DISTANCE EDUCATION

“Distance education is defined…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” (ACCJC, 2013).

Course Quality Standards
The same standards of course quality shall be applied to distance education as are applied to traditional classroom courses. Refer to the Curriculum Handbook.

Separate Course Approval
Each proposed or existing course offered by distance education shall be reviewed and approved separately. Separate approval is mandatory if any portion of the instruction in a course or a course section 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 Program and Curriculum Development and the Curriculum Handbook.

Instructor Contact
Each section of the course that is delivered through distance education shall include regular effective contact between instructor and students. Instructor contact guidelines can be found on the Curriculum Committee website.

Student Authentication Process
Consistent with federal regulations pertaining to federal financial aid eligibility, the District shall authenticate or verify that the student who registers in a distance education or correspondence education course is the same student who participates in and completes the course or program and receives the academic credit.

The Chief Instruction Officer (CIO) shall authorize one or more methods to authenticate or verify the student’s identity approved by federal regulation. For the Redwoods Community College District (RCCD), authentication uses secure credentialing/login and password within applicable course management systems, which is specifically referenced in the federal regulation as an appropriate and accepted procedure for verifying a student’s identity.

Privacy
The District shall 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.
Student Attendance Dates

Enrollment Services shall ensure compliance with Federal Regulations (34 CFR 668.22) pursuant to Return to Title IV Funds (R2T4) and VA-ONCE Notice of Change (38 CFR 21.4203) using faculty verification of last actual date of attendance as evidenced by active participation and reflected in the assessment of regular effective contact to calculate student’s earned and unearned portion of Title IV Aid.

Instructors are responsible for verifying student attendance dates in all sections in which:

- earned and unearned portions of Federal Student Aid (Title IV) are determined based upon the amount of time the student spent in attendance, and/or
- last actual date of attendance is used to determine status changes for students receiving Veteran (VA-ONCE) funds.

**Lynn Thiesen will provide suggested revised language to College Council.**

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). Also, see Administrative Procedure 3412 Access to Programs and Facilities.

Instructor Preparation and Professional Development

Faculty shall meet any of the following three criteria prior to teaching an online course for College of the Redwoods:

1. **Complete CR Online Teaching and Learning Training** sponsored by the DE Committee in consultation with the Academic Senate.
2. **Certificate of Completion in Online Teaching** from an accredited college or university, such as UCLA online Teaching Program, Cerro Coso Online Educators Certificate Program, or @One Teaching Certification Program.
3. **Demonstrate prior successful experience** in teaching online course(s) (e.g., Satisfactory faculty evaluation using the Supplemental Distance Education Evaluation Form (schedule F-2DE) or equivalent) as determined by the Distance Education Committee, with a copy of a Faculty Evaluation Report (A-5/AF-5) or equivalent that includes one or more online sections.*

*As Faculty Evaluation Reports for online instructors may not be available for current online faculty, all current and past CR faculty shall be “grandfathered in” as “provisionally certified” to teach online for one year. Full certification would occur after meeting [one of] the above criteria.

In addition, faculty shall complete CR’s “Orientation to Online Teaching” short course prior to teaching an online course for College of the Redwoods.
The district shall provide ongoing training and professional development in support of distance education.

**Evaluation of Instructors**
Instructors teaching online classes shall be systematically evaluated using criteria applied to all classes, in addition to criteria specific to online instruction.

**Student Grievances**
The CIO or designee will maintain a file of all student grievances related to distance education and their resolutions.

**REFERENCES:**
“Guide to Evaluating Distance Education and Correspondence Education” ACCJC publication, July 2013;
Title 5 Sections 55200 et seq.;
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;
Title 34 Code of Federal Regulations - Section 602.17.
Certification Standards for Online Teaching

Developed by Academic Standards and Policies 2/28/14
Revised by ASPC as per Academic Senate direction 3/28/14
Approved by Board of Trustees *New Procedure*
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Evaluation of Instructors
Instructors teaching online classes shall be systematically evaluated using criteria applied to all classes, in addition to criteria specific to online instruction.

Instructor Preparation and Professional Development
The district shall establish readiness standards and implement a method to identify instructors qualified to teach online. The district shall provide ongoing training and professional development in support of distance education.

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Approved by Board of Trustees New Procedure