



**Southwestern College Curriculum Committee**

# **DISTANCE EDUCATION HANDBOOK**

**A Guide to Teaching Online at SWC**



**SOUTHWESTERN COLLEGE DISTANCE EDUCATION TASK FORCE**

Fall 2018

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# INTRODUCTION

## About the Handbook

This section of the Curriculum Handbook describes the Federal, California state, and Southwestern College guidelines that pertain to the Distance Education program. The following guidelines ensure that the qualities of academic rigor that apply to traditional face-to-face courses also apply to distance education courses at our college.

This document is the result of careful research, collaboration with sister colleges, and involvement in Academic Senate for the California Community Colleges (ASCCC) workshops at Plenary and the Curriculum Institute. We are also indebted to the creators of the Cypress College Distance Education Plan, which was a valuable resource in the creation of this handbook.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

It is important to acknowledge the volunteers without whose many hours of work this handbook would not be available as a critical resource for our instructors of online/hybrid courses:

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## ABOUT THIS EDITION

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

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# COURSE DEVELOPMENT

## Course Approval and Curriculum

*Distance Education Guidelines* for the California Community Colleges states, “If any portion of the instruction in a proposed or existing course or course section is designed to be provided through distance education in lieu of on-campus interaction between instructor and student, the course shall be separately reviewed and approved according to the district’s adopted course approval procedures” (7).

In addition, Southwestern College District Policy No. 4105 requires that “all courses with a Distance Education component be taught according to the approved course outline of record (COR) . . .”

Course approval and curriculum is the responsibility of the Southwestern College Curriculum Committee. SWC Procedure No. 4105 explains that any new or modified course that will include a Distance Education component must be reviewed and approved via a separate approval process from face-to-face courses using the approved DE Addendum. Specially trained DE faculty on the Distance Education Review Committee (DERC), a sub-committee of the Curriculum Committee, evaluate and provide feedback on proposals using the DERC rubric. They also provide support to originators to revise if needed, as does the Distance Education Faculty Coordinator.

## 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.

The “Course Quality Standards” section of the *Distance Education Guidelines* states, “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 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 . . .” (6).

Accordingly, SWC Procedure No. 4105 includes two key articles. “The same standards of course quality are applied to the distance education courses as are applied to traditional classroom courses.” In addition, “Determinations and judgments about the quality of the

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distance education course were made with the full involvement of the academic deans, and curriculum committees.”

## Currency of Materials and Courses

Individual Distance Education faculty members are responsible for the currency and overall quality of the distance education courses 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 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 basic CMS functionality. The schedule is posted on the college website.

Instructors are also responsible for providing a course-specific orientation to prepare students to navigate the learning environment, access their specific course materials, and successfully complete course assignments and assessments. Video (especially screencasting) is an ideal format for this course introduction. SWC employees have free access to Camtasia and Snagit through the District’s site license. See the [DE@SWC website](#) for details. Training in the use of both Camtasia and Snagit is available via Training Services in Professional Development; contact the Training Services Coordinator to make an appointment.

## Student Authentication & Fraud Prevention

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

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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 63*).

There are currently three accepted approaches to authentication:

- secure credentialing/login and password
- test proctoring
- technology authentication systems

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

## 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.”

In addition, the WCET *Best Practice Strategies to Promote Academic Integrity in Online Education* cites numerous activities to promote campus-wide academic integrity and honesty (see Appendix B).

## 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

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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 Policy No. 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.

To meet accessibility/usability requirements, all web-based material used in a course, including outside links and 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.



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- 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 Web pages 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.

## **Syllabus Statement: Disability Support**

Course syllabi will include an academic accommodations statement which informs students with disabilities of available DSS and instructor support. See the District's [Syllabus Checklist](#) for current language. This can be expanded upon for distance education courses; for example: "Students with disabilities who want to request 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 and staff training on curating and developing accessible course materials.
- 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.

# COURSE DEVELOPMENT

## Copyright

Per Southwestern College Policy No. 3035, responsible use of internet resources includes “Respect for the legal protection of copyright and license agreements for programs and data.”

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 Effective Contact

Instruction for Distance Education must comply with all applicable federal and state regulations.

