



DISTANCE EDUCATION HANDBOOK

A Guide to Teaching Online at SWC



SOUTHWESTERN COLLEGE DISTANCE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Fall 2023

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Contents

INTRODUCTION

About the Handbook	1
--------------------	---

COURSE DEVELOPMENT

Distance Education Delivery Modes	2
-----------------------------------	---

Course Approval and Curriculum	3
--------------------------------	---

Course Quality Evaluation & Assessment	4
--	---

Currency of Materials and Courses	4
-----------------------------------	---

Course Orientation	4
--------------------	---

Student Authentication & Fraud Prevention	5
---	---

Accessibility/Universal Design	6
--------------------------------	---

Copyright	8
-----------	---

Regular and Substantive Interaction (RSI)	8
---	---

ATTENDANCE ACCOUNTING

Last Date of Attendance	11
-------------------------	----

Distance Education Absences	11
-----------------------------	----

EVALUATION & TRAINING

Evaluation of Faculty	13
-----------------------	----

Distance Education Faculty Training	15
-------------------------------------	----

TECHNOLOGY & SUPPORT

Technology and Digital Infrastructure	17
---------------------------------------	----

Faculty Support	17
-----------------	----

Student Support	19
-----------------	----

Organization and Human Resources	20
----------------------------------	----

About the Handbook

This handbook describes the Federal, California state, and Southwestern College regulations and guidelines that pertain to distance education (DE), and it also offers examples and resources to support faculty members in their implementation, with the goal of providing high quality online learning experiences for our students.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We are grateful to the Academic Senate for the California Community Colleges (ASCCC), the Online Network of Educators (@ONE), and DE leaders throughout our system for the resources, examples, and inspiration that have contributed to this handbook.

We are also indebted to past and present members of the SWC Academic Senate's Distance Education Committee, who have dedicated many hours to creating and updating this handbook so that it continues to serve as a resource for DE faculty.

ABOUT THIS EDITION

This handbook was originally approved by the Curriculum Committee in Spring 2014. It has been updated each year by the Distance Education Committee and/or the Distance Education Faculty Coordinator.

Cover photo by [Helena Lopes](#) from [Pexels](#).

Publication date for this edition: July 2023.

COURSE DEVELOPMENT

Distance Education Delivery Modes

Southwestern Community College District offers distance education classes in a variety of modalities. As detailed in District Administrative Procedure (AP) 4105, the following delivery mode definitions are used at SWC:

ONLINE

An online class section is instructed entirely online and asynchronously, with no required synchronous class meetings in person or via videoconferencing. The class is conducted using the college-adopted Course Management System (CMS), where asynchronous instruction, interaction, activities, and assessments occur. Instruction and academic engagement follow a predictable pattern. Southwestern College uses **500-level section numbers** for online sections.

LIVE ONLINE

A “live online” class section provides instruction and academic engagement entirely through live videoconferencing, with no campus meetings or required use of the college-adopted Course Management System (CMS). Class meeting days and times are regular and noted in the schedule of classes. The class meets using college-adopted videoconferencing software, such as Zoom, where synchronous instruction, interaction, activities, and assessments occur. The CMS may be used to offer students access to class materials, communication, grades, and resources online, and the CMS may also be used for supplemental activities, homework, and electronic submission of coursework and assessments. The CMS or other online resources or activities may not be used to replace required synchronous online instruction. Southwestern College uses **400-level section numbers** for live online sections.

HYBRID

A hybrid class section provides a portion of instruction asynchronously online and a portion synchronously. The asynchronous portion adheres to the “online” modality definition above. The synchronous portion of a hybrid section may be in one of two formats:

- **In-Person Hybrid:** This format provides a portion of instruction asynchronously online and a portion synchronously in person. Required in-person meetings follow a regular pattern (on the same day[s] of the week and at the same time) and are published in the class schedule. Southwestern College uses **600-level section numbers** for in-person hybrid sections. Southwestern College uses section numbers below 400 for in-person sections.

COURSE DEVELOPMENT

- **Live-Online Hybrid:** This format provides a portion of instruction asynchronously online and a portion through live videoconferencing. Required live-online meetings follow a regular pattern (on the same day[s] of the week and at the same time) and are published in the class schedule. Southwestern College uses **700-level section numbers** for live-online hybrid sections.

