Mt. San Jacinto College District
Distance Education Faculty Handbook
Academic Year 2013-2014
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# Prior to Teaching Online

## 1. MSJC Definitions and Terminology

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Descriptor</th>
<th>MSJC Definition</th>
<th>Processing</th>
<th>Notes:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fully Online</td>
<td>Courses in which students work entirely without having to come to any college facility. Arranged proctored tests are available in this modality (students do not have to come to an MSJC learning center to take tests); orientations and/or face-to-face class meetings are optional. Synchronous activities are not required but if synchronous events are scheduled, they may be posted as required archives for asynchronous access.</td>
<td>Requires separate Curriculum Committee approval with Distance Education Addendum (DEA) form and follows all quality measures as outlined in the Distance Education Guidelines (i.e. Regular Effective Contact)</td>
<td>Requires faculty readiness standards are met prior to online teaching. If proctoring is required, it cannot be required that students come to campus. Rather, instructors must arrange for a proctoring location in collaboration with the student.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hybrid (Blended)</td>
<td>Anytime distance education is offered in lieu of face-to-face class time, where planned face-to-face time is formally scheduled. This designation is also given whenever students are required to come to an MSJC site for any reason (testing, orientation, etc).</td>
<td>Requires separate Curriculum Committee approval with Distance Education Addendum (DEA) form and follows all quality measures as outlined in the Distance Education Guidelines (i.e. Regular Effective Contact)</td>
<td>If students are required to come to an MSJC site for any reason, the course is declared a hybrid course to notify students of this requirement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Virtual Hybrid:</td>
<td>All course activities take place online. Online Synchronous activities are scheduled along with asynchronous online activities. Dates and times for online synchronous activities are posted in the schedule of classes.</td>
<td>Curriculum Committee approval with Distance Education Addendum (DEA) form and follows all quality measures as outlined in the Distance Education Guidelines (i.e. Regular Effective Contact)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Web Mediated</td>
<td>Face-to-face courses that require the student to access the Internet and/or Blackboard as part of the course work.</td>
<td>These courses at a minimum will declare the required online use in the course syllabus. An informational note appears in the MSJC schedule as follows: In many MSJC courses, students are expected to be able to access the Internet and the MSJC Blackboard infrastructure either at home or from the campus learning resource centers where assistance for using these technologies is available.</td>
<td>This definition will be used for staff development planning and may be seen by students if needed.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2. Consultation with Department Chair for Curriculum Approval

All courses that use distance education as a modality for instruction in lieu of face-to-face instruction must go through the curriculum approval process by completing a DE Addendum and have it approved by the curriculum committee. The process is outlined in the DE Plan and the MSJC Curriculum Handbook.

The approval process takes two committee meetings to accomplish as long as the course outline is current. Otherwise, it may take longer to approve a revised course outline. The curriculum committee will review the course content for delivery in a distance education environment. Please review the DE Plan and MSJC Curriculum Handbook.

3. Training and Support

The Educational Technology Committee (ETC) is a shared governance committee. ETC will address the evolving technology needs of MSJC in a variety of areas related to the use of technology for instructional purposes. ETC will be the recommending body for curriculum, modifications, policies, procedures, systems, and purchases that relate to distance education and technology used for teaching and learning.

The Executive Academic Senate has adopted the following faculty readiness criteria developed by ETC that recommends training for faculty members prior to teaching online and/or hybrid courses:

1. Complete an MSJC Introduction to Online Teaching & Learning Workshop as defined by the Educational Technology Committee; or
2. Receive a certificate of completion in online teaching from a reliable institution such as UCLA online Teaching Program or @One Teaching Certification Program (approved by the California Community Colleges Academic Senate and the CCC Chancellor’s Office); or
3. Demonstrate prior successful experience in teaching distance education course(s) at MSJC or another similar institution; and
4. Participate in one online professional development activity per academic year (MSJC Academy, or @One Course Development).

MSJC Academy:
Two MSJC Academies are offered per year prior to the start of each semester. Distance Education faculty can acquire technology related skills needed to develop an online course and assist with teaching in a virtual classroom environment. Information regarding the MSJC Academy is located on the MSJC website under the Faculty and Staff tab. In addition, several professional development resources listed on the online learning website located under faculty resources.
@ONE Certification Program

The @ONE Online Teaching Certification is designed based on iNACOL’s National Standards for Quality Online Teaching. The certification program is flexible, affordable, and designed to specifically meet the needs of California community college faculty. The program includes:

- Introduction to Online Teaching and Learning
- Course Management Training with Blackboard
- Building Online Community with Social Media
- Creating Accessible Online Courses
- Designing Effective Online Assessments
- Online Teaching Practicum

The Distance Education Coordinator(s) serve as a liaison between faculty and administration in distance education related issues, co-leads planning efforts for DE professional development, co-chair ETC, and reviews and recommends for approval DE courses addendums through the Curriculum Committee. The DE Coordinator(s) will assist faculty with a variety of technical and pedagogical matters related to distance education.

Distance Education Accessibility Compliance by Federal laws mandates all online course materials be designed to be accessible to students who are vision and hearing impaired. Unlike just-in-time accommodation in the face-to-face classroom, online course materials must all be accessible at the time they are posted for student use. Workshops are held at the MSJC Academy to assist faculty in meeting these mandates. MSJC provides faculty with support concerning video captioning and uploading. In order to obtain additional information contact Teresa Davis (tdavis@msjc.edu) Menifee Campus and Randi Lee (rlee@msjc.edu) San Jacinto campus, and for more information on accessibility visit this site.

