College of the Canyons
Distance Education
Faculty Handbook

Covers Online, Hybrid, OnlineLIVE, and HyFlex Courses

Developed by the Academic Senate and Online Education, updated June 2023

Table of Contents

Table of Contents

Introduction

This handbook provides an overview of the procedures, policies, and best practices for teaching Distance Education (DE) courses at College of the Canyons. Some "how to…" instructions are included, although this is not intended to be a comprehensive manual about DE technology and methodology. Sources for technical information and available training are summarized in Appendix C.

Key predictors of student success in online courses are (1) Quality of the instructional design; (2) Quality of instructor-student interaction; and (3) Quality of student-student interaction. After other factors are considered, the mode of delivery itself is not predictive of student success or learning outcomes. Well-planned and engaged teaching are the primary ingredients for successful instruction, whether online or on campus. These factors are covered in this handbook, along with policies, procedures, and basic information about the availability and use of distance education at College of the Canyons.

State and Federal guidelines regarding distance education change rapidly. Even if you were familiar with DE regulations in the past, it is still a good idea to review current guidelines, policies, and laws. This is the subject of the next section.

Nothing in this handbook should be construed as overriding district policies, procedures, federal or state regulations, or collective bargaining agreements. It is meant as a practical handbook to be applied within the context of these regulations and agreements.

DE Definitions, Policies, and Course Development

Federal and state authorities have established definitions for distance education courses and minimum standards for instructor-student interaction and student-student interaction to ensure that distance education courses are comparable in content and effectiveness to face-to-face courses. These standards are, in turn, reflected in our local curriculum process.

Definitions: Distance Education, Online, Hybrid, OnlineLIVE, HyFlex, Web-Enhanced, and Correspondence Courses

Distance Education is a broad term that refers to education that uses one or more technologies to deliver instruction to students who are separated from the instructor and to support regular and substantive interaction between the students and instructor either synchronously or asynchronously. It is an important term for accreditation and compliance with state and federal regulations and does not include correspondence courses. **Distance Education** is also used for instructional continuity during an emergency when traditional classes cannot meet in person.

Students enrolled in distance education classes may need to join an online lecture at a particular date or time or may be given the flexibility to complete lessons, activities, assignments, and exams at a distance while adhering to instructor-defined due dates. In **Distance Education**, instructors shall initiate regular and substantive interaction with students using Learning Management System (LMS) communication tools, video

conferencing, email, or chat applications.

California regulations (Title 5), the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC), and the United States Department of Education (DoE) recognize the overarching categories of face-to-face instruction, correspondence education, and distance education. Sub-sets of distance education, such as online, hybrid, etc., exist in practice, but not in regulation.

Our local board policy on attendance, BP 4233, defines distance education courses as "courses that deliver instruction online using the Internet (synchronously and/or asynchronously), provide for regular and substantive contact and interaction online between instructor and students that is initiated by the instructor, and require online activities as part of astudent's grade." AP 4105 also defines distance education, the District's duty to authenticate students' identity, specifies that distance education courses must undergo separate course approval, include an addendum to the course outline, Academic Senate must certify course quality, and regular and substantive interaction maintained by the instructor.

Online courses use online tools to deliver lessons, conduct activities, assignments, and exams, and communicate with the instructor and other students. This is done primarily via the district-adopted LMS, which is currently Canvas. Students enrolled in an online class can complete all coursework and activities online without attending scheduled in-person or web-conference classes courses physically.

Instructors of **Online** classes utilize the Canvas LMS to combine course design strategies and online pedagogy to support learners and initiate regular and substantive interaction with students. College of the Canyons Instructors must be 'Online & Hybrid Instructor Certified' to teach an **Online** course.

Hybrid is a distance education modality where the instructional time is conducted partially online and partially in-in person. Hybrid classes combine the learning formats of online and on-campus classes. Hybrid classes have defined on-campus meetings as well as coursework to be completed independently online. CA Title 5 regulations state that whenever scheduled on-campus class hours are replaced by online activities, this becomes a distance education course. In practice, we would call this mix of scheduled on-campus and online sessions **hybrid**. College of the Canyons instructors must be 'Online & Hybrid Instructor Certified' to teach a **hybrid** course.

OnlineLIVE is a distance education modality in which students and the instructor meet synchronously during scheduled class times. Students enrolled in an OnlineLIVE class are able to complete all coursework and activities online without needing to physically attend a class. College ofthe Canyons Instructors must be 'OnlineLIVE Certified' to teach an **OnlineLIVE** course.

HyFlex courses provide synchronous instruction taught in an on-campus classroom with the instructor delivering instruction both online and on-campus at the same time. Students can choose to participate in each scheduled lecture face-to-face or online via web conferencing tools at the days/times/locationspecified in the schedule of classes.

Web-Enhanced courses are those in which an instructor teaching a face-to-face course utilizes the LMS to provide students with online course materials, textbooks, and/or resources to communicate with students. College of the Canyons Instructors must be 'Canvas Certified' to **web-enhance** their face-to-face course.

Remote Instruction referred to courses that shifted to distance education during the onset of COVD-19 in Spring 2020. While this term was useful at the time, it has no basis in law or regulation, and is no longer used to refer to distance education courses at College of the Canyons.