Regular effective contact initiated by the instructor is essential for student success in a distance education course. Title 5 states, “Any portion of a course conducted through distance education includes **regular effective contact** between instructor and students” (*California Education Code*, Section 55204), and the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges specifically defines a distance education course as featuring “**regular and substantive interaction** between the students and instructor” (2). This requirement for regular instructor contact with students is affirmed in [Southwestern College’s Procedure No. 4105](#), which states, “Each section of the course that is delivered through distance education will include regular effective contact (also known as regular substantive interaction by the Department of Education) by the instructor with the students.” See Procedure No. 4105 for examples.

## Instructor-Initiated Regular Effective Contact Practices

In a distance education environment, substantive contact refers to communication and interaction with the instructor, not to student interaction with course materials. Regular

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substantive contact means that an instructor must regularly initiate interaction with his or her students to determine progress and encourage active engagement in the course.

Accepted practices for regular and substantive contact between instructors and students include both the type and the frequency of contact.

1. **Type of Contact:** “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, real-time discussion boards, field trips, library workshops, telephone contact, correspondence, voice mail, e-mail, or other activities” (*California Education Code*, Section 55204).
2. **Frequency of Contact:** The standards that apply to traditional face-to-face courses also apply to distance education courses. The frequency of instructor initiated contact should therefore be equivalent to a traditional course. The number of instructor contact hours per week will be the same for both DE students and students enrolled in the face-to-face option. Instructor-student contact will be distributed such that regular contact is maintained over the course of a week and should occur as often as is appropriate for the course.

## SYLLABUS REQUIREMENT FOR INSTRUCTOR-INITIATED CONTACT

Syllabi for online courses must include a statement explaining how regular effective contact will be provided for this course. The following example should be customized to match the 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 the course. I will post announcements every week, join you in class discussions to help you understand course concepts, answer questions in the Q&A discussion forum, and provide detailed feedback on major assignments.”

# 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 purposes, 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. There is as yet no consensus within the California Community Colleges on how to handle attendance verification for financial aid purposes in an online environment; however, regulations include the following guidance:

(7)(i) “Academic attendance” and “attendance at an academically-related activity” include but are 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 (Dept. of Education, Reg. 66952).

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” (Dept. of Education, Reg. 66952).

# ATTENDANCE ACCOUNTING

## LAST DAY OF ATTENDANCE DOCUMENTATION

Faculty members must document student academic engagement in Canvas and record student withdrawals in WebAdvisor. This documentation must be stored with grades and other official course records following Southwestern College record keeping policy.

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 ATTENDANCE ACCOUNTING

### Absences are handled as follows:

- In a face-to-face 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 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 Distance Education 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 FULLY ONLINE COURSES

“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 course activities including, but not limited to, submitting an assignment, taking a test, participating

# ATTENDANCE ACCOUNTING

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 course. 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.” (For clarity, instructors can convert hours to weeks based on the duration of the course.)

## RECOMMENDED LANGUAGE FOR HYBRID COURSES

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

# 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 traditional courses also apply to faculty teaching distance education courses as part of their load, as negotiated in the SCEA contract (16.8).

Distance Education instructors will use 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 Distance Education course 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 course 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 (see SCEA contract) include specific information necessary for a student to be successful in a distance education course as well as information necessary to comply with state and federal guidelines and regulations. Appendix A provides a sample DE syllabus with this information.

## Distance Education Faculty Training

Teaching online and face-to-face are not the same. In fact, many consider online and traditional courses to be separate and distinct class preparations. For this reason, instructors need to re-think their teaching strategies and methodologies as they move a class to the online modality, whether fully online or hybrid. Online instructors need to understand the differences in andragogy created by online delivery, including physical distance between instructor and students. That distance does not alleviate the requirement for “regular and effective contact between the instructor and the student” required by Title 5. The instructor 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 accreditation standards and provide high-quality learning experiences for our students, all instructors who wish to teach an online or hybrid course “shall successfully complete a District-approved training course/program prior to providing instruction” (SCEA Contract, 16.8). This training includes effective online andragogy, course management system use, providing regular effective contact, accessibility and universal design, and accreditation requirements for online education.

Other District-approved training courses/programs can be found on the [DE Policies & Procedures](#) page of the SWC website. This page also provides information about and an application for administrative review; please see SCEA Contract, Section 16.8, for details.