The Distance Education Departmental Team consists of Dean of Instruction: Library and Technology, Faculty Distance Education Coordinator(s), DE Educational Project Coordinator, Online Learning Web Site Developer, and Curriculum Committee Liaison. The purpose of the team is to develop and maintain DE quality and student retention for MSJC online courses by offering faculty support, faculty professional development activities, and maintain a high quality DE program.
Designing a Course

1. Effective Practices

A student centered/teacher present approach to Effective Practices in Online Teaching, collected by Pat James click here.

Academic Senate for California Community Colleges (ASCCC) examines issues of educational technology that involve policy and their implementation important to local academic senates. In particular, it includes current information regarding a separate DE curriculum review and instructor-student contact. It suggests a variety of effective practices in educational technology appropriate for college governance that will facilitate planning. Ensuring The Appropriate Use of Educational Technology: An Update For Local Academic Senates

The list of best practice strategies is based on “Institutional Policies/Practices and Course Design Strategies to Promote Academic Integrity in Online Education,” by the combined efforts of Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE) Cooperative for Educational Technologies, WCET and Instructional Technology Council (ITC), and UT TeleCampus of the University of Texas System. Best Practice Strategies to Promote Academic Integrity in Online Education

2. Policies & Check List for Course Design see Appendix 1

3. Compliance

Accessibility

It is a federal mandate that all online course materials be designed to be accessible to students who are vision and hearing impaired. Unlike just-in-time accommodation in the face-to-face classroom, online course materials must be accessible at the time they are posted for student use. Workshops are held routinely at the MSJC Academy to help faculty in this regard and it is recommended for the online teaching faculty to attend on a regular basis. In order to accomplish video captioning and uploading, MSJC online teaching faculty are requested to contact Teresa David (tdavis@msjc.edu) for Menifee faculty or Randi Lee (rlee@msjc.edu) for San Jacinto faculty. For more information click here.

Authentication

A federal mandate appeared in the reauthorization of the Higher Education Opportunity Act in 2008 that requires faculty to have students sign into courses
using identification provided by the college. Interpretation of the language in the Act shows a governmental concern that students taking MSJC online courses are the students enrolled in them. The changes require MSJC to have student’s complete tests and quizzes in the Blackboard system. Faculty can no longer use their own websites to accomplish testing even if the students log into the site. MSJC will be held accountable through the accreditation process. The only exception is when faculty are using publisher content that requires students to purchase a key and log in, since students have to login through MSJC.

Academic Integrity

It is a requirement for MSJC faculty to define cheating and plagiarism in course documentation and syllabus. Faculty should have a link to the technology acceptable use policy and student conduct policy. Very often community college students do not understand what plagiarism means. A recommended method would be to hold a discussion forum asking students to write what it means to plagiarize. It should be made clear in the course content that the topic should be course specific. The following link would serve as a good example: Rutgers – Interactive Plagiarism Video, Real Life Examples, and Quiz and How to Avoid Plagiarism Online.

Faculty can assist students to be ready to take an online class, which will help with online course retention rates. MSJC offers a faculty facilitated online orientation that begins one week prior and two weeks after the start of every semester. Students receive information about the online orientation at the time of registration. Please see student online orientation and student readiness, number nine, under Important Policies. It is recommended that faculty have students take a student readiness self test. Links to the three student readiness quizzes are provided, click here.

Regular Effective Contact

When administration receive complaints from students about online courses, the top compliant, was that the instructor had not kept in touch with them either by not answering emails promptly or by not posting announcements or discussion responses. MSJC has adopted a regular effective contact policy, as mandated by Title 5 regulations. The mandated Title 5 and MSJC Regular Effective Contact Policy are located as appendix 2 in this document. The policy pertains to instructor-initiated contact with students mandated by Title 5 regulations. It has been found that student retention and success rates are directly tied to how well faculty communicate with online students. Faculty are required to participate in discussion activities with their students.

Copyright

Understanding what copyright is why it exists, and being able to effectively apply “fair use” guidelines when faculty use copyrighted materials in their courses are
essential tools for any educator. However, teaching online generally adds some additional challenging questions to the mix. To ensure faculty are provided with a clear and comprehensive overview of the topic, faculty are requested to read the shared Copyright 101 module created by BYU. “Copyright 101” is designed to:

- Increase faculty knowledge and understanding of copyright and licensing issues; and know what it means to say that someone owns the copyright to a creative work.
- Learn more about why copyright law exists and where it all started (the history of copyright).
- Know how to resolve basic copyright/licensing questions and when and who to ask for more help.
- Realize and respect the ethical/moral aspects involved in using materials protected by copyright.
- Be able to answer a variety of copyright questions and solve specific case studies.

The Teach Act: The Technology, Education, and Copyright Harmonization (TEACH) Act of 2002 extend an instructor’s legal use of copyrighted materials in online instruction at accredited nonprofit education institutions. Applying the TEACH Act is complex and relies on the instructor’s adherence to a specific set of criteria. Faculty are encouraged to speak directly with members of their own institution to understand if specific use of copyrighted materials in their online classes is within the guidelines of the TEACH Act. Faculty may find the resource, The TEACH Act: How the Law Affects Online Instruction created and shared by Florida State University helpful.

Creative Commons: Dialogue about the friction between copyright law and digital media have led to the development of Creative Commons. Creative Commons (CC) provides flexible copyright licenses that copyright owners may choose to apply to their work. The CC licenses grant more flexibility than traditional copyright but not as much as “public domain.” A work in the public domain may be used freely. A Creative Commons licensed work still requires the user to adhere to specific guidelines but may be as simple as “crediting the author.” The popularity of CC has resulted in the fostering of a culture of sharing and there are now thousands of works online that faculty may use without violating copyright. If the instructor is seeking images or audio for a class, it is in the interest of the instructor to check for CC licensed work. The following link can be helpful in this regard: “What is Creative Commons”.

