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NEA Grant Committee on Distance Education Policy and Bargaining Benchmarks

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NEA Grant Committee on Distance Education Policy and Bargaining Benchmarks

The members of the NEA Grant Committee on Distance Education developed the following policy and bargaining benchmarks to serve as best practice standards for distance education courses in regard to policies and collective bargaining. Much of the rationale for these standards is based upon Title V of the California Education Code and the Distance Education Guidelines, which interpret and apply Title V language to distance education modalities. These guidelines, which the California Community College Chancellor's Office originally published in March 2004, can be found at the following address:

http://www.cccco.edu/divisions/esed/aa_ir/disted/attachments/DEGuidelinesMar2004.pdf

A revised edition of these guidelines, made available in November 2007, revealed no discernable changes from the original publication. Faculty and administrators from outside the state of California should consult their own states' regulations for applicable codes and related guidelines.

I. Definitions of Distance Education Courses

- ***Distance Education Course:*** Title V Guidelines for Section 55205 define a Distance Education course/section or session as “the use of technology utilized 51% or more of the time to deliver instruction during the course term and where the student and instructor are separated by distance. The delivery of the instruction in the DE modality can include the use of one or a number of technologies.”
- ***Hybrid:*** Given the above definition, in order for a hybrid course to still be considered a “distance education” or “online” course, the instructor and students would have to replace face to face instruction with online instruction 51% of the time; therefore, instructors and students should meet face to face the remaining 49% of the time.
- ***Use of Mediated Technology vs. Hybrid Course:*** Courses in which an instructor uses mediated technology for limited purposes such as quizzes, exams, or homework only, would not by definition be hybrid or fully online courses. Nonetheless, should an instructor require students to use these mediated technologies for work upon which students will be evaluated, then it is incumbent upon the institution and the instructor to advise students of these course

requirements in the published enrollment information, including the course schedule, information regarding system requirements, and the instructor's course syllabi.

- **Articulation Advisory:** A number of departments within the University of California are establishing independent requirements for articulation of courses from community colleges. For example, the UC-Davis Mathematics department is requiring that, in all courses accepted for transfer, all exams be administered in person rather than online. Thus, to protect the integrity of articulation agreements and insure transferability of courses, it is incumbent upon community college districts to confer with transfer institutions regarding any specific course requirements those institutions may impose. College articulation officers should coordinate issues related to course requirements and transferability.

II. Course Development and Review

- **Course Approval Process:** Courses should be approved using the same process that curriculum committees use for face-to-face courses. Title V, section 55213, specifies that each proposed and existing course shall be “separately reviewed and approved according the district’s certified course approval procedures.” Furthermore, the Chancellor’s Office Guidelines state that the local curriculum approval process must provide for the documentation of “regular effective contact,” as provided in Title V, section 55211. The review of the course should take place prior to the first time a course is offered in a distance education mode, and again when the technology has substantially changed, in order to ensure that the standard of regular effective contact is consistently maintained.
- **Approval of Textbook Publishers’ Courses:** Increasingly, textbook publishers are selling completely developed courses for online instruction, which include course outlines, materials, assignments, and grading and evaluation standards. Should a faculty member wish to teach a course using a publisher developed course, that course should be subject to the same course approval process applied to all other courses in the curriculum.
- **Course Materials:** Course materials should be reviewed periodically to ensure they are using current and appropriate technology.
- **Class Limits and Teaching Methods:** Separate course outlines should clearly specify class limits and teaching methods.
- **Course Appropriateness:** Faculty members in the disciplines must determine what courses are appropriate or suitable for being taught in the distance education modality.

- **Transferability:** Since many transfer institutions are scrutinizing distance education courses, it is imperative that community college articulation officers coordinate and communicate the requirements that four year colleges and universities choose to impose.