### DEFT (DISTANCE EDUCATION FACULTY TRAINING) CERTIFICATION

SWC’s Distance Education Faculty Training (DEFT) course meets District training requirements by providing training and practice in online instruction in a 5-week, 40-hour, fully online course. Faculty who successfully complete DEFT earn their choice of 60 hours of flex credit, 60 hours of hurdle credit, 20 hours of flex and 40 hours of hurdle, or a stipend of \$500 for faculty “who complete DEFT training after May 31, 2018, and who accept a DE class” (SCEA Contract, 16.9).



# EVALUATION & TRAINING

## 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 technical skills, gain information about new developments in distance education, attend workshops on creating engaging 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. 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.

## 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 course design to peer review to making videos. See the [DE Mentor Program](#) page of the DE@SWC website for details and a list current mentors.

## COURSE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM TRAINING FOR ONLINE, HYBRID, AND WEB-ENHANCED INSTRUCTION

Southwestern College currently creates online course shells for every class offered at the college. Instructors who wish to use these shells to enhance their traditional courses must first complete basic CMS training. For Canvas, this is Canvas Basics 1 and 2. For online and hybrid instructors, Canvas Basics is a recommended prerequisite for DEFT.

Additional Canvas training opportunities include [SWC's advanced workshops and webinars](#), [@ONE's Introduction to Teaching with Canvas](#), and [Canvas Subscription Training](#) through 12/31/18.

It is also highly recommended that instructors become familiar with the basic accessibility, copyright, and authentication guidelines necessary to abide by state and federal laws when delivering instructional materials electronically. In addition to DEFT training, these guidelines are addressed in workshops and webinars as well in webinar archives housed on the [DE@SWC website](#).

## Technology and Digital Infrastructure

### COURSE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

At the onset of its online education program, Southwestern College provided Blackboard as the official distance education course management system. In Spring 2016, the Academic Senate selected Canvas—the CCC’s Common Course Management System—as the college’s new course management system. Eventually, 100% of the California Community Colleges made the same choice.

As required by District Policy No. 4015, all courses at SWC using a course management system must use the District-adopted course management system, Canvas. Online and hybrid courses must be taught in the District’s Canvas system.

## Faculty Support

### CMS TECHNICAL SUPPORT

The college provides Canvas technical support for faculty and students through the [Online Learning Center](#). The job description of the [Online Instructional Support Specialist](#) describes the types of support currently provided. Online Learning Center staff are available by email ([onlineLearning@swccd.edu](mailto:onlineLearning@swccd.edu)), phone (619-482-6596), [ServiceNow](#) request, and in person Monday-Thursday in room L344, on the third floor of the Library. After-hours assistance is provided by Canvas Support, which is always open. The faculty hotline is 1-833-507-7237; the student hotline is 1-844-629-6835.

### ONLINE TEACHING SUPPORT

The Distance Education Faculty Coordinator and the OLC’s Instructional Technologist provide training in online teaching strategies and best practices, instructional design, and meeting federal and state guidelines and regulations. [DE Coordinator office hours](#) are offered weekly, both on campus and online via ConferZoom. The Instructional Technologist is available via OLC drop-in or by appointment.

## **DE@SWC Faculty Resource Site**

The [DE@SWC resource site](#) can be accessed directly or through the SWC website. It includes a wide range of resources:

- Training calendars for SWC workshops, webinars, and the pre-semester HOW TO Academy
- Webinar archives for on-demand training
- Resources and links on a variety of DE topics
- Local policies, procedures, and documents
- Resources and materials licensed for free use by faculty

## **Course Templates and Model Course Content**

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; a variety of stand-alone template pages are also available. 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.

Upon completion, faculty are invited to meet with the Technology Specialist for Accessibility and Compliance to review activities and created content; flex and hurdle credit are offered. See the [Accessibility Tutorials](#) page of the DE@SWC website for details.

## Student Support

### TECHNICAL SUPPORT

The college provides technical support for the college-adopted course management system through the Online Learning Center. Online Learning Center staff provide student assistance by email, phone, and in person in room L344 during their working hours. Canvas 24/7 phone support is available for after-hours questions at 1-844-629-6835.