IN PERSON

An in-person section is taught entirely face-to-face, in a physical classroom or laboratory environment. An in-person section may have web-enhanced activities or class information housed in the college's Course Management System (CMS). These web-enhanced sections may offer students access to class materials, grades, and resources online, and they also may offer supplemental activities and homework online, as well as online communication and electronic submission of coursework. These courses may not use Internet-based resources or activities to replace required in-person instruction or in-seat contact hours.

Course Approval and Curriculum

Title 5 of the California Code of Regulations outlines the requirements for distance education course approval:

§ 55206. Separate Course Approval.

- a) If any portion of the instruction in a new or existing course is to be provided through distance education, the course outline of record or an addendum to the official course outline of record shall address how course outcomes will be achieved in a distance education mode and how the portion of instruction delivered via distance education meets the requirement for regular and substantive interaction as specified in section 55204.
- b) The course design and all course materials must be accessible to every student, including students with disabilities. The distance education course outline of record or addendum shall be approved according to the district's adopted curriculum approval procedures.

Course approval and curriculum is the responsibility of the Southwestern College Curriculum Committee. District Administrative Procedure (AP) 4105 requires that "all courses with a DE component are taught according to the approved course outline of record (COR)," and any new or modified course that will include a Distance Education component must be reviewed and approved by the Curriculum Committee.

COURSE DEVELOPMENT

Trained DE faculty on the Distance Education Review Committee (DERC), a sub-committee of the Curriculum Committee, support faculty developing DE curriculum and provide feedback on proposals. The Distance Education Faculty Coordinator also supports faculty developing DE curriculum, and DE Mentors are available to assist as well.

Course Quality Evaluation & Assessment

The same standards of quality, currency, and assessment of student learning outcomes that apply to traditional courses also apply to distance education courses.

Title 5's Course Quality Standards section (§ 55202) states, "The same standards of course quality shall be applied to any portion of a class conducted through distance education as are applied to in-person classes . . . 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."

Accordingly, SWC Procedure No. 4105 ensures that DE classes provide "the same standards of course quality as in-person classes." Students in DE courses learn the same concepts and content, and the instructor in each delivery mode designs the course and its content to meet the Course Outline of Record's course objectives and student learning outcomes.

Currency of Materials and Courses

Individual faculty members are responsible for the currency and quality of the distance education classes they teach. All courses will follow the approved Course Outline of Record (COR) and DE Addendum. It is expected that faculty will design, review, and revise course content as needed to ensure that distance education courses remain accurate, up to date, and consistent with accepted discipline standards and distance education instructional strategies.

Course Orientation

Southwestern College provides an [online learning orientation](#) that students can take before beginning an online, live online, or hybrid course. This orientation is offered in person and online at the beginning of each semester, and it is also available on demand in video format. The orientation addresses online success skills as well as essential Canvas and Zoom features and processes. The schedule is posted on the college website. Orientation information is also included in the [SWC Course Template](#) (including semester-specific versions) and the

COURSE DEVELOPMENT

standalone [Course Orientation Module](#); both can be imported into any SWC Canvas course shell from the [Canvas Commons](#).

The [Quest for Success](#) self-paced tutorials in Canvas help students access their online readiness, and Quest also provides videos and other resources to help them prepare. Many instructors make completion of Quest an early assignment or extra-credit assignment in their courses; the [Quest for Online Success Assignment](#) can be imported into any Canvas course from the Canvas Commons.

Instructors are also responsible for providing a course-specific orientation to prepare students to navigate the learning environment, access their specific class materials, and successfully complete assignments and assessments. Video (especially screencasting) is an ideal format for this course introduction. SWC employees have [free access to Camtasia and Snagit](#) (MySWC login required) through the District's site license, and SWC also provides an on-campus recording studio for faculty use; see [Making Videos](#) for details. Training in the use of both Camtasia and Snagit is available via [Training Services](#) in Professional Development.

Student Authentication & Fraud Prevention

The district provides a federally compliant authentication system through the use of a single CMS (Canvas) by all faculty, in accordance with the Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008. Student authentication in DE courses assures academic integrity and makes reasonable attempts to prevent fraudulent activity online.

Student authentication specifically requires that “. . . institutions of higher education offering distance education programs have a process by which the institution of higher education establishes that a student registered for a distance education course is the same student that participates in, completes, and receives credit for the course.” Thus, concerns regarding authentication impact student identification at various times during the semester, including "verifying the identity of students throughout the cycle of an online course: registration, participation, assessment, academic credit" (CCC Chancellor's Office, *Distance Education Report 61*).

