

**Academic Senate of  
MERCED COLLEGE**

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**RESOLUTION**

First Reading: October 10, 2013

Second Reading/Action (Date): October 24, 2013 Pass/Fail passed

RESOLUTION NO. 20-13

Subject: **AP 4105 Distance Education Regular and  
Substantive Interaction**

Mover: E. Ray Latham Discipline: Biology Area 1/7

Seconder: Nancy Golz Discipline: Library

**Whereas**, Title 5 section 55204 states:

*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.*

**Whereas**, The ACCJC guide to Evaluating Distance Education and Substantive Change Manual asks whether there is a policy that defines “regular and substantive interaction.”

**Therefore be it resolved**, that the Merced College Academic Senate recommends that the College Council adopt the revised Administrative Procedure 4105 that is presented in the attached documentation

## **ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE 4105 - Distance Education**

*Reference: Title 5 Sections 55200 et seq., Accreditation Standard XXX, U.S. Department of Education regulations on the Integrity of Federal Student Financial Aid Programs under Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended; 34 Code of Federal Regulations Part 602.17.*

**Definition:** Distance education means instruction in which the instructor and student are separated by distance and interact through the assistance of communication technology.

**Student Verification and Privacy:** Consistent with federal regulations pertaining to federal financial aid eligibility, the District must authenticate or verify that the student who registers in a distance education or correspondence education courses is the same student who participates in and completes the course or program and receives the academic credit. The District will provide to each student at the time of registration, a statement of the process in place to protect student privacy and estimated additional student charges associated with verification of student identity, if any.

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

- *secure credentialing/login and password;*
- *proctored examinations; or*
- *new or other technologies and practices that are effective in verifying student identification.*

The Chief Instructional Officer shall establish procedures for providing a statement of the process in place to protect student privacy and estimated additional student charges associated with verification of student identity, if any, to each student at the time of registration.

**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 Procedures 4020, Program and Curriculum Development. Distance education courses shall be approved under the same conditions and criteria as all other courses.

**Certification:** When approving distance education courses, the Board of Trustees will certify the following:

**Course Quality Standards:** The same standards of course quality are applied to the distance education courses as are applied to traditional classroom courses.

Course Quality Determinations: Determinations and judgments about the quality of the distance education course were made with the full involvement of the curriculum committee approval procedures.

**Instructor interaction:** Each section of the course that is delivered through distance education will include regular effective contact between instructor and students. *All faculty teaching Distance Education will include in their Syllabus a statement concerning Regular and Substantive Interaction equivalent to the instructional quality of face to face courses. That interaction will consist of one or more faculty initiated methods of interaction such as, but not limited to the following:*

1. *Email*
2. *Phone calls*
3. *On campus orientations*
4. *On campus sessions*
5. *Weekly participation and/or feedback in discussion forums*
6. *Weekly announcements*
7. *Virtual lectures – such as written or recorded lectures in video and/or audio format*
8. *Chat board activities*
9. *Video conferencing*
10. *Voice chat – such as Skype, Ventrillo or Google Voice*

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

Revised 8/28/12

Revised 7/11

Revised 2/08

Revised 8/07

Revised 8/06

Revised 8/03

Revised 7/02

Adopted 8/6/02