Correspondence courses are **not** distance education courses. They may use the Internet to *distribute* course material and do not provide online OR face-to-face *instruction.* These courses have limited interaction between the instructor and the student, contact is *neither regular nor substantive*, and contact is primarily initiated by the student. These courses are usually self-paced and present barriers for students to qualify for federal financial aid. Lastly, ACCJC follows the federal definitions for distance education and correspondence education and thus considers correspondence to be distinguished from distance education courses. The federal definition for correspondence education is:

> *Correspondence education means education provided through one or more courses by an institution under which the institution provides instructional materials, by mail or electronic transmission, including examinations on the materials, to students who are separated from the instructor. Interaction between the instructor and student is limited, is not regular and substantive, and is primarily initiated by the student. Correspondence courses are typically self-paced. Correspondence education is not distance education. (34 C.F.R. § 602.3)*

Therefore, correspondence courses are not considered distance education courses.

Definition of "Regular and Substantive" Interaction

The federal education code, ACCJC, CCCCO, and local [Administrative Procedure (AP 4105)](#), require that distance education courses involve "regular and substantive interaction" between the instructor and student and between students. Regular interaction refers to instructors providing frequent, predictable opportunities for interaction and monitoring of student engagement. This must be initiated by the instructor. Substantive refers to interaction that is academic in nature.

The instructor must initiate regular and substantive interaction with students, provide opportunities for regular and substantive interaction, and enable students to participate in academically related activities. The amount and quality of instructor and student interaction in distance education courses are key factors that are evaluated by outside agencies.

Examples include instructor feedback, online discussion forums, collaborative exercises, chats, live webinars, audio/video conferencing, and email exchanges. The interactions may include structured and graded interaction between students. One benchmark for the appropriate amount of graded interaction in an online course is to ask, "Can the student be successful in the course (receive a C or better) without participating in online interactions?" If the answer is "yes" then more graded online interactions may need to be employed.

Our local board policy on attendance, BP 4233, defines academic engagement in Distance Education as "academically related activities, described in the relevant course outline of record, including, but not limited to regular or substantive interaction between the students and initiated by the faculty through discussion board posts, completed assignments, or electronic conversations with faculty. This does not include passive activity in the course, e.g. watching a lecture, downloading an assignment, or other non-interactive activities."

The Course Outline of Record and DE Addendum

California Community College instructors are required to design and teach their courses according to the official "Course Outline of Record" (COR), approved by the local Curriculum Committee. At College of the Canyons, CORs are approved by the Curriculum Committee, Academic Senate, and Board of Trustees. The COR includes the faculty minimum qualifications requirements to teach the courses content, the units that the course satisfies, the course description which appears in the catalog, a sample topic outline, course objectives, sample educational materials, methods of assessment, and Student Learning Outcomes that are to be reached by successful students in that course.

The State requires that Course Outlines of Record for courses that will be offered via DE must also be separately reviewed to ensure they contain sufficient guidelines about how the course SLOs will be met using DE methods of delivery. At College of the Canyons, this review is recorded in the DE Addendum form which undergoes review by the Curriculum Committee and is attached to the COR. Locally, this form is known as the Distance Learning Addendum, or DLA.

A template of the DE Addendum for College of the Canyons is provided as Appendix B. The title, course description, and course SLOs in the COR should be included in the course syllabus. See the Academic Senate Recommendations Syllabus Recommendations for further information about what the syllabus should include.

The COR documents are available through the online curriculum platform eLumen. If you need help accessing eLumen, contact Patrick Backes in the Curriculum Office.

Qualifications for Teaching DE Courses at College of the Canyons

Requirements for Web-Enhancing Face-to-Face Courses via Canvas

In order to use Canvas to supplement face-to-face instruction at College of the Canyons, instructors must complete training to become 'Canvas Certified'. This training consists of a 100% online, self-paced, approximately 5-hour long course, where you learn how to find anduse Canvas tools to build accessible course content and assessments, communicate with students, and grade and provide feedback on assessments. Instructors may request to enroll in the course to complete training.

Requirements for Teaching Online & Hybrid Courses

Online Instructor Qualifications, approved by the College of the Canyons Academic Senate most recently in

2017, require that before teaching an online or hybrid course at College of the Canyons, instructors complete specific training components to earn an Online & Hybrid Instructor Certificate. The required training components to earn this certificate are:

1. Intro to Teaching with Canvas & Section 508 Accessibility (self-paced online course)
2. Introduction to Online Instruction (equivalent of a 2-unit, 100% online course).

Per Academic Senate requirements, College of the Canyons online & hybrid instructors will refresh their Online Instructor Qualifications every three years by completing a self-paced onlinetraining (approximately two hours), which includes updates on technology, regulations, accreditation requirements, best practices, and resources.