Southwestern College Distance Education requires the current standard for authentication: all DE coursework must be accomplished through a secure course management system (Canvas at SWC), with a unique username and password required each time a student engages in online coursework.

COURSE DEVELOPMENT

SYLLABUS STATEMENT: AUTHENTICATION

Many instructors choose to include a student authentication statement in each online/hybrid course syllabus; for example, “By enrolling in a distance education course, you agree that you are the person accessing and completing the work for this course and will not share your username and password with others.”

Accessibility/Universal Design

California community colleges are required by state and federal law to ensure that distance education is accessible to all users. Delivery systems and content must be accessible to all users in accordance with the accessibility guidelines found in the California Community Colleges’ *Distance Education Guidelines* and specifically in keeping with the California Community Colleges’ *Distance Education Accessibility Guidelines for Students with Disabilities*.

Accessibility requirements of Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 apply to all content delivery. Attention to course access also increases the usability for all users; for example, captioning benefits students in noisy or no-sound environments and provides multimodal learning.

Per Southwestern College Board Policy (BP) 3415, in order to provide an accessible education that develops the human potential of all its students, Southwestern College shall comply with Title III of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 and conform to the principles of Universal Design in Education (UDE) as defined by the Center for Universal Design at North Carolina State University as “the design of products and environments to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design.” Promoting the values of diversity and inclusion, UDE recognizes the full spectrum of user abilities and thus benefits all members of the Southwestern College community.

INSTRUCTOR RESPONSIBILITIES

Courses created in accordance with Universal Design principles will:

- provide an uncluttered interface with consistent layout and navigation.
- avoid moving or flashing images and self-starting video or audio.
- prove useful to people with diverse abilities.
- accommodate a wide range of individual preferences and abilities.
- communicate necessary information to the user regardless of ambient conditions or the user’s sensory abilities.

COURSE DEVELOPMENT

To meet accessibility/usability requirements, all web-based material used in a course, including outside links and any publisher-provided content, must conform to Section 508 requirements, including the following:

- Images will have alternative text (“alt” text) providing a brief textual equivalent of the image in order to provide access for students with visual impairments.
- Sound enhancements (videos, podcasts, etc.) will have closed captioning. In addition, a transcript may be provided.
- Pages will use adequate color contrast, font size, and font style to ensure readability (for example, 12-point black Arial text on a white background). When necessary, plain text versions of webpages will also be made available.
- Pages will use structured headings and accessible tables and lists. Hyperlinks will use meaningful link text rather than URLs.
- PDF files will be text-based (not scanned) with structured headings.

See [WebAIM](#) for a helpful overview of guidelines as well as tools and resources.

SYLLABUS STATEMENT: DISABILITY SUPPORT

Course syllabi must include an academic accommodations statement which informs students with disabilities of available DSS and instructor support. See the District’s [Syllabus Checklist for Online or Hybrid Courses](#) for current language. This can be expanded upon for online courses; for example: “Students with disabilities requesting accommodations in this online course must email the instructor their accommodation form and request the accommodations they need in this email.”

COLLEGE RESPONSIBILITIES

SWC’s Distance Education program works to make accessibility an integral part of the program by:

- complying with federal, state, and district accessibility guidelines.
- offering faculty training (both facilitated and on-demand) to ensure the creation of accessible course materials.
- working with Disability Support Services (DSS) to provide information and student access to assistive technology.

The Technology Specialist for Accessibility and Compliance supports faculty in developing accessible courses by:

- providing faculty training on curating and developing accessible course materials.

COURSE DEVELOPMENT

- testing course materials for accessibility and Section 508 compliance.
- offering one-on-one consultations.

In addition to its legal obligations, Southwestern College also has an ethical commitment to provide access to all instructional and support materials for all users, including users with disabilities.

Copyright

Per Southwestern College Policy No. 3720, responsible use of internet resources requires that users “respect software copyrights and licenses.” Copyright is a form of intellectual property protection that gives a copyright holder legal rights over the use, sale, reproduction, distribution, display, or creation of derivatives of a given original work. Copyright infringement refers to violation of these rights. Distance education faculty, staff, and students must abide by United States copyright law and protect against copyright infringement. This includes instructor use of written materials and images. For an overview of copyright, Fair Use, and Creative Commons licensing, see [Instructional Media: Copyright, Creative Commons, and Create Your Own](#).