III. Teaching and Learning Benchmarks

- **Instructor Contact (Title V Section 55211):** Distance education courses are to be considered virtual equivalents to classroom courses. For this reason, the Chancellor's Office Distance Education Guidelines indicate that the instruction received online should parallel that which would be given in a face-to-face modality. Thus, there should be **regular effective contact** between instructor and students. Students should have frequent opportunities to ask questions and interact with faculty as would be the case in a face-to-face class. Moreover, this also means that if the face-to-face course requires students to attend three hours of class per week, then the virtual equivalent should require faculty to deliver and students to receive three hours of instruction per week. Regular effective contact standards established through the separate course approval process (described in Section I above) should therefore provide a system for documenting various methods of interaction that ensure that instructional contact will occur. In addition to having the same amount of "seat time" as the face-to-face, students should also be expected to do the same amount of homework as they would in face-to-face classes. Title 5, section 58003, establishes the formula for determining the equivalents in order to meet the Carnegie Unit requirements: in both face-to-face and online courses students need to engage in two hours per week of educational activities for every one hour they spend "in class."
(See attached Appendices 1 and 2 for Solano Community College's regular, effective contact policy, addendum form for approval of on-line courses, documentation of instructor contact, and checklist.)
- **Faculty Selection:** To ensure that students receive instruction only from qualified instructors, it is critical that faculty who teach online be chosen through the same rigorous processes with which face-to-face instructors are selected. This is clearly supported by Title 5, section 55215, which specifies that online faculty should be selected by the same procedures used in all other faculty selections, and that instructors shall meet the minimum qualifications for the discipline. In accordance with Title 5, section 55215, the following parameters for faculty selection should be in place:
 1. Online faculty will be limited to individuals who are already faculty members in that department and have gone through the same hiring procedures as other faculty members (application, interview, and significant teaching demonstration). Recruitment from outside the department should not occur as it endangers the integrity of existing division/departmental, faculty-generated and maintained program goals, processes, and requirements.

2. Recruitment of adjunct faculty for teaching online courses should be done by directly and significantly consulting the department and division first. The department or division would then approach its own adjunct faculty first, before going outside the campus community.
 3. For the reasons stated in point #2 above, emergency hiring procedures cannot be used for staffing online courses.
 4. Faculty hired to teach online must complete the requirements as designated for an online instructor.
 5. Faculty should only be assigned distance education courses on a voluntary basis and should not be forced to teach in this modality.
- **ADA Compliance:** In order to ensure that all students have full access to distance education courses, institutions must make certain that ADA compliance measures apply to all distance education courses. The following measures apply:
 1. ADA compliance will be addressed by the faculty designing the courses during the initial course creation and approval process, and during course maintenance.
 2. The District and/or a Distance Education Committee will provide training on ADA compliance to faculty who want to teach via a distance education modality.
 3. Every reasonable effort will be made to comply with ADA regulations and section 508 according to accepted standards.
 4. Self-identification statements/Statement of Accessibility must be present in all distance education course syllabi. Such a statement could read as follows:

If you have a verified need for an academic accommodation or materials in alternate media (ie: braille, large print, electronic text, etc.) per the Americans With Disabilities Act or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, please contact your instructor as soon as possible.
 - **Instructor Workload:** It is critical that the quality of education students receive in a distance education class is the same as in a face-to-face class, that retention rates are the same or better, and that online course offerings not result in the diluting of the enrollment figures for face-to-face sections of the same course. The goal should be to maintain or increase enrollments in all sections and all modalities. Such an objective can only be achieved through the balanced scheduling of courses. Thus, faculty workloads must also be balanced. In addition, at a number of institutions, distance education has contributed to an increasing number of

faculty members who work away from those institutions' physical locale. However, full-time faculty who are not present on campus at all, or who are infrequently present, do not contribute to the shared governance processes or other non-teaching duties. This can indirectly damage students' experiences, and contribute to inequitable workloads among faculty. Therefore, because overextending online offerings, over-enrolling online classes, overloading teachers, and decreasing the personal availability of teachers will decrease the quality of any class experience, regardless of the modality, collective bargaining agreements should include provisions that address these issues in terms of workload. Thus, we recommend the following:

1. ***Distance Education Teaching Load***: Faculty should be limited to teaching 60% of their full time loads as distance education courses. This discourages distance education teachers from having limited or no campus presence, and ensures that regular effective instructor contact can in fact reasonably occur.

2. ***Overload***: So that regular effective contact can be reasonably maintained, there should be limitations on overloads. However, limitations on overloads for face-to-face and distance education classes should be the same, and can, for example, be specified in terms of a number of classes (e.g. 6 semester units, or 2 semester length classes per term), or in terms of load percentages (e.g. 20% of full time load).

3. ***Professional Obligations***: Full-time teachers in distance education courses should have the same professional obligations as face-to-face teachers in terms of committee work and other duties outside of the classroom.

4. ***Office Hours***: When full-time faculty members are teaching some classes in a distance education format, they should have an equivalent number of office hours in a virtual format for their distance education classes. For example, if they teach 40% of their load online, then 40% of their office hours should also be online.