Unit of Credit

A unit of credit is approximately one hour of class plus two hours of study per week, or three hours of laboratory per week carried through the term. For each hour of lecture/discussion, two hours of preparation are assumed. To receive credit, the student must be officially enrolled in the course. Students not officially enrolled by
the proper date will not receive credit for the course, even if they complete all course work.

Dropping Students

It is a federal mandate that faculty cannot use the course statistics in the Blackboard Dashboard to determine whether a student is participating in an online class. If students do not participate in the activities of the course (i.e. discussion forums, assignment submission, etc.) and are only logging in but not doing any meaningful work for an extended length of time (stated in the syllabus), faculty can use their discretion to drop students. Faculty should put in their syllabus that they expect students to remain active participants throughout the entire course, completing and submitting assignments. If a student becomes inactive for an extended period, faculty will drop them from the course. See Drop Policy below.

Important Policies

A student centered/teacher present approach to Effective Practices in Online Teaching, collected by Pat James click [here].

1. Check-in and Course Availability (Online & Hybrid Courses)

Check in for online classes opens a week prior to the beginning of any given semester. Courses will be opened to students by the Blackboard technicians and will remain open. Faculty are encouraged to go in and make areas within the courses unavailable, but cannot make the entire course unavailable after it opens. Directions for how to make specific sections within the course unavailable to students are in appendix 4. Faculty teaching online must be prepared to work with students from the first day of classes. If faculty have not posted a check-in discussion forum when the class is first opened, our technicians will place a check-in forum in the course. Faculty are able to replace the standard check-in forum with their own. The standard check-in board will not be placed in your course IF you have the words Check-In in the title of your custom discussion forum.

The student check-in process begins five business days prior to the first class date, and the last day for check-in for classes is the second day after the first class date. If students have not checked in by midnight on the second day, faculty reserve the right to drop them and add students from the waitlist. The procedure is to email students being dropped to inform them that they have not checked in and will be dropped from the course. It will be followed by an email to the students on the waitlist, in order, to let them know that they may be added if they email the faculty member by the end of the first week of classes (faculty can set the time). Students will be required to contact enrollment services to pay for the course and complete their registration. Faculty are required to send an add code to the student on the
waitlist using MSJC email obtained from the student roster in Eagle Advisor. It takes approximately one hour for a student who is added to the system to be enrolled in the course. If a class is not full, the instructor can at his/her discretion to keep the non-checked in student in the class. In this case, faculty may want to send an email to the student letting them know that they need to check in. Below are examples of the emails that an instructor can send to the students:

To dropped student: Please be informed that since you have not checked into your online course, [course name, and section], you will be dropped from the course effective at midnight [insert date here], to allow waitlisted students to enroll.

To Waitlisted student: It is my pleasure to inform you that as of [insert date her], you will be added to [course name and section] if you respond to this email by 9:00 a.m. on [insert date here]. It is your responsibility to contact enrollment services with this adds code [put in code] as soon as possible so that you can be added to this online course. **Please let me know immediately, via email, if you do not intend to participate in the course this semester so that I may give this slot to another student on the waitlist.**

Faculty are required to add an announcement when the course shell is open for student check in that distinguishes an online course from a hybrid course indicating the appropriate definition as an announcement.

**Fully Online Courses** are taught only through the web using the Blackboard courseware system. Online courses provide students with an opportunity to complete coursework without attending classes on campus. Although online courses do not meet on campus, the curriculum for online courses is the same as the curriculum provided in a traditional face-to-face course. Sometimes, according to the instructor’s preference and the course content, tests are completed on campus. Arrangements can also be made to complete tests at an alternative site if student(s) do not live near an MSJC campus. You cannot mandate that students come to an MSJC site for any reason, if your course is designated as fully online. (See proctoring guidelines in this document)

**Hybrid Courses** are taught partially online, but have regular on-campus meetings. Hybrid courses are courses that have some regularly scheduled meetings on campus that are accompanied by online activities. The hours spent on campus vary from course to course, and students should check the schedule carefully to know when the course meets on campus. **Please note in your announcement when the course officially starts. If the course starts online, identify the date and information students need to get started. If the course begins with a face-to-face meeting, please clearly state the day, time and room that the meeting will take place. Give your students complete instructions for starting the course!**
2. **Timelines/Deadlines for Requesting Development Course Shells**

Course shells in Blackboard are opened for all courses (face-to-face, hybrid, and online) automatically with the first student registration date and are automatically closed 80 days after the close of the semester.

Each faculty member is allowed to request one development course shell per unique course number that they teach (not per section) for the purpose of course development. In order to request a development course shell, an email request should be submitted to the help-desk via email to help@msjc.edu. Faculty members may also request a previous-semester course shell be returned to their MYMSJC site by submitting a help-desk request via email to help@msjc.edu, and should include the section number and the semester of the course. Faculty requesting an external participant be placed in their course shell can do so by submitting a help-desk request via email to help@msjc.edu.

3. **Visitation Protocols for Online Courses**

The administration has developed a protocol for visiting DE courses that allows for the same degree of oversight that is available in face-to-face classes. This ensures that administrators, who have an expressed need to visit a DE course, do so with the prior knowledge of the instructor.