### ONLINE LEARNING SUPPORT: STUDENT ORIENTATIONS

Online learning orientations are provided to SWC students at the start of each semester. These one-hour trainings provide an overview of the course management system, teach students about the online learning environment, and offer support resources and strategies for success. An online version of orientation is offered via ConferZoom. A video version of this orientation is available on the [Online Learning Orientations](#) page of SWC website.

### 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.

### 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:

# TECHNOLOGY & SUPPORT

- Academic Success Center
- Admission & Records
- Assessments
- Bookstore
- CalWORKs
- Career Center
- Counseling/Career Guidance
- Disability Support Services (DSS)
- Extended Opportunity Programs & Services (EOPS)
- Financial Aid
- Health Services
- Library/Learning Resource Center
- Online Learning Center
- Transfer Center
- Veterans Center
- Women's Resource Center

## 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 Support Services staff.

### DISTANCE EDUCATION FACULTY COORDINATOR

The Distance Education Faculty Coordinator provides training and resources in online teaching strategies and best practices, instructional design, and meeting federal and state guidelines and regulations. This position is also responsible for DE program development and implementation of the college's DE Plan.

## ONLINE LEARNING CENTER SPECIALISTS

The Online Instructional Support 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 to faculty, staff, and students. The Instructional Technologist provides training throughout the semester and instructional design consultations by appointment. OLC staff work to promote distance education by informing the campus community of new developments in technology related to distance learning.

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## Appendix A: Sample Syllabus

This syllabus contains recommended syllabus language for a variety of policies and is also an example of a Section 508-compliant syllabus with structured headings, alt text for images, and meaningful link text.

# Online 101: Course Name

## Section 503: Fully Online

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### Instructor Contact Information

**Instructor:** Demo Instructor

**Email:** Canvas Inbox (preferred method of contact) or [dinstructor@swccd.edu](mailto:dinstructor@swccd.edu)

**Phone:** (619) 421-6700 ext. xxxx

**Office:** XXX (mailbox in xxx)

**Zoom Room:** <https://cccconfer.zoom.us/j/>

### Office Hours and Response Time

- on campus (Room xxx): MWF 11:00-11:50 a.m.
- online (via email or ConferZoom video conferencing): TTh 6:00-6:50 p.m.
- Questions outside of office hours? I will respond to your email or Q&A post within 24 hours, M-F. If you do not get a response after 24 hours, please resend.

### Course Location & Technical Support

This course is taught in Canvas. To access our course, log in via [MySWC](#) or <https://swccd.instructure.com>.

Questions about Canvas are best handled by the [Online Learning Center](#) and Canvas Support (1-844-629-6835), although I will try to assist you with technical questions when possible. The [Canvas Guides](#) are an excellent resource for you as well.

### Course Description & Objectives

[Insert course description here—see course outline.]

## Student Learning Outcomes

Students who successfully complete this course will be able to . . .

- [Insert SLOs here—see course outline.]



## Prerequisites and Recommended Preparation

[Identify course prerequisites and recommended preparation here.]

## Required Materials

1. SWC email account
2. Textbook X, available at [SWC Bookstore](#) and online
3. software to save documents in Microsoft Word (.docx)—Get [Office 365](#) free with your SWC email address!
4. reliable, high-speed Internet access on a desktop or laptop computer, ideally with webcam and microphone

## Attendance and Participation

[Customize maximum absences to your course—see DE Handbook.]

Regular attendance and class participation is as vital in an online class as it is in a traditional classroom. Your presence will be counted not by taking roll but by your regular contributions to discussions and activities. 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 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 if there is no evidence of your participation in the academic activities of this course.

**Students who do not complete the first week's online assignments or are absent for two weeks or more of this 16-week course may be dropped.** However, if *you* choose to drop the course you will need to do so officially through Admissions and then notify your instructor.

## Instructor Role: Providing Regular Effective Contact

[Customize to your course.]

I am looking forward to working closely with you this semester, and you can expect me to play an active role in our course. I will post announcements every week, teach course material through online lecture content, 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 forum and in our weekly discussions, usually within 24 hours M-F.

Please let me know when you need help—that's why I'm here!

## Weekly Schedule



[Optional. Customize to your course.]