Regular and Substantive Interaction (RSI)

Online instruction must comply with all applicable federal and state regulations. “Regular and substantive interaction” (previously known in California as “regular effective contact”) is essential for student success in online learning and is required by federal and state regulations; it is also mandatory for accreditation.

Title 5 of the California Code of Regulations states, “Any portion of a course conducted through distance education includes **regular and substantive interaction** between the instructor(s) and students” and also “among students” as detailed in the course outline’s DE addendum (*California Education Code*, § 55204).

This requirement for regular and substantive interaction is affirmed in Southwestern College’s Administrative Procedure (AP) 4115, which explains, “In distance education classes, regular and substantive interaction ensures that students benefit from their instructor’s presence online as they would in person, both as a content expert providing instruction and as a facilitator of student learning. Regular and substantive interaction among students ensures that students are part of a community of learners, as they are in in-person classes.”

COURSE DEVELOPMENT

INSTRUCTOR-INITIATED RSI PRACTICES

As noted in AP 4115, Southwestern College “recognizes the importance of instructor presence and instructor-initiated interaction in equitable online instruction.” To meet RSI requirements and support equitable student success, the online portion of a DE class must include regular instructor-initiated interaction. AP 4115 explains that DE instructors will provide, at minimum, the types of instructor-initiated interaction detailed below on a regular basis, as is relevant for the DE modality:

- Content-based announcements
 - Online and hybrid classes: Text, audio, and/or video announcements by the instructor in the course management system (CMS) [Canvas]
 - Live online classes: text, audio, and/or video announcement during live class meetings and/or via college email or CMS
- Content-based discussions
 - Online and hybrid classes: Facilitated asynchronous discussions within the CMS, with appropriate instructor participation to engage and guide students. (Question-and-answer discussions are recommended but will be used in conjunction with regular academic discussions.)
 - Live online classes: Facilitated synchronous discussions via video conferencing, with appropriate instructor participation to engage and guide students.
- Timely feedback on student work, as described in the syllabus

RSI AMONG STUDENTS

As noted in AP 4115, instructors will regularly facilitate content-based interaction among students, as described in the course outline of record, to allow students to benefit from learning with their peers in an active learning environment. Activities may include, but are not limited to the following examples:

- Content-based discussions with required peer responses/interaction
- Group assignments or projects
- Peer review
- Collaborative activities

RSI FREQUENCY

Title 5 requires us to provide RSI “on a predictable and scheduled basis.” At minimum, the hours of instructor-initiated interaction per week that would be available for in-person

COURSE DEVELOPMENT

students will also be available for online students, and students will have weekly opportunities for interaction among students as well.

As noted in AP 4115, “interaction in asynchronous online and hybrid courses shall be distributed in a manner that will ensure regular interaction is maintained over the course of every week.”

Also note that faculty office hours do not contribute to the regular and substantive interaction requirement, as they are a separate requirement and occur outside of instructional hours.

LIVE ONLINE & RSI

Regular and substantive interaction requirements apply to all classes with an online component, including “live online” classes being taught synchronously via videoconferencing. For these classes, synchronous online meetings contribute to RSI requirements if they include instructor-initiated interaction with students and student-to-student interaction.

Note: Instructors may only hold synchronous class meetings during the days and times listed in the schedule of classes.

SYLLABUS REQUIREMENT FOR INSTRUCTOR-INITIATED CONTACT

Syllabi for DE classes must include a statement explaining how regular and substantive interaction will be provided for this class. The following example should be customized to match the course modality, official course outline, individual faculty preferences, and existing syllabus information regarding contact hours, specifying expectations for responsiveness and availability:

“As your instructor, I am looking forward to working closely with you this semester, and you can expect me to play an active role in our class. I will post announcements every week, join you in class discussions to help you understand course concepts, and provide detailed feedback on major assignments within one week of submission. I will also answer questions throughout the semester in the Q&A Discussion and in our weekly discussions, usually within 24 hours M-F.”

