








Faculty Handbook For Online & Hybrid Instruction

Center for Transformative Teaching and
Learning



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The Need for This Handbook

*In 2008, the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office published updated guidelines for distance education courses as outlined in Title V. Section 55204 (formerly section 55211) was amended to clarify guidelines for **regular effective contact in Online and Hybrid** courses. This update included subsection (a), the responsibility of the instructor for initiating and maintaining contact, and subsection (b), a discussion of acceptable modes for maintaining contact. According to the CCC State Chancellor's Office, it is the responsibility of each district to provide best practices guidelines for regular effective contact.*

*Studies have shown that student success in distance courses, including retention and persistence, is enhanced by contact between the instructor and the student (see, for instance, Lehmann and Chamberlain's discussion of effective practices in *Making the Move to ELearning*, 200.) Accordingly, all distance education courses should include frequent and ample opportunities for students to ask questions and receive comments and feedback from instructors. Moreover, feedback should be timely and interactive, and use a variety of channels.*

With these things in mind, this handbook was developed and updated to be a resource that provides information about Regulations and Best Practices for Online and Hybrid Teaching. This handbook lists guidelines and the support available through the Skyline College Center for Transformative Teaching and Learning (CTTL). [The CTTL web page](#) contains contact information for personnel, workshops and resources to help faculty develop and create an Online or Hybrid environment that helps student's achieve success in their coursework and "to get in, get through and get out, on time".

Online courses and instructors are subject to **standards and regulations**, and criteria which are in addition to the established standards and practices for on campus, face to face (**F2F**) courses.

This handbook includes information on policies and procedures such as the following: faculty role in course development and course approval, the assignment of online instructors, and oversight of online courses to ensure quality and conformity with institutional practices and procedures.

Definition of Distance Education

"Distance education is defined, for the purpose of accreditation review as a formal interaction which uses one or more technologies to deliver instruction to students who are separated from the instructor and which supports regular and substantive interaction between the students and instructor, either synchronously or asynchronously. Distance education often incorporates technologies such as the internet; one-way and two-way transmissions through open broadcast, closed circuit, cable, microwave, broadband lines, fiber optics, satellite, or wireless communications devices; audio conferencing; or video cassettes, DVDs, and CD-ROMs, in conjunction with any of the other technologies.

From the "**Guide to Evaluating Distance Education and Correspondence**"
Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges Western Association of Schools and Colleges

In this document, from this point on Distance Education will be referred to as Online/Hybrid Instruction.

Skyline College Online Course Standards

Skyline College is committed to a goal of 75% or more of our students getting in, getting through and getting out on-time. Online Education is a critical component of the institutional strategy to achieve this goal. However, significant student success and equity gaps exist with Online Education at the College. To help address these gaps, the Administration and Academic Senate recommend that all online course instructors adopt the following standards for teaching online at Skyline College. These standards were approved by the Skyline College Academic Senate on November 19, 2015.

Completion of Online Education technology and pedagogy training through the CTTL, STOT, @ONE, or other recognized certification program

Quality course design guided by the OEI Course Design Rubric that ensures regular effective contact between instructor and student

All instructional materials in online courses are accessible (Section 504 & 508)

Courses regularly receive feedback from peers through a structured consultation program

Instructors regularly participate in ongoing professional development that is focused on Online Education



TEACHING ONLINE / HYBRID

Successful online teaching is an integration of design and content with a knowledge of teaching theories regarding the important differences and requirements of the online environment. Developing an online course is the successful blend of the unique strengths and weaknesses of this mode of delivery, the specific student population being served, and the resources that will aid and ensure faculty in developing high quality online courses that promote student success.

Training and Certification

Faculty assigned to teach online or hybrid classes must have completed certificated training in Online/Hybrid pedagogy/andragogy and Canvas before being assigned to teach in the Online/Hybrid environment. Faculty members must have completed training at one of the following: CTTL canvas training, STOT, @ONE, or Nationally recognized training program.