For most weeks, this will be your work flow:

1. Following the published schedule in the Syllabus area, begin reading and taking notes for the new week as soon as you are finished with the previous week.
2. Read the announcement opening the new week and then head to the new week's module, using the link on the course home page. "Next" through the content, activities, and assignments for the week, being mindful of the week's deadlines. (Note: Our weeks officially begin Monday mornings, but weekly modules will be made available the Saturday morning *before* each week for early access.)
3. Take the quiz by Wednesday and contribute your initial post to the week's discussion by Thursday. Discussion responses are due by Saturday.
4. If applicable, work on your essay or other special assignment throughout the week, completing it by the published due date.

After a few weeks, you will fall into the rhythm of Wednesday-Thursday-Saturday deadlines. This should make it easier to schedule your time and reduce the chance that a deadline will sneak past you.

## Assignments

[Explain major assignments for the course, such as essays, discussions, tests, and projects.]

## Grading

[Customize to your course.]

Each student's final grade is calculated by the percentage of total points possible earned by that student, using a standard scale: 90-100%=A, 80-89%=B, 70-79%=C, 60-69%=D, 0-59%=F. The instructor reserves the right to add/change/delete points during the semester.

Assignment	Points	% of Total
Sample 1	200	20%
Sample 2	200	20%

Assignment	Points	% of Total
Sample Project	200	20%
Weekly Quizzes	125	12.5%
Weekly Discussions	240	24%
Activities & Surveys	35	3.5%
<b>Total Points Possible</b>	<b>1000</b>	<b>100%</b>

## Late Work

[Customize to your course.]



All assignments for this course must be completed on time. Quizzes and surveys will be automatically locked when the due date passes. While discussions will remain open, only posts submitted on time will receive credit.

In emergency situations and with instructor approval, a major assignment (paper or project) may be accepted with a late penalty of 10% of the total points per calendar day the assignment is late. To avoid such a situation, I strongly recommend that you do not wait until an assignment is due to submit it—*early* is a wise plan in an online class.

## Academic Integrity

[Use first paragraph verbatim; additional explanation may be added.]

Academic dishonesty of any type by a student provides grounds for disciplinary action by the instructor or college. In written work, no material may be copied from another without proper quotation marks and appropriate documentation.

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.

In this course, any academic dishonesty such as plagiarism or cheating will result in severe penalties. Plagiarism is the act of using another person's words or ideas as if they were your own. Sources of quotations, paraphrases, and summaries must be properly documented according to MLA format. This applies to all writing, including discussions. Plagiarism is considered academic theft because it is stealing someone else's words or ideas, but the plagiarizer robs himself or herself as well. This course will provide you with the opportunity to improve your reading, thinking, and writing skills—don't rob yourself of that chance.



Unfortunately, I am very practiced at both identifying and locating the source of plagiarized writing. In addition, VeriCite plagiarism detection software will be used to scan your written submissions. **Plagiarized work will automatically receive a failing grade, and the plagiarizer is also very likely to receive a failing grade for the course and/or face misconduct charges (see Southwestern College**

**Catalog).** When in doubt, always ask first!

## Professional Conduct

[Optional. Customize to your course.]

## Netiquette

[Optional. Customize to your course.]

*Netiquette* is a set of guidelines for good behavior in an online environment. It is etiquette for the Internet, and knowing these social rules can help you have a more rewarding semester. The netiquette guidelines here are ones that are especially important in our online classroom.

1. **Participate.** Reading the posts of others is helpful for you, but you must also do your part to be helpful for the group. Share your ideas to strengthen our discussion, and don't wait until the last minute to contribute. Encourage others to participate by responding to their ideas. Be involved, but do not dominate a forum with too many posts.
2. **Remember the human.** This common Internet mantra means that even though we may not be face to face, there is a real person behind each discussion-board post. Do not write something that you would not feel comfortable saying in a traditional classroom setting. Discuss ideas, not people. In other words, do not attack a classmate for expressing his or her opinion; instead, discuss your position on the *ideas* that have been presented. Be kind and understanding with your classmates to keep our environment positive and productive.
3. **Help others.** We will be working together all semester, so let's try to be a good team. If you can help a classmate with a question, please do! Your efforts will be appreciated by both students and instructor.
4. **Respect other people's time.** Your posts should be focused, organized, and clear so that your classmates can quickly see your point and evidence. Another way to respect people's time is to look for answers before asking for help. For example, if you can't find something or you don't remember when an assignment is due, look through the syllabus and other course documents for the answer. Only ask for help when you truly need it.
5. **Edit and proofread before posting.** We have lots of posts to read, so yours needs to be as clear as it can be. It should be organized and written in standard English. Not fixing misspellings and other errors tells your readers that you don't value their time and you don't

care if they get frustrated trying to understand you. This does not build good will. Avoid slang and unfamiliar abbreviations for the same reason.