**Classroom Visitation Protocol for Online Courses**

Background: It is common practice for administrators to visit face-to-face classes occasionally to offer support to instructors as well as to observe students in a class settings on campus in order to stay connected to the actual practice of instruction. Instructional Administrators also have the responsibility to ensure that classes are meeting as posted in the schedule of classes and that the instructor is providing the instruction agreed upon as contracted. When an administrator visits a face-to-face class in session, the instructor is present in the room and aware of the visitation. It is appropriate to assume that the same scenario should exist during visitations in the virtual classroom. Since it is possible for administrators to observe an online course without the instructor’s knowledge the following protocol has been prepared and will be followed by MSJC instructional administrators.

Visitation of online courses may occur by the discipline dean and/or the department chair for the following reasons:

1. To ensure that the course is appropriately available to students in the course management system.

2. To ensure that regular effective contact is taking place as established in the
MSJC Regular Effective Contact Policy and compliance with Section 508 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act (accessibility for disabled students) and the Higher Education Act.

3. In response to a request from the instructor in the course (questionable student conduct, technical problems, course development review, and recommendation).

4. In response to student complaints about the instructor, the course, or the course management system infrastructure.

This visitation does not constitute a formal evaluation; however, a formal evaluation may be planned because of the visit. An informal email summary of the visitation will be forwarded to the instructor upon the conclusion of the visitation.

4. Office Hours

Past practice has been that office hours for online instruction are conducted at the same ratio of course hours to office hours as face-to-face courses. Online office hours should be conducted at times that are accessible to students who are enrolled in distance education for scheduling issues. Faculty does not have to be on campus to conduct online office hours. When instructors teach both online and face-to-face courses, they should offer office hours in face-to-face and online formats to all students. It is recommended that faculty hold office hours/learning sessions utilizing web-based tools such as CCCConfer and/or Skype.

5. Census Rosters

Census Rosters are a mandatory requirement of employment. All faculty members are required to submit census rosters prior to census due date. The education code mandates completion of census rosters to provide an accurate count of students. The college submits census data to the Chancellor’s Office to determine state funding for the district. Any student on a roster who has never attended an instructor’s class on-campus or signed into your online class MUST be dropped before the Census date. This is a Title 5 mandate. The date of census may vary according to the start date and length of each section. To find out what your census date is, check the top of the roster for each class or click on the census link in the Faculty Eagle Advisor tab of Blackboard. It’s a good practice to put those dates on the calendar and then go to Faculty Eagle Advisor on or before the date listed and complete the census roster.

6. Regular Effective Contact

Regular Effective Contact is mandated by Title 5 regulations MSJC has adopted a regular effective contact policy, see appendix 2 of this document. The policy pertains
to instructor-initiated contact with students mandated by Title 5 regulations. When administration receives complaints from students about online courses, the main reason is that the instructor has not kept in touch with them either by not answering emails promptly or by not posting announcements or discussion responses. Student retention and success rates are directly tied to how well faculty communicate with online students. Please become familiar with the policy. Faculty are required to participate in discussion activities with their students.

7. Dealing with Disruptive Students Online

Just as in the face-to-face classroom, faculty might have to deal with disruptive students online. Possibly because of the lack of face-to-face presence and the difficulty in interpreting emotions within electronic communications, disruptive students online can be more challenging to handle. Some can even appear downright disrespectful or abusive toward not only fellow students, but also toward faculty.

The document titled “Dealing with Disruptive Students” identifies some of the behaviors that faculty might encounter, gives suggestions for handling disruptive students, then outlines the official CLPCCD procedure for removing students.

8. Peer Evaluation Guidelines

Peer evaluation of the instructor will be accomplished via approved methods as agreed to by the Academic Senate, Faculty Association, and District (Click Peer Evaluation Guidelines).

An approved evaluation instrument is provided within the course to ensure student feedback on the organization and content of the course and the instructor performance.

9. Orientation and Student Readiness

MSJC provides online student orientations to both fully online and face-to-face courses as well. Faculty can orient students through the course within the first week of class by creating a video or directions. Faculty are recommended to make sure students know how to start a course. Sample Orientation More web resources can be located from the MSJC Online website (Online Learning tab) under Faculty Resources. The MSJC student online orientation link can be found here.

10. Library and Learning Center Resources

To access online Library Services (catalog, e-books, electronic databases, librarian support, orientations, and specific library research documents). Click here.
Learning Resource Centers offer tutoring (via CCCConfer, SkillsTutor, Face-to-Face tutoring, and Smarthinking). There is student support in learning and accessing Blackboard located inside a Blackboard course shell. The SmartThinking and library links are both located inside the Blackboard portal on the left side of the screen.

11. Syllabus/Start-up Requirements

All faculty members must provide students with a course syllabus specific to the course. The Academic Senate has developed the Syllabus Content Checklist which includes instructor contact information, course description, course objectives, course learning outcomes, assigned texts and materials, grading policy, expectations for classroom behavior, plagiarism policy and penalties, disability statement, and a schedule of topics, reading, activities, and assignments. Some examples can be found at the Effective Practices web site.

The syllabus is a contract with the students in the class. A clear and detailed syllabus will lead to fewer misunderstandings. Instructors often include detailed descriptions of assignments and rubrics for evaluation. A course syllabus is required and available to students the first day of class.

Faculty must submit a copy of their respective course syllabi to the Office of Instruction no later than the 2nd week of the semester. Syllabi should be submitted by email: SJC/San Gorgonio Pass Faculty Syllabus Email Address: sjcsyllabi@msjc.edu. MVC/TEC Faculty Syllabus Email Address: mvcsyllabi@msjc.edu.

Considerations for proctoring tests for Online Classes: The following are five steps to follow when an instructor requires tests to be proctored. If a course is fully online, the instructor cannot require students to come to MSJC for any reason. If students are required to visit campus, the course will be designated as a Hybrid course. See appendix 3 for an Online Proctored Exam Request Form.