ATTENDANCE ACCOUNTING

Last Date of Attendance

The last date of academic attendance, commonly known as the Last Day of Attendance (LDA), is the date the college uses to determine the amount of financial aid, if any, that must be returned to the Department of Education due to student withdrawal. The Department of Education (DOE) specifically requires “using a last date of attendance at an academically-related activity as a withdrawal date” and states that “it is up to the institution to ensure that accurate records are kept for purposes of identifying a student’s last date of academic attendance or last date of attendance at an academically-related activity.” (Dept. of Education, Reg. 66898)

For distance education, the last login into a course management system is not accepted as the last day of attendance. Instead, the Department of Education refers to academic engagement as the activity-based standard for determining the last date of attendance. Per Reg. 66952, “attendance at an academically-related activity” includes but is not limited to:

- 1) physically attending a class where there is an opportunity for direct interaction between the instructor and students;
- 2) submitting an academic assignment;
- 3) taking an exam, an interactive tutorial, or computer-assisted instruction;
- 4) attending a study group that is assigned by the institution;
- 5) participating in an online discussion about academic matters; and
- 6) initiating contact with a faculty member to ask a question about the academic subject studied in the course.

Activities where students may be present but exhibit no evidence of academic engagement are excluded from determining Last Day of Attendance, for example, “(3) logging into an online class without active participation; or (4) participating in academic counseling or advisement” (Reg. 66952).

LAST DAY OF ATTENDANCE DOCUMENTATION

Faculty members must document student academic engagement in Canvas and record student withdrawals in WebAdvisor/Colleague Self-Service. This documentation must also be stored with grades and other official course records following Southwestern College recordkeeping policy.

ATTENDANCE ACCOUNTING

Documenting engagement and recording withdrawals ensures that Southwestern College is in compliance with Title 5, Section 58004: “Districts shall, according to procedures adopted by the governing board, clear the rolls of inactive enrollment.” (Inactive enrollment is defined as a “no show” or a “student no longer participating in the course.”)

Distance Education Absences

In an in-person or live online class, students are expected to attend every class meeting, to arrive on time and stay throughout the class period. Students may be dropped from class for excessive tardiness, for failure to attend class the first day, or if the total number of absences exceeds twice the number of hours the class meets per week.

In the case of hybrid and asynchronous online classes, an absence may be identified as absence of active participation, such as not submitting course assignments in a timely manner or contributing to a required discussion. It is the instructor’s responsibility to specify in the course syllabus what constitutes active participation. Students may be dropped from class for excessive absence when such absence exceeds twice the number of hours indicated for the course in the College Catalog.

SYLLABUS REQUIREMENT FOR ATTENDANCE

A relevant DE attendance statement, in accordance with the College’s attendance policy and Department of Education regulations, should appear in each course syllabus specifying how absences are managed.

Recommended Syllabus Language for Online Classes

“Attendance in an online course is determined by participation in academically related activities. You will be considered present if there is evidence of your participation in required class activities including, but not limited to, **submitting an assignment, taking a quiz or test, participating in an online discussion, and working in a group**. You will be considered absent if there is no evidence of your participation in the academic activities of this class. Students who do not complete the first online assignment or are absent for more than ___ **hours** (twice the number of hours indicated for the course in the College Catalog) may be dropped.”

[Instructors, be sure to customize the bold sections for your course. For clarity, instructors can convert hours to weeks based on the duration of the course.]

ATTENDANCE ACCOUNTING

Recommended Language for Live Online Classes

“Attendance in distance education is determined by participation in academically related activities. You will be considered present if there is evidence of your active participation in course activities including, but not limited to, **participating in a scheduled class meeting using videoconferencing, working in a group, and taking a test.** You will be considered absent if there is no evidence of your participation in the academic activities of this course. Students who do not **attend the first class meeting in Zoom** may be dropped. In addition, students who are absent for more than ___ **hours/days/weeks** may be dropped.”

[Instructors, be sure to customize the bold sections based on your modality and class. Absence limit is twice the number of hours indicated for the course in the College Catalog, which instructors can convert to weeks based on the duration of the course.]

Recommended Language for Hybrid Classes

“Attendance in distance education is determined by participation in academically related activities. You will be considered present in the asynchronous online portion of this class if there is evidence of your participation in course activities including, but not limited to, **submitting an assignment, taking a quiz, participating in an online discussion, and working in a group.** You will be considered absent in the asynchronous online portion of this class if there is no evidence of your participation in the academic activities of this class. Students in hybrid courses who do not attend the first **in-person/live online** meeting and/or complete the first online assignment may be dropped. In addition, students who are absent for more than ___ **hours— in-person/live online** and online portions combined--may be dropped.”

[Instructors, be sure to customize the bold sections for your modality and class. Absence limit is twice the number of hours indicated for the course in the College Catalog, which instructors can convert to weeks based on the duration of the course.]