6. **Don't shout.** TYPING IN ALL CAPITALS MEANS YOU ARE SHOUTING AT US! Don't do it. The same can be said of repeated exclamation marks!!!!!!!!!!
7. **Use emoticons sparingly.** Social networking and texting have given us lots of fun keyboard shortcuts to add tone to a message. Because a smiley face or wink can help to establish the intended tone of a comment, you are welcome to use common emoticons occasionally. Too many emoticons can make your writing look more casual than academic, so don't overdo it. :-)
8. **No flaming.** "Flaming" is an angry message, often directed at another person. When another person responds in anger, we have a "flame war" taking over the discussion board. Personal attacks are unacceptable in the classroom, and the same goes for the cyber classroom. If you see a conflict developing, jump in and try to calm things down; if you feel attacked, contact your instructor rather than responding to the flaming student. Everything we do in Canvas is permanent, so you must think very carefully about your tone before submitting a post. If you don't, that mistake might haunt you for the rest of the semester.

## Student Support Services

[Use verbatim.]

Student support services are available both on campus and online. For a complete list of services, including the library, tutoring, and counseling, visit the [Student Services and Campus Resources](#) webpage.

Free online tutoring is available to all currently enrolled Southwestern College students through SWC's [Online Writing Lab](#) (OWL) and the [Western eTutoring Consortium](#).

When you have questions about Canvas and online learning at SWC, the [Online Learning Center](#) is ready to assist you.

## Students with Disabilities

If you have a learning disability, physical disability, or any other circumstance that needs special accommodation, please discuss it with your instructor, in person or via email. I want you to be successful and am happy to work with you! Here is additional information provided by our college's DSS office:

[Use verbatim.]

Southwestern College recommends that students with disabilities or specific learning needs contact their professors during the first two weeks of class to discuss academic accommodations. If a student believes that they may have a disability and would like more information, they are encouraged to contact [Disability Support Services](#) (DSS) at

(619) 482-6512 (voice), (619) 207-4480 (video phone), or email at [DSS@swccd.edu](mailto:DSS@swccd.edu). Alternate forms of this syllabus and other course materials are available upon request.

## Emergency Plan

[Optional]

If our course or instructor unexpectedly becomes unavailable, continue following the schedule to complete assignments, which will be submitted when access is restored. In emergency situations, college updates will be provided via [Twitter](#).

## Course Map

[Optional]

Here is an overview of the key areas of the course, each of which can be accessed from the home page:

- **Announcements** houses—you guessed it!—my announcements.
- **Syllabus** contains information that you will use throughout the course: the syllabus and schedules. A list of course assignments with due dates can also be found here.
- **Modules** contains everything you need for each week of our course. Simply click “next” to move from one item to the next in the week’s module.
- **Quizzes** provides one-click access to weekly quizzes and occasional surveys.
- **Discussions** contains links to our weekly discussions as well the Q&A Discussion. Weekly discussions are housed in their modules as well.
- **Assignments** offers a list of essay and project assignment as well as other graded assignments. You will find each of these items in its module as well.
- **Grades** lists your scores and the points possible for all assignments. Most quiz grades are posted immediately after completion, while other assignments requiring instructor grading will be posted 3-7 days later. You can access your graded work and my feedback by clicking on the item and/or rubric. You will also see your current total points and percentage. You can even see how your total grade will change with future scores using the “What if” feature!
- **Calendar (global menu)** includes all assignments with due dates; you can choose which courses to display.
- **Inbox (global menu)** is where you can send messages to me and to your group.
- **Help (global menu)** connects you to the [Canvas Guides](#), our support hotline, and a variety of other support options.



## Course Calendar

[Insert calendar of topics, activities, projects, and exams for the semester here.]