1. Plan for students to complete the test over a period of several days to avoid overwhelming the learning center testing environment.
2. Put a notice in the syllabus and in the first announcement so the proctoring information is the first thing students see when they enter the course.
3. Notify the appropriate testing center at MSJC about what is happening. Include clarification of the notion of proctoring MSJC students, center operation times, and the date window students have to complete the test.
4. Be ready to arrange for students who cannot come to an MSJC campus to take the test at another appropriate location.

12. Archive a Course

After the semester ends and grades are turned in, faculty will want to archive course(s). Faculty may choose to archive a course(s) every week or two during the semester and download it to a safe place.

[View instructions for archiving a course.]

13. Download a Gradebook

Once students are deleted from the Blackboard server, neither their work nor their grades will appear in an archived course. This is why faculty should download their gradebook separately. Like the archive, download the gradebook to a safe place. In addition, like the archive, faculty may choose to do this every week or so during the semester.

[View instructions for downloading a Gradebook.]

14. Archive Faculty Emails

If faculty decide not to use the Messages tool in Blackboard, they are advised to archive any emails from their students. Archiving a Blackboard course does not archive student emails that are sent to and from faculty MSJC email accounts; unless faculty use the Messages (Blackboard internal email).

15. Completing Incompletes

If a student chooses to take an incomplete, the student may complete the course work within the first six weeks of the following semester and receive an appropriate letter grade. Should a faculty member need to have a student complete work in Blackboard, faculty may choose one of the options below:

- Option 1: The student will complete the coursework in original site. The instructor may leave the course site set to available. Note that all other enrolled students will have access to the site, as well. Since the previous semester has ended, and none of the previous students will be doing any work, interactivity among students will not be possible.

- Option 2: If faculty do not want all of the other enrolled students to have access to the course after the semester ends, make it unavailable, then contact the
Blackboard system administrator by sending an email to help@msjc.edu to request that a new course be set up. The system administrator will manually create a new course shell, copy the content of the original course into it, and then add the student into the new-copied course. Note that none of the discussion board postings or any student work completed will be carried over. Instructors would need to re-enter grades in the Gradebook. Because there will only be one student in this course, interactivity among students again, will not be possible.

- Option 3: If interactivity among students, such as discussion board postings and replies, is required, ask the Blackboard system administrator by sending an email to help@msjc.edu to manually add the student into your current course. The student has to be added manually because he/she has not officially enrolled into the course. He/she can then interact with all of the students in the current course. Note that this method is just as if the student has begun a new course, so none of the coursework will be brought over to the new site. Faculty would need to re-enter grades in the Gradebook.

16. Drop Policy

There is a new federal requirement about the “last day of attendance” in online classes that we must follow. We can no longer use the course statistics to determine when a student has stopped participating in class. Instead, we have to document when the student stopped being engaged in the work of the class (i.e. submitting assignments, posting to discussion forums, etc.). If you have a student who stops actively participating, but is logging into your class, you should try to contact them to get them to do their work, and drop them if they don’t. This has been precipitated by a number of schools having to pay back considerable amounts of money to the government as a result of student financial aid fraud. Please post something like what you see below, in your syllabus:

- **Sample Policy:** If a student has not participated in discussions or other forms of communication and/or has not submitted assignments for two consecutive weeks, the instructor will attempt to contact the student and notify them that they have 5 days to complete the missing work or be dropped from the course. If the work requested has not been completed within the 5 day time frame, the student will be dropped from the course.

You can set the time that they must complete their work, or decide that they cannot successfully complete, that is up to you. However, you will have to document the student’s work until the point of dropping the student and save whatever work has been submitted up to that point.

**TIP:** It is a good idea to use a discussion forum at the beginning of the semester to explore the topics of cheating, plagiarism, and financial aid fraud. Students
may not completely understand their responsibilities in these matters.

**MSJC Instructor Initiated Drop Policy adopted by MSJC Academic Senate 5/2013**

Mandated: Students **must be dropped** from class for failure to attend the first meeting of the class, if they have not made prior arrangements. Students may be dropped for failure to attend the second meeting, if they have not made prior arrangements with the instructor. **Instructors are required to drop** students who have not appeared in class or who are judged to be inactive by the census date.

Students may be dropped from a semester-length class for continuous or cumulative absences that total the number of hours the class is scheduled to meet in a two-week period. For short term courses, students may be dropped after missing 11% of the total class hours. Three unapproved tardies of 15 minutes or more may be considered the equivalent of one absence.

**By law, instructors are required to document the date that students stop attending class (last date of attendance). In online classes, instructors are also required to maintain the grades earned up until the point of withdrawal from class.**

Online: Check in policy (for waitlisted classes) **Instructors must drop students** who do not check in by census.

Students who have not engaged in the academic activities of the course for the equivalence of two weeks of a full term class, or 11% of a short term (weeks) class, may be dropped. It is the instructor’s responsibility to document the date that the student stops engaging in the academic activities of the class.

**Student initiated drops for online, hybrid, and face-to-face courses:**
A student who decides to voluntarily withdraw from a class has the responsibility to go through the online drop procedure in Eagle Advisor to ensure that they do not receive an F in the course.

**Guidelines:**

- Be reasonable with the first day of class. Students often go to the wrong site or may have difficulty finding parking, etc. It’s a good idea to wait until the end of the class session to drop or add students.

- If you mistakenly drop a student and want to add them back to the class, but you have given their “seat” to a student from the waitlist, please contact your dean for permission to add that student back in, if it would exceed the capacity of your class.

  (Example: If you get home from class and find that three students have emailed you that they had legitimate reasons for missing the first class, and you gave
other students access, call your dean for assistance. If possible, always check your email right before the first class session.