Instructor Absence

As detailed in SWC’s Administrative Procedure 4115, if an instructor must be briefly out of contact with students due to illness, family emergency, or other unexpected situation, “students will be notified in the Announcements area of the course; this announcement will include when the students can expect regular and substantive interaction to resume.”

If the instructor’s absence extends beyond 3-4 days, a substitute instructor should be sought to provide RSI while the instructor of record is unavailable.

EVALUATION & TRAINING

Evaluation of Faculty

PART-TIME, PROBATIONARY, AND TENURED FACULTY

The same evaluation standards that apply to part-time, probationary, and tenured faculty teaching in-person courses also apply to faculty teaching distance education courses as part of their load.

Distance education classes are evaluated using the [Syllabus Checklist for Online or Hybrid Courses](#) and [Faculty Evaluation Form O](#), which have been adapted to this mode of delivery and aligned with federal and state regulations. In addition, guidelines specific to DE evaluation limit (per FERPA) the evaluator's access to course content for a specific time period during which the evaluation takes place. Instructions and procedures for DE evaluation are in the [Tenure Review Manual](#).

ELECTRONIC MAIL

Email is an official method of communication for Southwestern College distance education. DE faculty and staff can expect to receive important program communication via the campus email system and are expected to check their accounts regularly. It is strongly recommended that faculty and staff use their Southwestern College email account as the primary account for online class communication and other official business.

SYLLABUS REQUIREMENTS FOR DISTANCE EDUCATION

A comprehensive syllabus communicates the purpose and structure of the course, the instructor's role and expectations, and opportunities for academic support. An effective syllabus helps prepare students for a successful semester.

Distance education syllabus requirements include specific information necessary for a student to be successful in a DE class as well as information necessary to comply with state and federal guidelines and regulations; see the [Syllabus Checklist for Online or Hybrid Courses](#) for details. The [DE Syllabus Template](#) contains all required language as well as recommended language and examples; it can be downloaded from Canvas Essentials or the Canvas Commons and customized for a range of delivery modes.

EVALUATION & TRAINING

Distance Education Faculty Training

An increasing number of instructional modalities have evolved in recent years; in-person, online, live online, and hybrid courses require substantially different types of course preparation and training. Instructors must rethink their teaching strategies and methodologies as they prepare to teach in one of the online modalities, and to understand the differences in andragogy inherent in the online experience. Of paramount importance in the online environment is the requirement for regular and substantive interaction between the instructor and the student, and among students. Instructors must have the knowledge, skills, and tools to meet these DE-specific requirements.

SWC TRAINING REQUIREMENT FOR DE FACULTY

To ensure that our DE courses meet current federal, state, and ACCJC accreditation standards and provide high-quality learning experiences for our students, faculty “teaching online or hybrid classes shall successfully complete a District-approved training course/program prior to providing instruction” (SCEA Contract, 16.10). The [DE Policies, Procedures & Guidelines](#) page’s Distance Education Faculty Training Procedure provides information about District-approved training options as well as DE equivalency administrative review. Please see SCEA Contract, Section 16.10, for details.

DEFT (Distance Education Faculty Training) Certification

SWC’s in-house [Distance Education Faculty Training \(DEFT\)](#) meets the District training requirement for live-online (400 level), online (500 level), and hybrid (600 and 700 level) courses by providing training in online instruction and course development in a 5-week, fully online course. Topics include effective online andragogy, DE accreditation requirements, online course design, regular and substantive interaction, accessibility and universal design, and online assessment. DEFT is offered in fall, spring, and summer; to register, complete the Interest List form on the [DEFT Certification](#) webpage.

SOLID (Synchronous Online Learning Instructional Design)

Faculty preparing to teach a live online class via videoconferencing can meet the training requirement with successful completion of DEFT or SOLID, a 2-week, 20-hour training program. SOLID is designed to help faculty to plan, design and deliver synchronous online class sessions that are learner-centered, interactive and accessible. SOLID requires 4 hours of synchronous Zoom meetings and 16 hours of asynchronous work; participants practice skills

EVALUATION & TRAINING

both as a participant and a host in Zoom. For more information and registration, please visit the [SOLID](#) webpage.

