

AP 4105 DISTANCE EDUCATION

References:

- Title 5 Sections 55200 et seq.;
- 34 CFR Section 602.17 (U.S. Department of Education Regulations on the Integrity of Federal Student Financial Aid Programs under Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended);
- ACCJC Accreditation Standard II.A.1, ACCJC Guide-to-Institutional-Self-Evaluation-Improvement-and-Peer-Review, Appendix H, ACCJC Checklist for Evaluating Compliance, July 15, p.5

The Distance Education unit is the official District entity responsible for distance education, including technology infrastructure, faculty technology training, reporting and regulatory compliance.

Definition: Distance education means instruction in which the instructor and student are separated by distance and interact through the assistance of communication technology.

Course Approval: Each proposed or existing course offered by distance education shall be reviewed and approved separately. Separate curriculum committee approval is mandatory if any portion of the instruction in a course or a section of a course is designed to be provided through distance education.

The review and approval of new and existing distance education courses shall follow the curriculum approval procedures outlined in Administrative Procedure 4020 titled Program, Curriculum and Course Development. Determinations and judgments about the quality of the distance education course shall be made with the full involvement of the curriculum committee approval procedures and the colleges' Distance Education committees. In addition, DE course approval will include a review to specify how the portion of instruction delivered via distance education meets:

- (a) Regular and effective contact between instructors and students and among students as referenced in title 5, section 55204(a), and
- (b) Requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (42 U.S.C. § 12100 et seq.) and section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, (29 U.S.C. § 749d)

Certification: All faculty who are assigned to teach a distance education course will have undergone appropriate training, as offered through RCCD, or equivalent training at another institution. When approving distance education training, the Vice Chancellor, Educational Services, or designee, will certify that the training emphasizes the following:

- **Course Quality Standards:** The same standards of course quality are applied to the distance education courses as are applied to traditional classroom courses.
- **Instructor Contact:** Each section of the course that is delivered through distance education will include structures to facilitate regular and substantive contact between instructor and students, as well as student to student interaction.
- **Accessibility:** Faculty will receive training to ensure courses, documents, videos and other online instructional materials are compliant with Section 508 Amendment to the Rehabilitation Act of 1973
- The manner in which traditional class (seat) time will be effectively replaced in a distance education format has been addressed.

Duration of Approval: All distance education courses and trainings approved under this procedure will continue to be in effect unless there are substantive changes to the course outline, accreditation standards, or RCCD Guide to Recommended Best Practices to Achieve Regular and Substantive Contact in Distance Education.

Student Authentication: Consistent with federal regulations pertaining to federal financial aid eligibility, the District must authenticate or verify that the student who registers in a distance education or correspondence education courses is the same student who participates in and completes the course or program and receives the academic credit. The District will provide to each student at the time of registration, a statement of the process in place to protect student privacy and estimated additional student charges associated with verification of student identity, if any.

The Vice Chancellor, Educational Services shall utilize one or more of these methods to authenticate or verify the student's identity:

- secure credentialing/login and password;
- proctored examinations (determined by department); or
- anti-plagiarism software program

The Vice Chancellor, Educational Services shall establish procedures for providing a statement of the process in place to protect student privacy and estimated additional student charges associated with verification of student identity, if any, to each student at the time of registration.

Office of Primary Responsibility: Vice Chancellor, Educational Services