- The waitlist is compiled on a first-registered basis. Students on the waitlist should be considered in the order they are presented on the list. Do not arbitrarily distribute add codes out of order (you cannot sell them either) or to students who are not on the waitlist until you have exhausted the list.

- Clarification regarding the right to fail vs. last date of attendance requirements: Students, who engage in the academic activities of a class for online or continue to come to class, for face-to-face, have the right to earn their “F” by completing sub-standard work. If they stop attending in a face-to-face class, or stop engaging in an online class, you may drop them. The difference is that if you could drop the student for non-engagement/non-attendance and you choose not to, you still have to document the last day of attendance and grades for that student.

17. Weekend Technical Support

There is no technical support for faculty on the weekends, holidays, or days in which the MSJC campus is closed. The same goes for student technical support. Therefore, faculty might want to schedule deadlines for major student submissions in Blackboard (i.e. exams, research papers) for days and times that fall within the business day, when there will be technical support.

Revised 8/2013
This handbook is subject to change as new technologies emerge and new decisions are made.
Appendix 1

Successful Design Checklist

For each lesson:

☐ state objectives, rubrics and timelines that include evaluation (what you will learn, what you will do, how will you know you have done it right?)
☐ recall prior knowledge
☐ assign tasks considering learning styles
☐ include human interaction
☐ provide an optional "for more information" resource

Things you must do in your course:

Must have before class begins

☐ Create a “Welcome Letter” that welcomes the students to the course and gives some brief expectations (could be required skills to be successful) and also tells students how to start the course (could be, select the “start here” menu item)
☐ Provide an overview area that includes the syllabus but goes into more detail about online specifics (could be called “start here”).
  - On the Announcements page have a bold "start here" message (or have this included in your welcome letter that tells students what to do first and how the course is structured.
  - Provide students with a self-assessment test for online learners, if you do not provide an institutional orientation. Include a list of what a successful online learner must be.
  - Information from the instructor about how to start and navigate the course.
  - Clear syllabus and course overview information that contain the following:
    ▪ Policies, objectives, and student learning outcomes listed for students [http://my.msjc.edu/web/ol/ol/policies.html](http://my.msjc.edu/web/ol/ol/policies.html)
    ▪ Grading and Grading Rubrics
    ▪ A course outline (not from the curriculum outline, rather a weekly listing of topics to be covered), and schedule of assignments with clear due dates.
  - Technical support information ([http://my.msjc.edu/web/help.html](http://my.msjc.edu/web/help.html)) and a link to the college acceptable use policies for internet use.
  - Provide a list of materials needed that give urls and ISBN numbers when appropriate. (Include links to bookstores and libraries as appropriate).
  - Clearly define the hardware and software requirements and Internet skills your students will need to be successful.
  - Provide a clear overview of what you expect where you include your days off and your turn-around times for email and discussion responses, grading, and return
of assignments and when you open new units. Include appropriate use of email vs. discussion Q and A.
- Be sure to have late assignments and plagiarism policies in this area, as well as discussion/communication etiquette guidelines and participation expectations (attendance).
- Provide contact information for the instructor and list office hours.
- Provide information about any test proctoring that may be required for the class.

Compliance issues:

☐ Multiple measures of assessment, that you use more than just tests to evaluate your students, (this is a federal mandate that helps to insure student integrity in your course) see last page of this doc: [http://www.wcet.org](http://www.wcet.org) Design your courses for your students at risk. Good students will learn with any design.

☐ You should participate in Regular Effective Contact (REC) according to the college regular effective contact policy that includes discussion forums about covering the content of the course beyond just a Q and A opportunity. You have to have a Q & A forum, but you also must initiate and participate in thoughtful conversations with and among your students about the content of the course. (critical thinking) If you have not read the REC policy lately, you may want to do so, it is required for MSJC hybrid and online courses. ([http://msjconline.com/Regular_Effective_Contact_staff.pdf](http://msjconline.com/Regular_Effective_Contact_staff.pdf))

☐ Courses should be designed with accessibility standards followed. [http://teach.ucf.edu/pedagogy/accessibility](http://teach.ucf.edu/pedagogy/accessibility)

☐ Conduct the majority of your course within the Blackboard course shell (tests, quizzes, assignment submission, discussion forums, messaging/email)

☐ If you are using publisher materials, augment your course with your own materials (introduce the publisher materials, your own e-lectures, etc.).

Assignments:

☐ Make the first couple of assignments easier to give students time to adjust to the online learning environment and to give them confidence. Consider how long it will take for students to receive their books.

☐ Establish due dates, but also allow for some limited flexibility. Community college students need structure, but online students want flexibility.

☐ Allow second chances on difficult assignments.

☐ Provide a forum for peer questions. Students can ask each other for help here and this can take pressure of you.

☐ Establish a carefully detailed grading rubric explaining what "quality" you expect.

☐ Provide samples of exemplary assignments whenever possible

Testing and Quizzes:

☐ Establish the general test and quiz directions at the outset of the course.

☐ Explain your expectations regarding timed tests and reset rules.
Allow for flexible time schedules for students to take proctored tests; do not specify a short window! (By the way, learning centers, at most colleges will proctor tests for any college, but they will not be happy with restrictive test dates and times.)

Be sure to have additional evaluation methods, not just testing, to ensure that the student doing the work is the student who has been taking the course.

General Strategies

Use your Q & A forum effectively. Make sure that is the main place for questions that are not private. Every time a student asks a question that could pertain to the whole class in the discussion forum, make sure the subject line in your answer reflects the content of your answer. This saves you from answering the same questions over and over.