Faculty who have taught at other institutions

Faculty who have taught at other institutions must demonstrate Pedagogy/Andragogy Canvas proficiency before being scheduled to teach online. Demonstration of proficiency may occur through meetings with Skyline College Distance Education Coordinator and Skyline College Instructional Technologist or Instructional Designer using the Online Education Initiative Rubric.

Faculty who have been teaching Online/Hybrid courses

Faculty who have been teaching Online/Hybrid courses need to receive regular feedback from peers about their courses through the consultation process. In addition to course feedback, Instructors should regularly participate in Professional Development activities specifically related to Online/Hybrid instruction. For example, these may include: Canvas instruction, Pedagogical discussions/ Brown bag events, or attendance at conferences whose emphasis is Online/Hybrid Teaching.

Technology Requirements

Faculty members should have technology sufficient for managing their online courses and must use the District required Course management system (CMS) known as CANVAS. Faculty should contact the CTTL for recommendations regarding best technology for Online/Hybrid instruction.



Course Development and Approval Process

To ensure that our course delivery is high quality, consistent, student-success focused, and integrated, the following criteria should be met before a faculty member designs, adopts or teaches an Online/Hybrid course. This process takes 2 semesters to complete.



New Course with an Online/Hybrid format

- I. All New Online/Hybrid courses must also go through the NEW course approval process. This process begins by completing all parts of the course approval forms and submission through CurricUNET.
- II. Division dean must approve the submission before it is forwarded to the Skyline College Curriculum Committee.
- III. After the final approval by the Curriculum Committee, the design of actual course can begin. The faculty member must have completed the required training to develop the course.
- IV. Faculty members developing an online course need to work in tandem with the Center for Transformative Teaching and Learning (CTTL) which may include the following: Instructional Designer, Instructional Technologist and Distance Education Coordinator along with other successful Online/Hybrid teaching faculty. The peer consultation process is an important component for the creation of quality Online/Hybrid course. *Throughout the development/design process, faculty collaboration should be used to ensure best practices and to share insights into both technology and pedagogy.*
- V. Moving from the traditional classroom to a “virtual” classroom is not as simple as merely putting existing course notes and readings online. This would be considered a “Correspondence Course” and therefore NOT an Online/ Hybrid course. Faculty must develop a course that creates a strong [“instructor presence”](#).



Existing Course with Addition of Online/Hybrid Modality

- I. A DE addendum must be submitted to through CurricUNET, and approved by the Curriculum Committee that designates the following:
 - (1) *Demonstration that sufficient planning has been given to adaptations of methods of instruction and methods of evaluation to ensure regular and effective contact as required in Title 5 and the SMCCCD Regular Effective Contact Policy*
 - (2) *Demonstration that necessary technical requirements are available.*
 - (3) *Demonstration that accessibility is ensured as required by Section 508 guidelines.*
- II. The Course Outline of Record must be current.
- III. Division dean must approve the submission before it is forwarded to the Skyline College Curriculum Committee.
- IV. After the final approval by the Curriculum Committee, the design of the actual course can begin. The faculty member must have completed the required training to develop the course.
- V. Faculty members developing an online course need to work in tandem with the Center for Transformative Teaching and Learning (CTTL) which may include the following: Instructional Designer, Instructional Technologist and Distance Education Coordinator along with other successful Online/Hybrid teaching faculty. The peer consultation process is an important component for the creation of quality Online/Hybrid course. *Throughout the development/design process, faculty collaboration should be used to ensure best practices and to share insights into both technology and pedagogy.*
- VI. Moving from the traditional classroom to a “virtual” classroom is not as simple as merely putting existing course notes and readings online. This would be considered a “Correspondence Course” and therefore NOT an Online/ Hybrid course. Faculty must develop a course that creates a strong Instructor Presence.