ONGOING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Faculty members are expected to periodically update distance education technical skills and mastery of online teaching and learning strategies. Ongoing professional development for experienced DE instructors includes opportunities to expand skills, gain information about new developments in distance education, attend workshops on creating equitable and accessible instructional materials, collaborate with colleagues through local and statewide groups and organizations, and engage with peers by participating in training and webinars facilitated by Southwestern College faculty and staff. The aim of this ongoing professional development is to build on the Southwestern College culture of collegiality by fostering a DE faculty support system while providing opportunities for skill building, communication, and collaboration.

Recommended SWC training for all faculty teaching online includes [Camp Canvas](#) workshops (synchronous), [Creating Accessible Content](#) (self-paced), and [Introduction to Teaching with Canvas](#) (self-paced).

DE MENTOR PROGRAM

The DE Mentor Program pairs trained mentors with fellow faculty members who are seeking to develop their online teaching skills and knowledge. Mentors are DEFT-certified online and hybrid instructors, and they are available to provide support in a variety of areas, from Canvas course design to accessibility to making videos. See the [DE Mentor Program](#) page of the SWC website for details and to locate the lead mentor for your school or center.

CANVAS TRAINING FOR ALL FACULTY

Southwestern College currently creates Canvas course shells for every class offered at the college. Instructors who wish to use these shells to enhance their in-person courses should first complete basic CMS training. For Canvas, this is Canvas Basics or the self-paced [Introduction to Teaching with Canvas](#). One of these options is also the recommended prerequisite for DEFT. Upcoming Canvas Basics and other DE training sessions are available on the Camp Canvas training schedule, located on the [Distance Education webpage](#). Additional training opportunities for CCC faculty are available from the CCC's [Online Network of Educators \(@ONE\)](#).

Technology and Digital Infrastructure

COURSE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

As required by Board Policy 4015, all courses at SWC using a course management system must use the District-adopted course management system, currently Canvas. Online and hybrid courses must be taught in the District's Canvas system. Canvas is the Common Course Management System of the California Community Colleges.

Southwestern College also provides a videoconferencing platform to use for live online classes as well as online office hours and meetings. Please visit the [Zoom](#) page of the college website to obtain your district-provided Zoom account for use with SWC students.

Faculty Support

For a handy list of DE faculty services and resources, please see [Online Learning Center Faculty Services](#). To quickly access archived training, resource sites, and self-paced training, visit the [Faculty Support hub in Canvas](#).

CANVAS TECHNICAL SUPPORT

The college provides Canvas technical support for faculty and students through the [Online Learning Center](#). Online Learning Center staff are available by phone (619-482-6596), email (onlinelearning@swccd.edu), [ServiceNow](#) request, and in person Monday-Thursday in room 64-344, on the third floor of the Library. After-hours assistance for all users is provided by Canvas Support via Live Chat; see the Help menu in Canvas. Faculty can access 24/7 Canvas phone support at 1-833-507-7237.

Canvas Essentials Resource Site

The [Canvas Essentials](#) site offers faculty how-to guidance for a wide range of Canvas topics, including start-of-term and end-of-terms processes, course procedures like creating shells and importing content, and additional tools and resources that can be used in Canvas. Faculty can access Canvas Essentials from the [Faculty Support hub in Canvas](#).

ONLINE TEACHING SUPPORT

The Distance Education Faculty Coordinator and the OLC's Instructional Designer provide in-person and online training in online teaching strategies and best practices, instructional design, and meeting federal and state guidelines and regulations. They are also available to

TECHNOLOGY & SUPPORT

meet with individual faculty and groups by appointment; appointments may be scheduled through [eSARS](#).

ONLINE TEACHING RESOURCES

Southwestern College Website

The [Distance Education](#) pages of the college website contain a wide range of resources:

- Training information and calendars for SWC workshops, the pre-semester HOW TO Academy, and DEFT and SOLID
- DE Mentor Program information
- Local policies, procedures, and documents
- Teaching tools and resources

Faculty Resources Hub in Canvas

The [Faculty Support hub](#) offers one-click access from within Canvas to the Online Learning Center's resource sites, archived training videos, self-paced training, training programs, and more.

Course Templates

SWC faculty can visit the Canvas Commons (via the Global Navigation Menu in Canvas) to access and download a variety of course design and instructional materials. These materials can be downloaded from the Canvas Commons (search for Southwestern College) and freely used and adapted.

SWC course templates include pre-built home pages, modules, and settings; faculty can download a generic version or one with the current semester's dates. A variety of stand-alone template pages are also available, as well as the DE Syllabus Template. In addition, SWC faculty can share their materials with local faculty, custom departmental groups, the CCC system, or all Canvas teachers.

