your instructor will not see your comments until the end of the semester and the survey process is anonymous. Your participation is greatly appreciated and allows Clovis Community College instructors to continually improve their courses.

The following surveys should be completed by [date].

Thank you for your participation.

Classroom visitation protocol for online courses

When an administrator visits a face-to-face class in session, the instructor, in general, has been verbally notified ahead of time, is present in the room, and aware of the visitation. It is appropriate to assume that the same notification protocols should exist during visitations in the virtual classroom. Visitations may be requested for several reasons, including to ensure that regular effective contact is taking place according to the established Clovis Community College Regular and Substantive Interaction Policy. Because technology allows for administrators to observe an online course without the instructor's knowledge, the following protocol will be followed by Clovis Community College administrators:

- To the extent that it is reasonable and practical, instructors will be notified ahead of time of the online visit by the appropriate administrator.
- The administrator will follow up with the instructor following the visit. This may be a follow-up email, conversation, or follow the student complaint process.

Evaluation and Review Process for Non-Instructional Faculty

Evaluation policies for Non-Instructional Faculty providing online and face-to-face support services are the same and are outlined in the faculty contract. Non-Instructional faculty also rely on professional discipline association standards and practices to regularly assess services and student satisfaction.

In addition, student satisfaction surveys and focus groups are used to gather student feedback on specific online student support services. This data is used in the Service Unit Outcomes (SUOs) assessment, evaluation, and improvement process.

Course Policies

In addition to the policies required in all syllabi, as defined in the Faculty Handbook, distance education faculty should include policies and information specific to distance education.

- Course Attendance and Participation – although distance education courses do not physically meet with students, all courses should include a policy in the syllabus of how student participation/attendance will be measured. Attendance can include student assignment submissions or discussion board participation. It cannot be a mandatory synchronous meeting, and the face-to-face times for hybrid courses also do not count. The online portion of a hybrid class must have separate participation that meets the Title 5 requirements for regular, effective interaction.
    - Admissions and Records is required to have a verification of when students participated in the course (as attendance). This verification of attendance will be submitted at the end of the semester with student grades. When compiling attendance for end of semester submission, try to be as accurate as possible.
- Drop Policy – Faculty should have a clear policy on when students will be dropped for a) no show and b) lack of progress.
    - District policy requires that all students who have not participated within the first three weeks of the course be dropped as a no-show drop.
    - The faculty handbook states, "Instructors are required to take attendance at each class session and to report any student who is absent for two successive weeks of instruction. Unless there are significant extenuating circumstances, that student will be immediately dropped from class by the instructor if the absences are occurring before 50 percent of the class is expired."
    - Federal and ACCJC guidelines indicate student logins to distance education courses do not count as student participation, and students must provide evidence of academic engagement. According to the U.S. Department of Education: "…institutions [need] to take steps necessary to ensure that **students are academically engag**ed prior to disbursing Title IV student aid funds." **If students do not begin attendance, Title IV funds must be returned** (34 CFR 668.21(a) (Runcie & Ocha).
- Contact – online courses should have clearly explained contact policies. Here is a sample communication policy:
    - *"My office hours are Monday-Thursday 2:00-2:50 and Friday 1:00-1:50 in AC1-999. In addition to my office hours, I am available for online office hours through Zoom. Please see e-mail information to log in for online sessions. I also am*

available at 559-549-9999 from 9:00 AM-3:00 PM and by e-mail. Email is my preferred method of communication. I will respond to e-mails within 24 hours. Include your first and last name and course and section number in the subject line of the e-mail. If you have not received a response within 24 hours, please contact me again, in case I did not receive your communication. Additionally, I strongly encourage students to contact me with class-related questions in the Q&A forum. I will check this forum daily and many of your other classmates may have these questions as well! Finally, I will post comments on all graded assignments. Please check Canvas for comments on assignments."

- Student Support – Online instructors should include syllabus information that explains how students can access support. It is encouraged that instructors have pre-course contact with links to institutional services, such as disability services, online counseling, online tutoring, online readiness, and the library. In addition, technological support should be explained to students and relevant contact information and/or links should be easily found. Links to technology support and trouble-shooting tips are should also be provided where they may be needed throughout the course. Instructors can access a template for Student Support Services through the Canvas Commons. Please note, you must open Canvas Commons and then paste the available link ([Student Resources at Clovis Community College Commons Link](#)) into your browser.

Accessibility

Instructional

All courses should be 508 compliant and meet the accessibility requirements outlined in the faculty handbook. This means that all content and material is accessible for students with who are visually or hearing impaired before they enter a course. This includes documents that are designed to be read by screen readers, captioned videos, images that include alt tags, and all publisher content. It is the responsibility of the faculty member to make sure that all publisher content is accessible. Faculty should have a thorough knowledge of how to make content accessible, especially if they teach online. Please see the [Clovis Community College website for accessibility resources](#).

Non-Instructional Faculty/Student Support Services

Online support services must be ADA Compliant.

Student Readiness

Resources to prepare students for online instruction are available.

- [Are You Ready for Online Learning?](#) This self-paced course is for students new to online learning and students who are considering enrollment in an online course. It is adapted from the Quest for Success online course developed by the OEI and includes the Smarter Measure assessment. Smarter Measure is an assessment provided by the OEI that helps students measure their online readiness. It also includes an introduction to online learning, which explores the common myths students new to online courses may have. Clovis Community College's Canvas Orientation is also included in this course. When

students have completed the course, they are awarded a badge, which can be submitted as proof to other instructors.

- Success in Online Learning This self-paced course is also adapted from the Quest for Success online course provided by the OEI. It has been adapted to reflect Clovis Community College resources, like tutorial, counseling, library, and career services.

Best Practices for Course Content

Open Educational Resources

According to the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), "Open Educational Resources (OER) are learning, teaching and research materials in any format and medium that reside in the public domain or are under copyright that have been released under an open license, that permit no-cost access, re-use, re-purpose, adaptation and redistribution by others." faculty are encouraged to consider cost when choosing material for students, and the Academic Senate recommends using free and low-cost textbooks. Clovis Community College's Center for Teaching and Learning encourages faculty to avail themselves of the many resources developed by our library and the OER Committee.

- Resources for using, modifying and creating OER:
  - Clovis Community College Lib Guide: Open Educational Resources
  - Clovis Community College OER Committee SharePoint Communication Site
  - Clovis Community College OER Committee Canvas Course
- Additional OER Resources and Sites:
  - Merlot
  - OER Commons
  - OpenStax
  - OpenEd
  - California Open Online Library for Education LibreText

Publisher Content

Publishers offer a variety of content that can be integrated into online courses. Content for online courses should be integrated into the LMS. Common publishers have already been integrated in Canvas and can usually be accessed using the external tool for assignments. Faculty have the responsibility to ensure that all publisher content is accessible and integrated. Faculty should also augment their courses with their own materials, by including specific instructions, welcome videos, discussion boards, etc. Be aware that while publisher content can add supplemental resources for students, it should not take the place of direct instruction from the instructor.