5. ***Class Sizes***: Title V, section 55217, specifies that the process for determining class sizes for distance education courses shall be consistent with those for all faculty assignments. In addition, procedures may be reviewed by an institution's Curriculum Committee, which may make its own recommendations. However, because class size is negotiable, class size limitations can be addressed in the course outline or in the contract, or, ideally, in both. In negotiating class sizes, attention must be paid to the requirements of an individual class: papers to be read, quizzes or assignments to be graded, and individual attention students may require. In any event, class size should be accounted for in the negotiated standards for faculty workloads.

IV. Compensation

- **Salary:** Instructors of distance education classes must be paid according to the same scale as negotiated for instructors of face-to-face classes of the same unit value. Districts should not offer additional salary to instructors for adding more students above specified class size limits. Doing so provides an incentive to over-enroll courses, which undermines the regular effective contact that is essential to quality teaching and learning.
- **Stipends for Development:** Because distance education instructors who develop online courses may have to learn a new presentation platform as well as write the curriculum, the development of an online class can require more time than is required for the development of a traditional class. Thus, compensation for this additional work is reasonable and should be bargained. However, since textbook publishers and other vendors now sell “canned” classes which require very little curriculum development work, each District should distinguish between the classes that are truly developed by an instructor and classes that are simply “canned” classes provided by a textbook publisher or other outside source, to determine appropriate levels of compensation. Faculty who actually write their own curriculum should get a stipend for course development and training. This stipend could be a dollar amount per unit or a flat rate per class. If there is a major change in platform, there should be a stipend for the work involved in making the change.
- **Stipend compensation vs. “work for hire”:** Development stipends should not imply that the course is a “work for hire,” and collective bargaining agreements should provide language that protects instructors’ intellectual property rights.

V. Course Structure Benchmarks for Optimizing Learning

- **Student Access to Learning Support Services:** Students must have access to libraries, labs, tutoring, and other student support services. This may include a virtual library.
- **Training in Information Competency:** Students should also be instructed in proper methods of effective research, including off-line and online resources available through campus libraries, and in the assessment of sources.
- **Timeliness:** Student assignment completion and faculty responses should be in a timely fashion and in accordance with course syllabi.
- **Student Readiness:** Since there are skills and attitudes that are critical to student success in distance education courses, before enrolling students have to demonstrate that they can use the course management software and that they have the self-motivation that is necessary in order to succeed in an online course. Thus, institutions should perform some kind of a diagnostic testing to determine

students' readiness in terms of their technical skills, their willingness and ability to work independently, and their level of basic literacy and/or numeracy skills necessary for an independent learning environment. Institutions should provide guidance to students who require additional preparation or training before enrolling in a distance education course. The Colton Online Adult Learning Inventory (2002) is one diagnostic tool that could be used to assess student readiness for distance education classes. (*See Appendix 3 for the Colton Adult Learning Inventory.*)

- ***Additional and Continuing Support:*** After students have enrolled in courses, the institution should provide assistance to students who need additional training to succeed in the class.

VI. Student Support Benchmarks

- ***Coordinating Services:*** Institutions must coordinate the services that support the academic success of distance education students (e.g., technological assistance, counseling services, library access, enrollment and registration assistance).
- ***Providing Campus Life:*** Institutions must establish ways to connect online students to the campus life. Students must receive information about admission requirements, tuition, and fees, books and supplies, programs, tutoring, counseling, clubs, campus events, scholarships and financial aid, employment, VA, and other student services.
- ***Guiding Students Through the Online Environment:*** Students must receive an orientation to the online environment. They also need to be provided training and information to aid them in securing material through electronic databases, interlibrary loans, government archives, news services and other relevant sources.
- ***Providing Technical Assistance:*** Institutions must provide technical assistance to distance education students.
- ***Ensuring Effective Communication:*** The institution must ensure that questions directed to student service personnel are answered accurately and promptly.