Requirements for Teaching OnlineLIVE Courses

The College of the Canyons Academic Senate approved OnlineLIVE instructor certification requirements in April 2021. The policy requires instructors to complete the following two training components to teach OnlineLIVE classes and earn an OnlineLIVE Teaching Certificate:

Intro to Teaching with Canvas & Section 508 Accessibility (self-paced online course)
Intro to OnlineLIVE & HyFlex Instruction (9-hour OnlineLIVE course with 2 synchronous meetings)

Requirements for Teaching HyFlex Courses

The College of the Canyons Academic Senate approved [HyFlex instructor certification requirements](#) in February 2022. The policy requires instructors to complete the following three training components to teach HyFlex classes and earn a HyFlex Teaching Certificate:

1. Intro to Teaching with Canvas & Section 508 Accessibility (self-paced online course)
2. Intro to OnlineLIVE & HyFlex Instruction (9-hour OnlineLIVE course with 2 synchronous meetings)
3. HyFlex Tech Training (in-person training on HyFlex video and audio equipment)

Evaluation of DE Courses

Online courses and instruction are evaluated as part of the normal faculty evaluation process. The faculty union bargaining agreements provide details about the evaluation process. The evaluation forms can be found under the Instruction Office on the intranet.

Professional Development

There are many DE related professional development opportunities that are available throughout the year to support faculty. The Online Education Office provides frequent workshops, open labs, and an annual Online Instructor Retreat for faculty so that they can learn about the latest developments in online education, collaborate with colleagues, and explore online teaching best practices. Watch for email announcements and check the [Online Education](#) and [Professional Development](#) websites for upcoming workshops.

Canvas: The College Learning Management System

College of the Canyons uses Canvas as our LMS. All California Community Colleges use Canvas as part of the state Online Education Initiative. This provides a consistent online classroom for students and faculty.

Online Education maintains a [Canvas Instructor Resources page](#) with references and tutorials, as well as a Canvas & Zoom Student [Guides](#). Canvas provides various guides and support options for students and faculty, which are available at the [Canvas Community](#) and by selecting the "?" icon in the Canvas global navigation. The help icon connects users to guides, videos, and tutorials, features a "Report a Problem" option, and Canvas 24/7 phone support numbers for instructors and students.

Student and Instructor Account Creation in Canvas

Canvas shells are automatically created for all College of the Canyons course sections and are available to instructors who have completed the [Canvas Certification training](#). Instructors and students are added to these courses as the official record is available in the college's MyCanyons information system.

Canvas course shells will not be visible to students until the instructor publishes the course. Ifyou are a Canvas Certified instructor and do not see the course that you are scheduled to teach in Canvas, please contact [Chad Estrella](#), the Canvas Administrator, with your course name, section number, and start date of your course, along with any additional set-up requests (example, multiple sections in one course).

Attendance and Dropping Students

Verifying that students are regularly and actively participating in your online course is essential, especially in the first several weeks. The level of activity of students in the first several weeks ofonline courses is highly predictive of the successful completion of the course. Per [Board Policy (BP 4233)](#), [Administrative Procedure (AP 4233)](#), and [Administrative Procedure (AP 4105)](#), attendance in an online course requires regular or substantive interaction between students and initiated by the faculty. Students must actively participate in the course, not just enter and view materials.

Instructors must provide the opportunity for students to engage in regular and substantive contact every week. Creating a short exercise that is required in the first week is encouraged to immediately engage students and initiate regular and substantive contact with and between students. For example, creating a discussion forum in which students introduce themselves and are required to respond to other student posts is a way to foster student-student interaction early in the course. You may consider including simple exercises at the beginning of your course that require students to demonstrate their ability to use each of the activities you plan to assign like quizzes, forums, or essay assignments.

To help clarify your expectation of activity at the beginning of the semester, if may help to include some language in your syllabus such as, "Students must respond to the first discussiontopic located in Canvas, our learning management system, by the end of the first day or risk being dropped from the class for non-

participation." It is also nice to add something along the lines of "please let me know if you are not able to post by the first day, or if you are havingissues with logging into, or finding your way around Canvas."

Canyons Connects can be utilized to flag attendance concerns.

Organizing Your Course

The organization of online courses is critical for student success in online courses. The most common reason for students dropping or failing online courses is the difficulty they face in scheduling regular times to study and complete their course work. Often, students sign up for online courses because they have a job or family responsibilities that make it difficult or impossible to schedule face-to-face courses. Organizing your course in a way that helps ease student navigation can play a critical role in ensuring their success. Of course, it also provides you with the same advantages!

The most important strategy for organizing online courses to assist time management is to divide your course into modules. The "Modules" feature in Canvas is a good tool to use for this and is easy to organize. A consistent repetitive pattern of assignments and their due dates witha clear beginning and end can make time management much easier for both you and the students. The value of this aspect of the organization of your online course cannot be overemphasized! It can make the difference between the success or failure of many of your students.

Here's an example of a module organization that would be repeated every week or every topic:
- **Overview**: A short overview of this module including learning outcomes
- **Main Content**: Reading and/or audio/video (presentation of the core weekly informationwith an introduction or guide to key points or themes)
- **Supporting Resources**: Videos, PowerPoints, flashcards, brief quizzes with feedback about comprehension, graphics (textbook or other websites can be useful here, or library videos, YouTube videos, TED videos, or original resources created by you)
- **Interaction**: Discussion forums, virtual office hours (chat or video conference), groupprojects, peer grading exercises
- **Assessment**: Quizzes, essays, projects, and/or graded forum discussions
- **Summary and Preview**: Summary of what the student should have learned, how this module fits within the overall course, and what's next!