Keeping Up With Online Education: The field of online education is constantly changing. In order to keep up, you will need to set aside some time to look for new ideas and to participate in professional development activities.

Links:

Diigo: http://www.diigo.com

Faculty Resources: http://msjconline.com/index.php/faculty

Pat’s Web Resources: http://my.msjc.edu/web/ol/ol/

Jing: http://www.techsmith.com/jing

Pat James: pjames@msjc.edu

Belinda Heiden Scott: bscott@msjc.edu

Anna Stirling: astirling@msjc.edu

Micah Orloff: morloff@msjc.edu

Help: help@msjc.edu
Appendix 2

Mt. San Jacinto College Regular Effective Contact Policy

Regulations:

Title 5 and the Distance Education Guidelines for the California Community Colleges state:
55200. Definition and Application.

*Distance education means instruction in which the instructor and student are separated by distance and interact through the assistance of communication technology. All distance education is subject to the general requirements of this chapter as well as the specific requirements of this article. In addition, instruction provided as distance education is subject to the requirements that may be imposed by 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. §794d).*

Guideline for Section 55202

This section emphasizes the extent to which course quality depends upon the full involvement of faculty in the design and application of DE courses. It discusses course quality standards for distance education and combines language formerly found in sections 55207 and 55209 that it replaces. Language is added to clarify that normal course quality standards apply to any portion of a course conducted through distance education.

55202. Course Quality Standards.

*The same standards of course quality shall be applied to any portion of a course conducted through distance education as are applied to traditional classroom courses, in regard to the course quality judgment made pursuant to the requirements of section 55002, and in regard to any local course quality determination or review process. Determinations and judgments about the quality of distance education under the course quality standards shall be made with the full involvement of faculty in accordance with the provisions of subchapter 2 (commencing with section 53200) of chapter 2.*

*NOTE: Authority cited: Section 66700 and 70901, Education Code.*

*References: Sections 70901 and 70902, Education Code.*

Guideline for Section 55202

This section emphasizes the extent to which course quality depends upon the full involvement of faculty in the design and application of DE courses. It discusses course quality standards for distance education and combines language formerly found in sections 55207 and 55209 that it replaces. Language is added to clarify that normal course quality standards apply to any portion of a course conducted through distance education.
55204. Instructor Contact.

In addition to the requirements of section 55002 and any locally established requirements applicable to all courses, district governing boards shall ensure that:
(a) Any portion of a course conducted through distance education includes regular effective contact between instructor and students, through group or individual meetings, orientation and review sessions, supplemental seminar or study sessions, field trips, library workshops, telephone contact, correspondence, voice mail, e-mail, or other activities. Regular effective contact is an academic and professional matter pursuant to sections 53200 et seq.
(b) Any portion of a course provided through distance education is conducted consistent with guidelines issued by the Chancellor pursuant to section 409 of the Procedures and Standing Orders of the Board of Governors.

NOTE: Authority cited: Sections 66700 and 70901, Education Code.
Reference: Sections 70901 and 70902, Education Code.

Guideline for Section 55204

This section defines what contact must be maintained between instructor and student. It is virtually identical to section 55211 that it replaces, except that language has been added to clarify that rules related to conduct of distance education and effective instructor contact apply to any portion of a course conducted through distance education.

Subdivision (a) stresses the responsibility of the instructor in a DE course to initiate regular contact with enrolled students to verify their participation and performance status. The use of the term “regular effective contact” in this context suggests that students should have frequent opportunities to ask questions and receive answers from the instructor of record.

The last published Distance Education Guidelines, March 2004, issued by the Chancellor pursuant to section 409 of the Procedures and Standing Orders of the Board of Governors, as referenced in subdivision (b), establishes the principle that for DE courses there are a number of acceptable interactions between instructor and student, not all of which may require in-person contact. Thus, districts and/or colleges will need to define “effective contact” including how often, and in what manner instructor-student interaction is achieved. It is important to document regular effective contact and how it is achieved. Since regular effective contact was declared an academic and professional matter, this documentation must include demonstration of collegial consultation with the academic senate, for example through its delegation to the local curriculum committee. A natural place for this to occur is during the separate course approval process (see section 55206) as well as during faculty evaluations, student surveys, and program review. Documentation should consist of the inclusion of information in applicable outlines of record on the type and frequency of interaction appropriate to each DE course/section or session. Local policies should establish and monitor minimum standards of regular effective contact.
**Background:**

In hybrid or fully online courses, ensuring **Regular Effective Instructor/Student Contact** guarantees that the student receives the benefit of the instructor’s presence in the learning environment both as a provider of instructional information and as a facilitator of student learning. In a face-to-face course, the instructor is present at each class meeting and interacts via all class announcements, lectures, activities, and discussions that take a variety of forms. For example, discussions can be held as part of a lecture format, group work scenarios, or content review sessions. The instructor also serves as a content advisor when he or she answers questions both as they come up in class and as they arise in individual situations. These types of questions are dealt with via the telephone, email, or face-to-face office visits.

Title 5 regulations do not make a distinction between regular and distance education courses beyond the need to have a separate curriculum approval process and the need to ensure regular effective contact. The guidelines do say that quality assurances within the regulations apply to all DE courses, which include hybrid courses. Therefore, it is assumed that those qualities of regular effective contact described above for the face-to-face environment, should also be applied to the distance education situation. The DE Guidelines require colleges to develop a policy regarding regular effective contact that addresses “the type and frequency of interaction appropriate to each DE course/section or session”.

