

## SCC Regular Effective Contact Guidelines

### **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.

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. 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”.

*(Distance Education Guidelines for the California Community Colleges)*

### **SCC Guidelines:**

All DE courses at Sacramento City College, 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. Providing students

with an open ended question forum, although appropriate, does not constitute the entirety of effective instructor initiated interaction.

- **Frequency:** DE Courses are considered equivalent to face to face courses. Therefore, the frequency of the contact will be at least the same as would be established in a face to face course. Contact shall be distributed in a manner that will ensure that regular contact is maintained, given the nature of asynchronous instructional methodologies, over the course of a week and should occur as often as is appropriate for the course.
- **Establishing expectations:** 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.

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

- Discussion forums with appropriate instructor participation
- Email
- Weekly announcements in the Learning Management System

- Timely feedback for student work.
- Timely response to student emails or inquiries
- Instructors should also choose to use other forms of communication, as mentioned in section 55211 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, podcast, or other synchronous technologies may also be included.

## **Associated Regulations:**

Title 5 and the Distance Education Guidelines for the California Community Colleges state:

### **55211. 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) All approved courses offered as distance education include ***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.

(b) All distance education courses are delivered consistent with guidelines issued by the Chancellor pursuant to section 409 of the Procedures and Standing Orders of the Board of Governors. ***Regular effective contact*** is an academic and professional matter pursuant to title 5, section 53200.

**Note:** Authority cited: Sections 70901 and 66700, Education Code.

Reference: Sections 70901 and 70902, Education Code.

### **Guideline for Section 55211**

This section defines what contact must be maintained between instructor and student:

Subsection (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.

Subsection (b) honors 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 will need to define “effective contact, **including how often, and in what manner instructor-student interaction is achieved**. It is important that districts document how regular effective contact 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 55213). 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. As indicated in the *Guideline to Section 55219*, districts need to describe the type and quantity of student-faculty interaction in their annual reports to their local governing boards and the State Chancellor's Office.

## **Glossary:**

Email	Individual email exchange between student and professor. Asynchronous communication.
Mailing Lists	Multi-party, multi-way email exchange between students and professor. Asynchronous communication. Also known as "listserv"
Distribution Lists	Multi-party, one-way email exchange from professor to students. Asynchronous communication.
Discussion Board	Threaded discussion boards. Communication between students and professor posted on the Web. Asynchronous communication.
Web Log or FAQ	Regular web posting of information by the professor for students. Professor makes regular announcements or submits answers to student questions to the entire class. Asynchronous communication. Pull technology.
Instant Message	Individual online exchange between student and professor. Synchronous communication.
Chat Room	Online exchange for a group of students and the professor. Synchronous communication.
Telephone	Individual phone calls between student and professor. Synchronous communication.
Videoconferencing	Individual video conferences between student and professor. Synchronous communication.
Onsite Orientation Sessions	Face-to-face interaction between students and professor onsite. Synchronous communication. Push technology.
Onsite Group Meetings	Face-to-face interaction between students and professor onsite. Synchronous communication.
Onsite Tests or Assessments	Face-to-face interaction between students and professor onsite. Synchronous communication.
Onsite Review Sessions	Face-to-face interaction between students and professor onsite. Synchronous communication.