VII. Faculty Support Benchmarks

- ***Providing Technical Assistance:*** The institution must provide faculty with the necessary technical assistance in course development.
- ***Providing Training:*** Faculty members must be assisted in the transition from classroom teaching to online instruction. For instructors who are new to distance

education, training and assistance, including peer mentoring, should continue through the progression of the online course(s) they initially teach. (*See attached Appendix 4 of Solano Community College's policy regarding the training of online faculty.*)

- ***Ensuring Academic Integrity:*** To protect the academic integrity of their courses, faculty members must be provided with the tools and resources to prevent, detect, and respond to incidents of plagiarism, illegal downloads, fraud, and cheating.
- ***Providing Comprehensive Information to Distance Education Faculty:*** Institutions must make available to both faculty and administrators a *Distance Education Manual* or *Best Practices Document for Online Classes*. This publication should include information on the following:
 - how to receive training;
 - technical and pedagogical advice and/or assistance;
 - names and contact information of critical people (e.g., Dean or other supervisor, Distance Education Coordinator, Distance Education Committee members, computer technicians, curriculum committee chair, union representatives, Academic Senate representatives);
 - course quality standards;
 - Academic Senate and/or Curriculum Committee approval process for distance education courses;
 - managing enrollment (e.g. adding and dropping students);
 - adding new sections;
 - collective bargaining agreement language regarding distance education;
 - the institution's enrollment management and distributive education plans that explain plan for both distance education and face-to-face course growth.

VIII. Instructor Evaluation and Assessment Benchmarks

- ***Periodic Evaluation of Faculty:*** Faculty who teach online must be subject to consistent periodic evaluations occurring with the same frequency and processes as those bargained for the evaluation of faculty teaching face-to-face.
- ***Observations:*** Evaluation processes should provide for at least one observation by instructors' direct line supervisors, during which instructors, in the presence of their supervisors, navigate through their course(s) so that supervisors have access to all facets of the secured online environments.
- ***Evidence of Regular Effective Contact:*** Data collection for evaluation purposes should include provisions for evidence of regular effective instructor initiated contact.

- ***Student Surveys:*** Student evaluation surveys should be adapted to online courses and ask students questions that relate directly to the course and the effectiveness of the instructor in the online modality.
- ***Student Comments:*** Student evaluations of instructors should provide opportunities for qualitative comments regarding the course and instructors' teaching effectiveness.
- ***Evaluation Processes:*** Collective bargaining agreements should contain specific provisions for the processes for the "distribution" and "collection" of student survey data.
- ***Authorized Course Entry:*** To ensure that distance education faculty members are not being evaluated beyond the parameters established in a collective bargaining agreement, negotiated language should also clearly specify who, if anyone, will be permitted entry into teachers' course shells without their express knowledge and consent.
- *See Bargaining Checklist in Appendix 5 for issues related to evaluation language.*

VIV. Program Assessment Benchmarks

- ***Data-Driven Decision Making:*** So that decision-making concerning distance education is data driven and relevant to unique local conditions, institutions should systematically engage in and support classroom research efforts that include both quantitative and qualitative measures of the effectiveness of distance education courses and programs. The following are areas which should form the basis for such research:
 1. students' addresses
 2. reasons for enrolling in online courses or face-to-face
 3. students' educational backgrounds
 4. students' GPA's
 5. persistence (subsequent enrollment in following semesters) for both distance education and face-to-face courses
 6. retention
 7. success rates (e.g. earning C or better)
 8. initial preparation (prior coursework, assessment and placement test scores for basic skills and college level skills)
 9. number of units enrolled in, and ratio of online to face-to-face courses enrolled in
 10. performance differences between online and face-to-face students
 11. workload differences when comparing two sections of the same course (online vs. face-to-face)
 12. completion rates
 13. student perceptions, attitudes, and experiences about and concerning online learning and face-to-face learning.

- **Enrollment Management and Research:** In order to maximize enrollments and maintain healthy programs that meet the needs of all students, institutions must consistently conduct research to determine the impact of distance education on the institution as whole. The following are suggested areas for institutional inquiry:
 1. scheduling,
 2. course cancellations,
 3. fill rates,
 4. drop rates,
 5. withdrawal rates,
 6. successful completion,
 7. direct and indirect costs of programs
 8. enrollment patterns of online and face-to-face classes over the course of six or more semesters.
 9. workload differences for online vs. face-to-face teachers (e.g. number of papers or lab assignments graded)
 10. criteria for determining which modality to offer when additional sections of a course are warranted

- **Assessing Training and Support Services:** Institutions should also conduct regular research to assess the effectiveness of support services for students and faculty in distance education courses as well as the effectiveness of faculty training and mentoring.

- **Assessing Fiscal Impact:** Institutions should conduct regular research to fully examine the fiscal implications of distance education to determine if the growth of online offerings in fact is contributing positively to the fiscal health of the entire institution.

X. Additional Areas for Consideration in Policy Development and Collective Bargaining

The following points are ones that require additional consideration in developing both institutional policies and collective bargaining language.