REGULAR EFFECTIVE CONTACT

Instructor-initiated regular effective contact requires early, continuing, and consistent communication from the instructor of record. This includes the instructions for accessing the course and directions on how to use the tools and materials. In other words, this means *more* than just a Q & A or FAQ discussion.

Paramount to the development and actualization of Online/ Hybrid courses is the responsibility of the instructor to ensure substantive regular and effective contact with students. This challenge is often equated as parity with F2F courses. This means that interaction and content delivery must parallel a F2F class.

The Canvas course “shell” must be developed to be more than a “container for lectures” and multiple choice tests. An Online/Hybrid instructor must create active interactions between instructor and student and between student and student. Online tools can provide methods for achieving both synchronous (real time) and asynchronous interaction.

- **Faculty teaching Online/Hybrid courses may only use Canvas and the** tools within the Canvas environment as the course management system for Online /Hybrid and Web-assisted course delivery.
- **Instructor presence:** Instructors needs to create a sense of “presence” for which students are aware and with whom interaction is available. Presence is the most important best practice for an online course (Boettcher & Conrad, 2010, p. 53) Research has shown that an important component in students ‘performance in and satisfaction with their online course is the active participation of the instructor within their course (Picciano, 2002; Rovai, 2002; Swan & Shih, 2005)
- **Regular contact hours** should be listed through published [office hours](#) (whether virtual or F2F) and availability for answering questions and giving feedback that includes both synchronous and asynchronous modes.
- **Timely feedback** that replicates the contact of F2F courses, with communication between faculty and students occurring no less frequently than in a comparable F2F course. Instructors should clearly indicate when they will be available to students, and when they will not be available (i.e., weekends, vacations, holidays, if appropriate), how often they will respond to student work, and in what manner they will respond to student work (i.e., email, text message, phone, online chat). SMCCCD best practice guidelines suggest instructors should answer student questions as soon as possible within 24 hours, the outside being 48 hours.
- **Interaction between faculty and students should use multiple channels**, besides just Conversations (e-mail tool in) Canvas. Discussions, and regular announcements, are an added but minimal way to connect with students. **Best practices:** Faculty should use a variety of communication tools available in Canvas in their classes. These tools include both real time modes, such as Chat and Conferences and asynchronous tools such as Conversations, which is the e-mail/inbox app in canvas.

- **Collaborative tools**, within Canvas are often one of the best ways to achieve student to student interaction, in addition to discussions.
- **Best practice for the application of FERPA guidelines** requires single sign-on and that Assignments and Grades are only kept with Canvas, the District required Course Management System. Use of publishers' materials compromises student's private data if faculty send the student out of Canvas or directly to a publisher's site. Canvas enables LTI integration of publisher content with a single sign on. This integration allows faculty to keep all student data within Canvas on the District Servers and therefore not violate FERPA.



BEFORE THE FIRST CLASS

Communication with Online/Hybrid students often begins before the first class meeting. Faculty members are encouraged to develop an information email also known as a Welcome Letter, to be sent to enrolled students at least a week prior to the course start date.

A. Recommended components of Welcome

- *A welcome letter:* Introduction of instructor and course. Expectations of an Online Class experience and Links to [Learning Readiness module\(s\) from the OEI](#)
- The course syllabus: all the components that would appear in a face to face class syllabus plus clearly address course policies, assignment submission, testing and proctoring, and support services that may be affected by the Online/Hybrid learning experience.
- *Guidelines for communication.*
- *Books, materials & technology requirement.* (Instructors should consider the use of Open Educational Resources (OERs) as a part of their courses. Go to [the OER consortium](#) for information

B. Duties of Instructor

In addition, the above listed, faculty teaching Online/Hybrid courses are responsible for the same administrative functions as those teaching in the face to face classroom. These include:

- Developing curriculum
- Choosing textbooks (or Open Educational Resources known as OERs)
- Verifying course rosters
- Adding and dropping students ([please note the special requirements for withdrawals](#))
- Entering grades at the prescribed times.
- Creating and uploading syllabi
- Creating and uploading assignments and assessments to Canvas.
- Ensuring that all features of the course are up-to-date and currently working