**MSJC Policy:**

All DE courses at MSJC, whether hybrid or fully online will include regular effective contact as described below:

**Initiated interaction:** Instructors will regularly initiate interaction with students to determine that they are accessing and comprehending course material and that they are participating regularly in the activities in the course. Opportunities that relate to the content of the course should include those in which students interact with instructors, instructors to interact with students, and students to interact with each other. Providing students with an open-ended question forum, although required, does not constitute the entirety of effective instructor initiated interaction. In addition to open-ended question forums, utilizing CMS blogs, journals, MSJC email, and collaboration chat tools are appropriate to engage instructor and student interaction. Furthermore, implementing web 2.0 tools into course activities (ie. VoiceThread, Twitter, Facebook, etc.) are also appropriate tools to create interaction. Some web 2.0 tools can be brought into the CMS and some can be linked from the CMS. Instructor prepared content (written, recorded, broadcast, etc.) combined with other course materials, creates the “virtual equivalent” of the face-to-face class and must be included in your course.

**Frequency:** DE Courses are considered the “virtual equivalent” to face-to-face courses. Therefore, the frequency of the contact will be at least the same as would be established in a regular, face-to-face course. At the very least, the number of instructor contact hours per week that would be available for face-to-face students, will also be available, in asynchronous and/or synchronous mode, with students in the DE format. A class that meets three hours a week...
would require three hours of faculty communication time. Faculty office hours are not included as fulfilling the regular effective contact requirement and are a separate requirement. Given the nature of asynchronous instructional methodologies, contact shall be distributed in a manner that will ensure that regular contact is maintained over the course of a week and should occur as often as is appropriate for the course.

Establishing expectations and managing unexpected instructor absence: An instructor and/or department established policy describing the frequency and timeliness of instructor initiated contact and instructor feedback, will be posted in the syllabus and/or other course documents that are made available for students when the course officially opens each semester. If the instructor must be out of contact briefly for an unexpected reason (such as illness or a family emergency that takes the instructor offline), notification to students will be made in the announcements area of the course that includes when the students can expect regular effective contact to resume. If the offline time results in a lengthy absence (i.e. more than three or four days) a substitute instructor should be sought who can assist students while the instructor is unavailable.

Type of Contact: Regarding the type of contact that will exist in all MSJC DE courses, instructors will, at a minimum, use the following resources to initiate contact with students:

- Threaded discussion forums within the course management system, with appropriate instructor participation. (“Questions for the instructor” forums are good but should be used in conjunction with other forums.)
- MSJC email
- Weekly announcements in the Course Management System
- Timely feedback for student work.

Suggestions:

Instructors should also choose to use other forms of communication, as mentioned in section 55204 of Title 5. (“...through group or individual meetings, orientation and review sessions, supplemental seminar or study sessions, field trips, library workshops, telephone contact, correspondence, voice mail. e-mail or other activities.”) and/or CCCConfer, video conference, pod cast, or other synchronous technologies may also be included. CCCConfer is a web conferencing tool that is free to the California Community College System. http://www.cccconfer.org

- It is suggested that instructors have a threaded discussion that is set aside for general questions about the course and may wish to have weekly or other timely, question and answer sessions available to students. This may be accomplished through virtual office hours.

- It is recommended that Instructors engage students with web 2.0 tools and applications such as although not limited to VoiceThread, Twitter, Facebook, polleverywhere, doodle, Animoto, Prezi, Glogster, GoogleDocs, Wordle,
Bitstrips etc.

- A suggested approach for DE instructors to stay current with new and emerging technology is to subscribe to SSE feeds such as although, not limited to Edudemic, wix, MindShift, TED, Mashable, Online Teaching Conference, The Faculty Project, Visually, etc.

*Academic Senate Approval 05/2013*
Appendix 3

Online Proctored Exam Request Form

It is the student’s responsibility to find a suitable proctor and make arrangements with the proctor. This form must be received one week prior to the exam test date. A testing center can be any of the following examples:

- Accredited institution of higher learning (i.e. university, college, community college)
- Public school
- Academic or public library

Please fill the form out completely. Fill out all fields clearly. Include area codes when necessary. Please print; complete the form, sign, Scan and e-mail or fax directly to instructor.

**Student Information**

Today’s Date:_______________________________

Student’s Name:_____________________________________________

Course:___________________________________________________
(Course number, title, and section number and name of professor)

Student’s Address:____________________________________________

City:_________________________State:_________________________Zip:___________

Student’s Phone Number :(___)______________________________

Student’s Email:_____________________________________________

Student’s Signature For Compliance:___________________________

**Proctor Information**

Proctor’s Name:____________________________________________

Proctor’s Official Title:________________________________________

Proctor’s Institution __________________________________________

Institution Street Address:_______________________________________

City:_________________________State:_________________________Zip:___________

Proctor’s Email:_____________________________________________

Proctor’s Phone Number :(___)_______________________________

Proctor’s Fax Number :(___)___________________________________

Proctor’s Signature For Compliance:___________________________
Appendix 4:

Making individual areas of a course unavailable:

You will likely want to do this during the check-in period prior to the first day of class. You cannot make the whole course unavailable because the students don't see the course listed in the "my courses" area of the Blackboard portal and think that they are not enrolled. At MSJC the courses will become available and stay that way even if you try to set them as unavailable. So, your solution to not having students starting the class early, should you not be ready or just don't want them starting until day 1, is to close the individual areas. **TIP: Keep the “start here” or “syllabus” area open from the beginning of the check-in. If there’s nothing else but the announcement and the check-in discussion to read, students will very likely read the syllabus, if it's available.**

1. Toggle Edit Mode to ON.
2. For a Content Area, Learning Module, Lesson Plan, or other item Click an item’s Action Link to access the contextual menu.

3. Select Hide Link

4. To show the link on day one of the course, do this again and “Show Link”