## Appendix B: WCET’s “Best Practice Strategies to Promote Academic Integrity in Online Education”



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## Best Practice Strategies to Promote Academic Integrity in Online Education

Version 2.0, June 2009

This list of best practice strategies is based on "Institutional Policies/Practices and Course Design Strategies to Promote Academic Integrity in Online Education," produced by WCET in February 2009 and updated in April 2009. In May 2009, the Instructional Technology Council (ITC) surveyed its membership to invite feedback and additional strategies to enhance the WCET work. This June 2009 document reflects the combined contributions of WCET, the UT TeleCampus of the University of Texas System, and ITC. This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-Noncommercial-Share Alike 3.0 United States license.

### INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT AND COMMITMENT

1. Establish a campus-wide policy on academic integrity that articulates faculty and student responsibilities.
2. Demonstrate an institutional commitment to enforcing the policy and in supporting faculty and staff in the handling of academic integrity matters.
3. Make information on academic integrity easy to find on the campus Web site, library Web site, department Web site, course, within the syllabus and within specific assignments.
4. Include ethics instruction within the core curriculum and/or area-specific within degree plans.
5. Address academic integrity at student orientation programs and events.
6. Encourage faculty to report every suspected violation and act upon it.
7. Secure student logins and password to access online courses and related resources, discussions, assignments and assessments.

### CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. State the academic integrity/academic honesty policy within the online learning environment and discuss it early in the course.
2. Require student engagement with the academic integrity policy. For example:
  - a. Ask students for their input on how to create a community of integrity at the start of the course. This establishes the students as stakeholders in the community and the process of its formation.
  - b. Develop and ask students to commit to a class honor code.
  - c. Require students to read and sign an agreement to the campus academic integrity policy.
  - d. Write a letter to students about integrity and post it in the course.
  - e. Ask students to restate the academic integrity policy (this can also be used as a writing sample to use when grading and reviewing student work).
  - f. Ask students to reflect on the academic integrity policy in the discussion board.
  - g. Include a lesson on avoiding plagiarism.
3. Have assignments and activities in which appropriate sharing and collaboration is essential to successful completion. Foster a community of integrity by choosing authentic learning tasks that require group cohesiveness and effort. For example, focus assignments on distinctive, individual, and non-duplicative tasks or on what individual students self-identify as their personal learning needs.
4. Provide students with a course or course lesson on research and/or study skills. Work with library staff to design assignments and prepare materials on plagiarism and research techniques.

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5. Include a statement that the instructor reserves the right to require alternative forms and/or locations of assessments (e.g., proctoring).
  6. Ask students follow-up questions to assignments such as, "expand upon this statement you made," "tell me why you chose this phrase, description or reference," and "expand upon the ideas behind this reference."
  7. Select one or two difficult concepts from the paper and ask the student to restate/rewrite the information.
  8. Require students to share key learning from references for a paper or self-reflection on an assignment in the discussion board.
  9. Include an ethical decision-making case study within the course.

### FACULTY SUPPORT

1. Incorporate academic integrity strategies into professional development and faculty training offerings.
2. Publish academic integrity strategies and policies in faculty handbook and Web-based faculty resources.
3. Publish guidelines for handling/reporting individual student infractions.
4. Assign a department academic integrity liaison to support faculty.
5. Use a plagiarism detection service.
6. Use Google to search for a unique text string or unique phrase from the paper.
7. Keep student papers filed in the department by topic for reference.

### STUDENT SUPPORT

1. Define academic integrity and cheating and clearly explain what is considered dishonest and unacceptable behavior.
2. Provide information and examples to help students understand the difference between collaboration on assignments and cheating, and identify plagiarism. Teach the proper use of citations.
3. State how much collaboration is permissible on each assignment.
4. State what the instructor's expectations are for the students and explain what they should expect from the instructor. For example:

- a. Include a statement in the syllabus encouraging honest work.
  - b. Repeat the campus academic integrity statement and provide a link to campus policies.
  - c. Describe academic dishonesty.
  - d. Describe the repercussions for academic dishonesty.
  - e. Describe permissible and impermissible collaboration.
  - f. Include outside links to information on plagiarism, self-tests and examples.
  - g. Include information on acceptable sources.
  - h. Include information about the college's writing center, library or other support.
5. Provide a writing style sheet or handbook with information on plagiarism and campus policies.
  6. Indicate assessments may require follow-up documentation, questions or assignments.
  7. State expectations for the time needed to complete coursework.
  8. State whether the instructor/college will use a plagiarism detection service.

### ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION

1. Provide rubrics, or detailed grading criteria, for every assignment at the beginning of the course so students understand how they will be graded.
2. Train faculty on ways to use the settings on the college's learning management system to reduce cheating:
  - a. Use a test bank with more questions than will be used on any particular test and have the learning management system pull a smaller number of questions from the test bank
  - b. Randomize the order of answers for multiple test questions so for example, the correct answer for a particular question might be "a" for one student and "b" for another.
  - c. Require forced completion on exams so students cannot re-enter a test.
  - d. Set a short window for testing completion, i.e. one or two days to take an exam rather than a whole week. Setting a completion time reduces a student's ability to access the test, look up the

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- answer, and re-enter the test. Most test-taking software applications keep track of time on the server, not on the student's computer.
- e. Password protect exams.
  - f. Show questions one at a time (makes more difficult for students to copy and paste the test in order to give it to someone else).
  - g. Use a Web browser lock-down service during testing.
  - h. Check the computer "properties" for the "creation date" and "author" for essay or term paper submissions if students are suspected of submitting work created by someone else.
3. Clarify that students with disabilities and requesting testing accommodations (extended time for completion of examinations and quizzes) must identify themselves to the college's office of disabilities and provide appropriate documentation.
  4. Change test items and assignment topics each semester.
  5. Emphasize assignments that require written work and problem solving (e.g., essays, papers, online discussions).
  6. Use a variety of assessment strategies (quizzes, short and long papers, test questions that require the application of a theory or concept).
  7. Adopt the following practices to encourage authentic written work:
    - a. Require students to turn in copies of reference articles with cited text highlighted.
    - b. Require annotated bibliographies.
    - c. Do not allow last minute changes in assignment topics.
    - d. Require specific references be used (this might be the course text).
    - e. Require an abstract.
    - f. Give narrow assignment topics (tied into class experience) and require thesis statements prior to topic approval.
    - g. Require students to turn in a draft, and their bibliography or references prior to the paper's due date.
    - h. Require students to write a concept paper and project plan prior to completing an assignment.
  8. Evaluate the research process and the product.
  9. After an assignment is due, have students post in the discussion board, describing the assignment and the research method used, a summary of conclusions and an abstract (a meta-learning essay).
  10. When evaluating student written work, consider following these practices:
    - a. Be wary of student writing that reads like an encyclopedia, newspaper article or expert in the field.
    - b. Look for whether a paper reflects the assignment, has changes in tense, includes odd sentences within a well-written paper, is based on references older than three years, refers to past events as current, or uses jargon.
    - c. Compare student writing on the discussion board with that on assignments and papers. A writing sample collected at the start of the semester can be helpful.
    - d. Compare the writing at the beginning and end of the paper with that in the middle of the paper -- language, sentence length and reading level.
    - e. Check references; compare quotations with cited sources; look for the same author in multiple references.
    - f. Read all papers on the same topic together.
  11. Make assignments cumulative (students turn in parts of a project or paper throughout the semester).
  12. Give open book exams.
  13. Other than grades, do not provide students feedback on tests until all of the students in the class have completed them.
  14. Use proctored test sites where appropriate.
  15. Faculty should use a robust user name and password to protect their computer-based grade book and keep a printed copy in a secure place in case students are able to hack into the computer system.

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## SOURCES

"101 Ways to Maintain Academic Integrity in an Online Course," by Michael Anderson and Lori McNabb, UT TeleCampus, The University of Texas System. Handout for faculty development program.

McNabb, L., & Olmstead, A. "Communities of Integrity in Online Courses: Faculty Member Beliefs and Strategies." *Journal of Online Learning and Teaching* 5, no.2 (June 2009), 208-221. Retrieved from [http://jolt.merlot.org/vol5no2/mcnabb\\_0609.htm](http://jolt.merlot.org/vol5no2/mcnabb_0609.htm).

WCET Survey on Academic Integrity and Student Verification, August 2008.

"Institutional Policies/Practices and Course Design Strategies to Promote Academic Integrity in Online Education," by WCET Working Group on Academic Integrity and Student Verification. February 2009 and revised April 2009.

Instructional Technology Council Survey on Best Practice Strategies to Promote Academic Integrity in Online Education, May 2009.



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