The different functions listed above don't have to be separate activities or resources. For instance, if you use peer grading, portions of assessment may be accomplished along withproviding an interactive experience. The main organizational principle is that your course follows approximately the same pattern in each module.

To assist faculty in developing and improving their online or hybrid online courses, College of the Canyons has developed a [Course Design Checklist](#). This Course Design Checklist is not intended to serve nor does it serve as a formal evaluation of instructors. Rather, through its adoption by the Academic Senate on November 8, 2018, the checklist is designed as a tool to support faculty in their online or hybrid course design.

The Course Design Checklist includes four sections and can be found as Appendix A.

Additionally, Online Education has developed two course templates (one for use in Online or OnlineLIVE courses and another for web enhancing a face-to-face course) that can be adopted and edited to fit your needs. Use of a template is not required, but rather meant to provide you with a starting point for creating a comprehensive and consistent course structure. It intentionally incorporates best practices in online course design and accessibility formatting. To learn more about the templates visit the Canvas Course Templates page.

Maintaining Accessibility for Students with Disabilities

By regulation (CA Title 5 and Section 508 federal regulations) and as a duty to our students, faculty should follow guidelines for maximizing the accessibility of instruction for students with disabilities. College of the Canyons' Academic Accommodation Center (AAC), formally known as the Disabled Students Programs and Services (DSPS), can be of great assistance by providing software and hardware support to students. You can also call their office for recommendations about how to accommodate online students. In many cases, students with disabilities will be making use of the AAC support and will notify the faculty member of necessary accommodations as verified by AAC staff.

Preparing Course Material

ALL required web-based materials (for example, content in Canvas, HTML files, PDF files, PowerPoint presentations, Word documents, Excel spreadsheets, video files, audio files, images) for use with online, hybrid, OnlineLIVE, HyFlex, or face-to-face classes must be made accessible. Canvas is designed to be compliant with accessibility guidelines in most of its general functions and modules, and includes tools such as an 'Accessibility Checker' for the Canvas Rich Content Editor, and the Pope Tech Accessibility guide. College of the Canyons is committed to providing quality, accessible content for all of our students. In our continuing goal to provide equal access to all of our electronic information and instructional materials, remember to adhere to these following guidelines, which are explained in greater detail, with examples and resources in the College of the Canyons' Faculty Guide to Accessibility course:

- Make sure all your Canvas pages and external documents use headings for structure. Headings communicate the organization of the content on the page. Properly styled headings give users of screen readers and other assistive technology the ability to scan a page for structure and content (just as sighted readers tend to do).
- Auto-formatted ordered (numbered) and unordered (bulleted) lists should be used to provide an easily understood, structured order to content.
- Descriptive hyperlinks should be used that provide a clear description of where the link will take the user.
- Tables should include a descriptive caption, and rows and columns designated as either header cells or data cells.
- There should be a high color contrast between font color and the background. Additionally, color should not be used as the sole way of conveying meaning.

- All videos, whether from YouTube or Zoom, instructor created, publisher based, or otherwise—must be closed captioned with accurate captions. Audio files—spoken content and music with lyrics—also need to have a complete and accurate transcript provided. Please refer to the Distance Education Captioning and Transcription (DECT) grant or [3CMedia](#) to submit your videos for captioning. are captioned.
- There should be a written description of all non-text content. When using images in your course, add an "alt" tag that describes the image. In Canvas, this field is called "Alt text" and can be read by a screen reader for the visually impaired. If an image is purely decorative and provides no useful information to the learner, it should be marked as 'decorative'.
- Verify that third party websites, exercises, and/or content are accessible to all students.

See the resources in Appendix C for links to accessibility standards and guidelines or contact the [AAC](#) for additional support and resources.

Managing the Accessibility of External Files

You can upload numerous types of files to Canvas, including PDFs, Word documents, and PowerPoints. If you choose to upload a document as a PDF file to Canvas, note that a PDF will only be as accessible as the original source document. So, always start with a fully accessible source document (such as running an Accessibility check in Word) before turning it into a PDF. Then double-check the PDF for accessibility issues before sharing it with students.

One way to ensure your external files are accessible in Canvas is to convert them to a Canvas page. Canvas pages present the content using HTML format, which is optimal for screen readers. To convert a PDF or Word document to a Canvas page, simply copy and paste the content into a Canvas page, and then run the Canvas Accessibility Checker to make sure the page is formatted correctly with accessible headers, alt text, bulleted lists, etc.

While presenting your course content on Canvas pages is optimum, at times, there may be valid reasons to include external files. The National Center on Disability and Access to Education (NCDAE) has a variety of helpful cheat sheets for developing and remediating (making accessible) external files that you might be using in your course.

For more information on creating accessible files and content in Canvas, visit the [COC Faculty Accessibility Resource course.](#) If you are unsure if your content is accessible, please contact the AAC to discuss the project.