C. Office Hour/Virtual Office Hours for Online/Hybrid Faculty

Faculty members teaching a course or courses in an online format during a given semester have the option to schedule “virtual” office hours during that semester that would count toward their total office hour obligation. The proportion of a faculty member's total hours that are scheduled as “virtual” office hours may be equal to the proportion of that faculty member's total units taught that are online courses. A “virtual” office hour in this context means an hour in which the faculty member is available for synchronous conferences or message exchange with students online. Such “virtual” office hours must be scheduled and noted in the faculty online syllabus and door card.

D. Last Date of Attendance & Drop Policy

Recent examples of financial aid fraud have caused the Federal Department of Education to require last date of attendance information and tracking of student attendance for Online courses. Therefore, it is up to the instructor to closely monitor student participation in Online/Hybrid courses. Participation is more than just logging in.

It is not enough to evaluate a student's attendance based solely on the number and frequency of logins or through course statistics on Canvas. The guidelines are meant to protect the institution from students who are receiving financial aid assistance but who are not participating in class.

Instructors must drop students based on their “lack of” participation in class. ‘Attendance’ (through logins) is not the same as participation. Participation means actively completing course activities in the CMS (Canvas) such as assignments, assessments, posting on discussion forums, etc. Participation policies must be clarified in the online syllabus.

Best Practices for Last Date of Attendance and Withdraw / Drop:

- Create a course Check-In Assignment, such as a discussion forum, an introductory email students send to the class, or a self-assessment. Simply having the student login for the first day of class is not enough. New Federal guidelines to prevent financial aid fraud state that student logins no longer count as participation.
- State the last day for Check-In to occur. For example – the second or third day after the course begins.
- Require students to complete ALL assignments in the first learning unit by the due date.
- Be specific as to the exact day, date and time of your drop deadline. Include time zone information (eg. PST/EST) so that there is minimal confusion for students.
- If a student has not checked-in, it is best to send an email before the drop deadline to students who have not checked in to inform them that they are in danger of being dropped if they do not respond by the deadline.

E. Copyright: Digital Millennium Copyright Act

New exemptions to the anti-circumvention provisions of the Digital Millennium Copyright Act (DMCA) that will now allow professors and students to decrypt and excerpt copyrighted video content for lectures and class projects. The rule changes were recently issued by the U.S. Copyright Office, which issues new rules every three years or so since Congress incorporated anti-circumvention rules into the DMCA when it was passed in 2000.

The new exemptions will allow professors in all fields and “film and media studies students” to hack encrypted DVD content and clip ‘short portions’ into documentary films and “non-commercial videos.” The agency has not defined short portions. This means that any professor, in any field, can legally extract movie clips and incorporate them into lectures, as long as they are willing to decrypt them. Programs known as ‘DVD rippers’ are available to handle decryption. Additionally, professors are now permitted to use ripped content in non-classroom settings that are similarly protected under “fair use,” such as presentations at academic conferences.

These new exemptions provide an opportunity for professors to compile clips from disparate sources onto one contiguous media file. Ripping portions of disparate sources into one compilation often results in an uncaptioned compilation that will need to be made accessible. There is still an instructional need to continue providing accessible media for persons with disabilities requiring access in Online/Hybrid courses. Work with your faculty resource areas for support in understanding the copyright policy on your campus. To download a full [copy of the policy](#).

If faculty have questions about regarding Copyright, Please refer to the following information on the [Skyline college Library website](#) or contact Eric Brenner at (650) 738-4177.

