AP 4105 DISTANCE EDUCATION

References:
- Title 5 Sections 55200 et seq.;
- 42 U.S. Code Sections 12100 et seq.;
- 29 U.S. Code Section 794d;
- ACCJC Guide to Evaluating Distance Education and Correspondence Education;
- 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;
- 34 Code of Federal Regulations Part 600

Per Title 5 Section 55200, distance education means instruction in which the instructor and student are separated by distance and interact through the assistance of communication technology. A distance education course is a course or course section where 40% or more of the hours of instruction occur at a distance.

In the District, a hybrid course or course section is defined as one in which regularly scheduled face-to-face classroom time is replaced consistently throughout the semester by required online activities; and is one in which the face-to-face component is between 40% and 60% of the total course hours.

In the District, an online or media-based course or course section is defined as one in which 100% of instruction occurs at a distance; while there is no face-to-face instruction, mandatory face-to-face orientations and assessments may be scheduled.

Course Approval
Each proposed or existing course offered by distance education shall be reviewed and approved separately. Separate course outlines are required for each hybrid, online or media-based version of a course. Each course outline must include the Distance Education addendum of the Course Outline of Record template. Separate approval is mandatory if 40% or more of the instruction in a course or a course section is designed to be provided through distance education, whether as a hybrid or online.

The review and approval of new and existing distance education courses shall follow the curriculum approval procedures outlined in AP 4020 titled Program and Curriculum Development. Distance education courses shall be approved under the same conditions and criteria as all other courses.

Certification
When approving distance education courses, the Curriculum Committee will certify 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.

- **Course Quality Determinations**
  Determinations and judgments about the quality of the distance education course were made
with the full involvement of the Academic Senate and Curriculum Committee approval procedures.

- **Instructor Contact**
  Each section of the course that is delivered through distance education will include regular effective contact between instructor and students.

- **Duration of Approval**
  All distance education courses approved under this procedure will continue to be in effect unless there are substantive changes of the course outline.

**ADA Compliance**
All distance education is subject to the requirements of Title 5 as well as the requirements imposed by the Americans with Disabilities Act (42 U.S. Code Sections 12100 et seq.) and Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended (29 U.S. Code Section 794d). Distance Education courses will be reviewed by Disabled Students Programs and Services (DSPS) to determine ADA compliance. The College’s Instructional Technologist will assist faculty to ensure ADA compliance when needed.

**Instructor Learning Management System (LMS) Training**
Instructors interested in teaching hybrid and/or online courses will be provided with training opportunities in the technical and pedagogical aspects of such courses using the approved District LMS before being assigned to teach such a course.

**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 Chief Instructional Officer shall utilize one or more of these methods to authenticate or verify the student’s identity:

The District utilizes a LMS whereby students must authenticate their identity. In order to access the LMS, students must log into the MyCOM Portal with their College of Marin-issued student user name and password.

The District’s Distance Education Support Center (DESC) provides proctored testing services. Students enrolled in the District’s distance education courses can schedule an appointment to take a test in the DESC Office. Appointments are required in advance. To make an appointment, students must follow the guidelines specified by the DESC.

The Chief Instructional Officer shall provide 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.

**Distance Education Support Services**
The District provides online assistance in the following areas:

- Moodle technical help through an online help center
- Online writing assistance through the Online Writing Center (OWC)
- Research assistance through the Library’s “Ask a Librarian” service
- Tutoring appointments through the Teaching and Learning Center
- Counseling services through “Ask a Counselor”

The Assessment and Testing Center provides proctored exams with an instructor’s approval. Specific instructions about taking an exam in the Assessment and Testing Center can be found on the Assessment and Testing Center’s Webpage.

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