Student and Instructor Technical Support

The [Online Education website](#) features a rich array of resources for students and instructors. There are also guides in the help area inside Canvas and on the [Canvas Website.](#)

- The College of the Canyons Online Education department can be reached by phone at (661) 362-3600 or email at online@canyons.edu for student and faculty Canvas support, Monday-Friday 9am-5pm.

- 24/7 Canvas support is available for students by calling: (877) 889-9052 and faculty by calling:(833) 286-2864. Log in support for students is available through COC's Canvas Support via email: cvsupport@canyons.edu.
- College of the Canyons students have Microsoft Office 365 products including Word, PowerPoint, and Excel for free through their student email account, as well as on-campus computer labs.An additional option is for students to download a reader program from Microsoft (free on Microsoft's website) or use a non-Microsoft program that will open them.

Fostering Interaction in Your Online Course

Per College of the Canyons' Board Policy (BP 4233) and Administrative Procedure (AP4105), Academic Engagement in Distance Education is:

...academically related activities, described in the relevant course outline of record, including, but not limited to regular or substantive interaction between the students and initiated by the faculty through discussion board posts, completed assignments, or electronic conversations with faculty. This does not include passive activity in the course; e.g. watching a lecture, downloading an assignment, or other non-interactive activities. …courses that deliver instruction online using the Internet (synchronously and/or asynchronously), provide for regular and substantive contact andinteraction online between instructor and students that is initiated by the instructor, and require online activities as part of a student's grade.

A number of tools are available for facilitating online interaction between the instructor and students, and among students. Reviewing all of them is beyond the scope of tishandbook, but below is a brief introduction to several commonly used features.

Discussions

Canvas discussion forums allow the instructor to propose a topic and students the opportunity to engage with the instructor and/or to each other about the same topic. Consistent instructions for how you expect students to engage in the discussion allow students to familiarize themselves with instructor expectations and ensure students are effectively engaging in student-student interaction.

Discussions can be graded or ungraded, made available during certain time periods, students may be required to post their response before they can see posts by other students, and more. Consider creating a "Meet and Greet" discussion at the beginning of your course as a first step in building community.

Another idea is to create a space in Canvas where students can ask questions of each other tofacilitate student-student interactions. You can allow students to start their own topics which is great for general discussions, but not recommended if you want to keep the interaction more focused. The instructor can choose to grade or not grade posts.

Zoom

Instructors teaching OnlineLIVE or HyFlex courses use Zoom to host their synchronous online instruction. Zoom allows students and the instructor to interact synchronously online, and supports the display of PowerPoint slides, live audio and video participation, sharing computer screens with participants, live chat, live sending of attachments, immediate polling of students, thumbs up and thumbs down feedback, "raising your hand" to request the ability to respond to the class, and more. If the instructor chooses to record the Zoom session, a video archive is available after the synchronous session concludes that can be shared with students.

- Instructors teaching a modality other than OnlineLIVE or HyFlex may choose to hold optional synchronous meetings utilizing Zoom.
- Online Education has created a [Zoom Faculty Resource course](#) in Canvas that includes guides and resources to support your use of Zoom.

Assignments

Assignments in Canvas can be used to challenge students' understanding and help assess competency. Providing feedback on assignments supports student learning and demonstrates regular and substantive interaction.

Groups

The groups feature in Canvas can be used to create group exercises, assignments, and discussions. Canvas Groups provide a space for asynchronous collaboration among students that supports student-student interaction.

Additional Resources

Coursework impacting a student's grade that an instructor allows or requires a student to digitally submit through software or computerized applications other than the District provided Learning Management System, such as publisher-provided digital homework platforms, must be accessible to the student through integration with, or a hyperlink from, the District-provided Learning Management System. This will provide students one place to access learning resources and materials, and will help you track student participation. This also helps adhere to accreditation and US DoE requirements that the institution verify student identity and safeguard student data.

Orientation Letters

Per the recommendation by the College of the Canyons Academic Senate, all DE classes should have an Orientation Letter which describes for students: How the class will be taught (OnlineLIVE/synchronous, Online/asynchronous, HyFlex, or Hybrid), technology needs, and other relevant information necessary to meet the standards as outlined in the Course Outline of Record, while ensuring students have guidance on necessary virtual support services available to them. Orientation Letters are written by the course instructor prior to the start of the session, and are coordinated by the Online Education department.

Orientation letters serve as a welcome message and are separate from the course syllabus,which contains

more detailed information about the course expectations, learning objectives,due dates, course policies, assignments and assessments. Orientation Letters allow faculty to set a friendly welcome and support students by:

- Outlining course expectations
- Easing concerns about the course
- Communicating that you are a real person who is accessible and approachable
- Saving time by addressing student questions
- Setting the stage for continued, positive interactions between you and your online students

When students consider registering for a distance education class at COC, they are directed to visit the Online Education Orientation Letter webpage to find more information. Orientation letters help students to plan their schedules, understand course requirements, and anticipate the time commitment, necessary hardware / software they need to have or purchase, as well as any mandatory online or on campus meetings they need to attend.