Accessibility & Universal Design

To ensure that students all students have the same opportunity, Online/Hybrid courses must be designed to provide “built-in” accommodation, known as Universal Design. This means ALL instructional materials and resources must be accessible to “industry standard” assistive computer technology commonly used by students with disabilities. Specific guidelines are available at the System Office [Regulations and Guidelines for Distance Education](#):

This includes the following:

- All documents to be set with Header and Styles
- All video must be **C**losed **C**aptioned
- All audio must have a transcript
- All images need ATL tags

The [Skyline College CTTL website page on Accessibility](#) provides extensive information on accessibility requirements and resources. The CTTL provides information with “Do it Yourself” (DIY) aids on how to do video captioning. Captioning services are available and to schedule an appointment, contact Liezi Madrona at madronal@smccd.edu (650) 738-7113.

F. Federal Education Rights and Privacy Act: FERPA

FERPA is an acronym for the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (also referred to as the Buckley Amendment) and is a federal law designed to do the following: Protect the privacy of student education records and establish the right of students to inspect and review their education records.




What are student education records?

Education records are records that are directly related to a student and that are maintained by an educational agency or institution or a party acting for or on behalf of the agency or institution. These records include but are not limited to grades, transcripts, class lists, student course schedules, health records (at the K-12 level), student financial information (at the postsecondary level), and student discipline files. The information may be recorded in any way, including, but not limited to, handwriting, print, computer media, videotape, audiotape, film, microfilm, microfiche, and e-mail.

Source: 34 CFR § 99.2 “Education Records” and “Record”

Use of publisher’s materials compromises a student’s private data if faculty send the student outside the District required CMS (Canvas) to publisher’s sites. Canvas enables LTI integration of publisher content with a single sign on. This integration allows Faculty to keep all student data within the course shell on District Servers and therefore Not violate FERPA.

The following links provide information regarding the guidelines and policy.

-  [Hyperlink to Youtube \(published 2/19/2015\) videos about FERPA](#)
-  [Hyperlink to Frequently asked questions](#)
-  [Hyperlink to FERPA Disclosure information](#)



Student Support Services

A. Counseling and Student Services

- i. In addition to our regular on-campus advising and counseling, Online/Hybrid student can use Skyline College's Electronic Counseling Service to receive limited counseling on schedule planning, transferring, and GE and certificate questions. Students can access the [Electronic Counseling Service](#) or can access [the general page for Skyline Counseling](#).

B. Library

- i. The Skyline College Library supports remote access for both faculty and students, including remote access to search tools, library catalogs, and a remote helpline via email. Additionally, library faculty are available for designing custom library resource pages for distance courses. For more information regarding the library's services, visit [Skyline College Library Distance Education website](#).

C. Learning Center

- i. The Learning Center (TLC) supports student success by providing tutoring, workshops and a variety of academic resources, by incorporation a team of student assistants, peer and graduate tutors, and knowledgeable faculty and staff who are ready to empower students

D. Online Tutoring

- i. *Coming in the Fall of 2016:* Online tutoring through The Learning Center and Net Tutor using the WorldWideWhiteboard platform will be available to online Students. This link from the OEI site gives information regarding Net Tutor [and other resource links](#).

E. Student Readiness Modules from the OEI

OEI Online Learner Readiness is designed to assist California Community College students in developing the skills required to be successful online learners. Students, while they may be savvy smart-phone, tablet, and/or computer users, may not be prepared for the particular challenge of college level learning in the online environment. Colleges can easily include these resources in existing online courses and learning environments. The series of engaging, [interactive multimedia tutorials and resources](#) designed to address the real challenges encountered by both new and experienced online students, is now available for free via Creative Commons.



ONLINE RESOURCES

Faculty Support links

- [Online Education Initiative](#): (where the rubric lives)
- [Online Learning Consortium](#)
- [Bloom's taxonomy for the digital age](#)
- [The American Distance Education Consortium \(ADEC\)](#)
- [Edudemic](#)
- [Multimedia Educational Resource for Learning and Online Teaching \(Merlot\)](#)
- [Community College Consortium for Open Educational Resources](#):
- [@one](#)
- [Article on Instructor Presence in Online courses](#)