Creating Accessible Content Tutorials

Faculty can learn how to create accessible online content through a series of four self-paced tutorials: Intro to Accessibility and Universal Design, Accessible Canvas Pages, Accessible Documents, and Accessible Videos.

TECHNOLOGY & SUPPORT

Upon completion, faculty are invited to meet with an accessibility specialist to review activities and created content; flex and hurdle credit are offered. See [Accessible Instruction](#) for details.

Student Support

ONLINE LEARNING CENTER SUPPORT

The college provides technical support for Canvas through the Online Learning Center. Online Learning Center staff provide student assistance by email, phone, videoconferencing, and in person in room 64-344 during their working hours. Canvas 24/7 chat and phone support is available for after-hours questions.

Online learning orientations are provided to SWC students at the start of each semester. These one-hour sessions provide an overview of Canvas and Zoom, teach students about the online learning environment, and offer support resources and strategies for success. Students will be invited to practice using Canvas in the [Canvas Student Essentials](#) open course. A video version of this orientation is available on the [Online Learning](#) page of SWC website.

QUEST FOR ONLINE SUCCESS

The [Quest for Online Success](#) self-paced tutorials are designed to help students access their readiness for online learning and provide resources and strategies to support their success. Upon successful completion, students will receive an emailed certificate that can be submitted in Canvas should an instructor integrate Quest into a class assignment or activity. Instructors can download a sample [Quest assignment](#) in the Canvas Commons.

INSTRUCTOR-PROVIDED SUPPORT

Distance education instructors are expected to be the initial contact for student questions and to respond to student requests for help on a timely basis (ideally within 24-48 hours). Technical questions can be referred to the Online Learning Center and Canvas Support.

COMPUTER LABS

Southwestern College distance education students may use a personal computer or computers provided on campus to complete DE coursework. Computers at the Academic Success Center, Library, and other sites are available for student use when the campus is open.

TECHNOLOGY & SUPPORT

If a webcam and/or microphone is needed, these items are available for student checkout in the Online Learning Center, where there is also a multimedia station for student use.

STUDENT SERVICES

Access to Southwestern College student services is available to distance education students both on campus and on the Southwestern College website. To enable easy access to these services from within all Southwestern College DE courses, instructors should provide a student services list with information and links for important college support services and discipline-specific services. This list is likely to include some of the following services:

- Academic Success Center
- Admission & Records
- Bookstore
- Counseling/Career Guidance
- Disability Support Services (DSS)
- Financial Aid
- Health Services
- Library/Learning Resource Center
- Online Learning Center
- SWC Cares

College support services are included in the Course Orientation Module and SWC Course Template, available in the Canvas Commons for importing.

Quick links to several of these resources are available from the Canvas Global Navigation Menu's [Student Support](#) link.

Organization and Human Resources

INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT SERVICES DEAN

The Dean of Instructional Support Services provides administrative leadership for distance education. The dean serves as the immediate supervisor for Online Learning Center staff.

DISTANCE EDUCATION FACULTY COORDINATOR

The Distance Education Faculty Coordinator coordinates training programs, resource development, DE curriculum development, and meeting federal and state guidelines and regulations. This position is also responsible for DEFT, POCR, certification program management, and implementation of the college's DE Plan.

INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGNER

The Instructional Designer provides training and resources in DE teaching strategies, course design, and use of Canvas in a variety of modalities. This position also manages the DE

TECHNOLOGY & SUPPORT

Mentor Program, contributes to SOLID course design and facilitation, and offers customized instructional design support to individuals and groups, including in-depth support for POCR course alignment with the CVC-OEI Course Design Rubric.

ONLINE LEARNING CENTER SPECIALISTS

The Online Instructional Systems Specialist and Instructional Technologist & Systems Specialist are responsible for the development and day-to-day operation of the SWC course management system under direct supervision of the Dean of Instructional Support Services. They also provide technical support and training to faculty, staff, and students, including in educational technology used for and within Canvas. OLC staff work to promote distance education by informing the campus community of new developments in technology related to distance learning.

TECHNOLOGY SPECIALIST FOR ACCESSIBILITY & COMPLIANCE

The Technology Specialist for Accessibility & Compliance provides faculty training and consultation to support the development of accessible instructional content. This position also provides in-depth support for POCR course alignment with Section D of the CVC-OEI Course Design Rubric.