Instructors can access, edit, and submit orientation letters via the orientation letter (OL) portal, which they log into using their CanyonsID. Letters can be semester-specific, or permanent (applying to multiple semesters and course formats).

If you are scheduled to teach a class in an upcoming semester, first check the Orientation Letter site to make sure the letter(s) posted applies to your upcoming course(s). If edits are needed to your posted letters, log into the OL Portal, select the letter, make edits, and click 'Save'. Changes will immediately display on the posted letter. New letters can also be submitted via the OL form found in the OL portal.

Any questions relating to orientation letters should be emailed to the Online Education department: online@canyons.edu.For additional information and resources to support the creation of Instructor Orientation Letters, including recommendations, tips, and templates, see Online Education's Instructor Guide to Orientation Letters.

Verifying Your Students' Identity

Accreditation (ACCJC), Federal (Title IV) guidelines, and AP 4105 require that institutions authenticate students' identity and safeguard their data. The learning management system (LMS), Canvas, is recognized as the approved means of doing so.

MyCanyons Account

MyCanyons is where you can check your official College of the Canyons rosters and where you will submit course grades at the end of the semester. You can also access various personal employee information through this service. Contact Human Resources or the Office of Instruction if you need assistance accessing your MyCanyons account.

Submitting Grades

Faculty submit their final course grades through the MyCanyons system, the same system where you view your official rosters. The Canvas grade book is not connected to this system. Consult resources on the Internet or contact the [Admissions and Records Office](#) if you have questions.

Appendix A: Course Design Checklist

This Course Design Checklist is based on the Online Education Initiative (OEI) Course Design Guide (CDG). The purpose of this checklist is to provide insight to instructors who may wish to compare their existing courses with the best practices for online education established by the OEI. Each section of the checklist is linked to the OEI Online Course Design Guide (OEI-CDG) where additional resources, explanations and examples are provided. You can access the full OEI Course Design Rubric, along with resources, explanations and examples for each of these sections at COC's Online Education Faculty Resource Page: www.canyons.edu/onlinefaculty

Please note: This checklist is NOT intended as a formal evaluation tool of instructors or their courses.

The Course Design Checklist is available to download as an editable PDF. Below is a summary of the sections of the Checklist.

Section A: Content Presentation

1. Course/Unit/Chapter Objectives/Learning Outcomes are included in the course (e.g., syllabus, modules, and chapters).
2. Course is easy to navigate.
3. Course navigation menu displays only items that are relevant to the course.
4. Units/Modules/Pages are chunked into manageable segments.
5. A variety of modalities (e.g., text, audio, video, images, graphics) are used.
6. Course design includes instructions for learners to work with content in meaningful ways
7. (e.g., instructing students to take notes during a video, explaining the purpose of an external resource).
8. Individualized learning opportunities are provided (e.g., optional academic support workshops through the TLC; links to practice activities, videos, or audios; activities that present more challenging concepts; self-checks).
9. Learners have the opportunity to give anonymous feedback to the instructor regarding course design and/or course content.
10. Institutional policies and services relevant for learner success are included (e.g., plagiarism, academic honesty, technical support, TLC, technology support, library, veteran's office, DSPS, Health Center) and are easy to find (e.g., syllabus, modules, and external links.)

Section B: Interaction

1. The instructor initiates contact prior to or at the beginning of course and provides the syllabus, welcome letter, or other relevant resources.
2. The instructor's engagement in regular and effective contact includes the use of a variety of communication tools (e.g., email, inbox, announcements, chat).
3. Contact information for the instructor is easy to find (e.g., syllabus, syllabus page, homepage, modules) and includes expected response times.

4. Opportunities for student-initiated interaction with other students and the instructor areclearly available and encouraged in the syllabus and monitored by the instructor (e.g.,discussion forums, synchronous chats, email).
5. Student-to-student collaboration is designed to build workplace skills such as teamwork,cooperation, negotiation, and consensus-building (e.g., discussion forums, group projects).
6. The design and facilitation of communication activities are responsive to the variety ofcultures and communication styles in the class.
7. Rubrics or details of grading criteria are included for all assessments.

Section C: Assessment

1. Assessment activities lead to the demonstration of learning outcomes.
2. Both formative and summative assessments are used.
3. Multiple modes of assessment are used throughout the course.
4. Instructions for all assessments are written clearly with exemplary details to ensure understanding.
5. Students are given clear instructions on accessing feedback in the CMS and guidance onapplying feedback to improve learning and performance.
6. Multiple opportunities for student self-assessment with feedback are present.

Section D: Accessibility – Content Pages

1. Heading styles are used consistently (i.e., Heading 2, Heading 3).
2. Lists are created using the Bullet or Numbered List tool.
3. Links are descriptive and avoid redundancy and non-descriptive phrases; Underlining isonly used to denote active hyperlinks.
4. Table cells designated as row and/or column headers allow screen readers to read tablecells in the correct order.
5. There is sufficient color contrast between foreground and background to meet Sectionstandards.
6. Visual elements (color, bolding, all caps) are not used as the sole way to conveyimportance or meaning.
7. Every image uses descriptive alternative text that includes any text visible in the image.

Section D continued: Accessibility – Files

1. For PowerPoints, every slide has a unique title, reading order is properly set (slides use pre-set layouts), and all images/charts include alternative text. All text is visible in OutlineView so that it can be read by assistive technology.
2. PDFs pass the Adobe Accessibility Check with no substantial errors.
3. Spreadsheets include labels for the rows and columns, detailed labels for any charts, and is accompanied by a textual description of the spreadsheet, drawing attention to keycells, trends, and totals.
4. Accurate transcripts are included for audio, closed captioning for video, and narrativedescriptions are available when possible.

5. Live broadcasts include a means for displaying synchronized captions.
6. Multimedia is not set to auto-play.
7. Multimedia (including gifs and images) do not blink or strobe.

Section E: Institutional Accessibility

1. Any apps used in the course have been verified as accessible.
2. Any third-party media players used in the course have been verified as accessible.
3. Any third-party websites used in the course have been verified as accessible.
4. Any publisher content used in the course has been verified as accessible.

Appendix B: Distance Learning Addendum Template

Note: Below is a template for completing the Distance Learning Addendum used for the CourseOutline of Record and approved by the Curriculum Committee.

COLLEGE OF THE CANYONS
DISTANCE LEARNING ADDENDUM

A. Mode(s) of distance education (DE) delivery (check all that apply):
- **FULLY ONLINE (FO)**
  - Asynchronous (FOA) - Online
  - Synchronous (FOS) - OnlineLIVE
  - Combination (FOC) - Online + OnlineLIVE
- **PARTIALLY ONLINE (PO)**
  - Asynchronous (POA) – InPerson + Online
  - Synchronous (POS) – InPerson + OnlineLIVE
- **FULLY ONLINE WITH FLEXIBLE INPERSON ASSESSMENT (FOIA)**
- **FULLY ONLINE THROUGH MUTUAL AGREEMENT (FOMA) –** enacted, through mutual agreement, during emergent conditions preventing the continuation of InPerson instruction; applies to those sections/hours scheduled InPerson

B. Title 5 Section 55200: "Distance education" means 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) either synchronously or asynchronously. Technologies that may be used to offer distance education include:
- (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.

The definition of "distance education" does not include correspondence courses.

C. Courses delivered through distance education modalities will use the district's adopted learning management system (LMS) for authentication of students. Courses delivered via distance education will cover the content and learning objectives for the number of student contact hours listed the

Course Outline of Record.

D. Courses delivered through distance education modalities will maintain regular and substantive interaction between instructor and students and amongst students. Substantive interaction is engaging students in teaching, learning, and assessment, consistent with the content under discussion including:
   a. Providing direct instruction;
   b. Discussing or providing feedback on a student's coursework;
   c. Explaining information or responding to questions about the content of a course or competency
   d. Facilitating a group discussion, or other group assignment, regarding the content of a course or competency. A sample discussion prompt for this course is:

   e. Other instructional activities approved by the institution's or program's accrediting agency.
E. Provide at least one example of how student learning will be assessed, or evaluated, in this course:

F. All distance education course materials will be accessible to students with disabilities (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). This will include but not be limited to use of properly captioned video, video transcripts, alternative text for images, and formatting of materials consistent with text-reading software.
G. Disclosures regarding technology or application requirements unique to this course will be included in the schedule of classes.

New DLA F21 – Senate Approved 4.14.22

Appendix C: College of the Canyons Administrative Procedure on Distance Education

From [Administrative Procedure 4105](#) (Distance Education):

1. Consistent with federal and state regulations pertaining to financial aid eligibility, the District must authenticate and verify that the student who registers in a Distance Education course is the same student who participates in and completes the course or program and receives academic credit. No student shall be charged additional fees associated with verification of student identity.

   The Vice President of Instruction or designee shall make available for faculty members to utilize while teaching a Distance Education course one or more of these methods to authenticate or verify the student's identity:

   A. Secure credentialing/login and password for users, including the District-provided Learning Management System;
   B. Proctored examinations; or
   C. After consultation with the Academic Senate, new or other technologies and practices that are effective in verifying student identification

Faculty teaching a Distance Education course who accept the electronic submission of coursework that impact a student's grade, must verify student identity by requiring enrolled students to submit such electronic coursework through the District-provided Learning Management System or the District-provided student email account. Coursework impacting a student's grade that an instructor allows or requires a student to digitally submit through software or computerized applications other than the District provided Learning Management System, such as publisher-provided digital homework platforms, must be accessible to the student through integration with, or a hyperlink from, the District-provided Learning Management System.

Nothing in this procedure precludes faculty teaching Distance Education courses from requiring students, as part of their coursework, to utilize or access the internet, software, or computerized applications.

The Vice President of Student Services shall establish procedures for providing students a statement of the District's process to protect student privacy and provide to each student a statement of such process at the time of registration.

1. Definitions:
   A. Distance Education means education that uses one or more technologies listed below to deliver instruction to students who are separated from the instructor and to support regular and substantive interactions between students and the instructor, either synchronously or asynchronously.
      i. The internet.

ii. One-way and two-way transmissions through open broadcast, closed circuit, cable, microwave, broadband lines, fiber optics, satellite, or wireless communications devices.

iii. Audioconferencing.

iv. Other media used in a course in conjunction with any of the technologies listed in the paragraph above.

The definition of Distance Education does not include correspondence education per state and federal law.

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:

i. Providing direct instruction.

ii. Assessing or providing feedback on a student's coursework.

iii. Providing information or responding to questions about the content of a course or competency.

iv. Facilitating a group discussion regarding the content of a course or competency.

v. Other instructional activities approved by the District's or a program's accrediting agency.

2. Course Approval: Each proposed or existing course offered via Distance Education shall be reviewed and approved separately. Separate approval is required if any portion of the instruction in a course or a course section is designed to be provided through Distance Education.

Distance Education courses shall be approved under the same conditions and criteria as other courses. The review and approval of new and existing Distance Education courses shall comply with BP 4020 and AP 4020 Program and Curriculum Development.

3. Addendum to Course Outline: No new or existing course may be delivered through Distance Education before an addendum to the course outline of record has been approved according to the District's curriculum approval procedures. The addendum shall address the following:

A. How course outcomes will be achieved in a Distance Education mode.

B. How the portion of instruction delivered via Distance Education provides regular and substantive contact between instructor and students, initiated by the instructor, and between students.

C. How the portion of instruction delivered via Distance Education meets the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

4. Certification: When approving Distance Education courses, the Academic Senate shall certify the following:

A. Course Quality Standards: The same standards of course quality are applied to Distance Education courses as are applied to in-person courses.

B. Course Quality Determinations: Determinations and judgments about the quality of Distance

Education courses were made with the full involvement of the curriculum committee and its established procedures.

5. Duration of Approval: All Distance Education courses approved under this procedure will continue to be in effect unless there are substantive changes to the course outline.

6. Instructor Contact: Each section of the course that is delivered through Distance Education shall include regular and substantive interactions between the instructor and students, initiated by the instructor, as well as among students, either synchronously or asynchronously. The District ensures regular interactions between a student and an instructor or instructors, prior to the student's completion of a course or competency, by:
    A. Providing the opportunity for substantive interactions with a student on a predictable and regular basis commensurate with the length of time and the amount of content in the course or competency.
    B. Monitoring a student's academic engagement and success and ensuring that an instructor is responsible for promptly and proactively engaging in substantive interactions with a student when needed on the basis of such monitoring, or upon request by a student.

Appendix D: College of the Canyons Attendance Policy

From [Board Policy 4233](#) (Attendance):

Distance Education Courses

    A. Faculty shall initiate regular and substantive interaction with students in distance education courses.

    B. A student's absence from a distance education course shall be determined by the last day on which the student was academically engaged and participated inan academically related activity in the class.

    C. The last date of attendance for students enrolled in a distance education coursewill be used in determining a student's absences and subsequent drop or withdrawal from a class.

Academically related activities include but are not limited to:

1. Physically attending a class where there is an opportunity for direct interactionbetween the instructor and students;
2. Submitting an academic assignment;
3. Taking an exam, an interactive tutorial or computer-assisted instruction;
4. Attending a supplemental learning activity and/or study group that is assigned bythe instructor;
5. Participating in an online discussion about academic matters; and
6. Initiating contact with the instructor of record to ask a question about the academic subject studied in the course.
7. Academically related activities do not include activities where a student may bepresent but not academically engaged, such as:
   a. Logging into an online class without active participation; or
   b. Participating in academic counseling or advisement.

From [Administrative Procedure 4233](#) (Attendance):

Students must actively participate in online courses to prove attendance. Attendance in   an online course will be counted when a student participates in an academically related activity. If the student does not participate in an academically related activity throughout the course, the instructor may drop the student for non-attendance.

Appendix E: Distance Education Resources

Regulations and Guidelines

- ACCJC, [Policy on Distance Education and on Correspondence Education](#)
- California Community College Chancellor's Office, [Notice of Proposed Rulemaking to California Code of Regulations, Title 5 Regarding Distance Education](#)
- Santa Clarita Community College District, [Administrative Procedure 4233, Attendance](#)
- Santa Clarita Community College District, [Board Policy 4233, Attendance](#)
- Santa Clarita Community College District, [Administrative Procedure 4105 Distance Education](#)
- College of the Canyons, [Distance Education Faculty Handbook](#)
- Department of Education, Federal Register, [Rules and Regulations, Distance Education and Innovation](#)
- WCET Frontiers, [Interpreting what is required for "Regular and Substantive Interaction"](#)

College of the Canyons Online Education Department Resources

- [Faculty Support](#)
- [Zoom Faculty Resource course](#)
- [Trauma Informed Teaching Practices](#)
- [Canvas Studio resource course](#)

Accessibility

- [COC Faculty Accessibility resource course](#)
- [CCC Accessibility Center](#)

Distance Education Resources for California Community Colleges

- [Vision Resource Center](#)
- [Ensuring an Effective Online Program: A Faculty Perspective, ASCCC Paper, 2018](#)

Programs and Services

- [@One](#)
- [Distance Education Captioning and Transcription Grant (DECT)](#)
- [3CMedia Solutions](#)
- [CCC Accessibility Center](#)