1. Community education vs. contract education (a course developed for a local business, community service courses). What standards for distance education should be maintained for contract education?

2. Health and sick leave issues must also be addressed. How will the institution account for “sick leave” if an instructor is ill and cannot come to work, but can teach a full load online from home? This accommodation may benefit the individual, but it results in an inequity among faculty (i.e., face-to-face faculty must draw down sick leave while online faculty do not).

3. There are also health and safety issues associated with using technology, such as repetitive motion injuries. What can Districts and unions do to help prevent these? Does collective bargaining language address health and safety issues that arise from distance education teaching?
4. How will districts process and dispose of E-waste?

Appendix 1
Sample - Curriculum Approval – Documenting Regular Effective Contact
(Solano Community College)

Documentation of Instructor Contact

How do you propose to establish and maintain regular and effective contact with students as required by Title 5, Section 55211? Specifically mark the following types of contact that you will use and indicate how you will measure the contact.

Contact	Y/N	How will you measure the contact?
Group meetings		
Individual meetings		
Orientation session		
Review session		
Supplemental seminar		
Library workshops		
Telephone contact		
Correspondence		
Voice mail		
Field trips		
Email		
Instant messaging		
Threaded discussions		
Chat rooms		
Course announcements		
Pod casting		

Web cams		
Blogs		
Video conferencing		
Teleconferencing		
Other		

Appendix 2
Sample Addendum for Curriculum Committee Approval of Online Courses
(Solano Community College)

Addendum Form for Approval of Online Courses

Addendum Originator:		Planned Implementation Date:	
			Course Number:
	Dept:		
Course Title:			

← Please place an X in one of the gray boxes. →

Hybrid	Fully Online
The course has online components and face-to-face meetings	The course has no required face-to-face meetings.
Please describe how this hybrid class will meet face-to-face in the box below:	Full Online Delivery Requirements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students must be notified via the college schedule of classes and the syllabus for the class, if proctored tests are required for this course. • Any planned face-to-face meetings, such as an orientation or study session, must be optional. • The Curriculum Committee requires the use of asynchronous discussion as a component of every fully online course. • Accommodations regarding disabled student accessibility to online content must be made as prescribed in the Distance Education Guidelines regarding Section 508, as published by the California Community College Chancellor's office.

Course Outline: The two methods that significantly change when teaching a course online are methods of instruction and methods of evaluation. Please describe how these methods will be adapted for online instruction.

Methods of Instruction: Copy your Methods of Instruction from the course outline into the space below. Specify any adaptations in instructional methodology resulting from offering this course in the distance learning mode you have selected (online or hybrid), as opposed to the face-to-face mode assumed by the current course outline.

Examples of online methods of instruction: Threaded discussions; instructor developed web lectures; converted power point presentations; digital video clips; graphics (digital charts, diagrams, photos, images, annotated screen shots); digital animations; web quests; online reference resources; chat; email; CD/DVD support materials; instructor web site; online library resources; text book supplements.

Methods of Instruction	Online Adaptation
<i>Example: Lecture and Discussion will be used to analyze and synthesize major trends in twentieth century history.</i>	<i>Example: Lecture will be accomplished using instructor-prepared web-based lectures and links to appropriate reference sites and historical web sites. Discussions will take place using the course management system discussion board in both group and whole class setting</i>

Methods of Evaluation: Copy your methods of evaluation from the course outline into the space below and describe how the evaluation methods in the course outline will be adapted for use in the online environment.

Examples of online methods of evaluation: Essays and research papers submitted to the course website; Open-book essay and short-answer exam questions; timed quizzes and tests; Projects submitted via attachments in the CMS discussion forum; online discussion participation (pairs, groups, whole class); proctored exams.

Methods of Evaluation	Online Adaptation
<p><i>Example:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Research projects in specified topics will be completed.</i> 2. <i>Exams evaluating the students' comprehension of the effects of technology on politics will be given.</i> 	<p><i>Example:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Students will use the college online library and specified website references to complete a research project that will be submitted to the instructor via email attachment.</i> 2. <i>Proctored exams that can happen either at the college learning center or at the location agreed upon by the student and the instructor will take place twice in a semester.</i>

Sample Assignment: Please give an example of an assignment that students will do in the online class format described in this document:



Appendix 3 Colton Online Adult Learning Inventory

Online Adult Learning Inventory

*For Assessing the Application of Adult Learning Principles
to Web-Based Instruction*

© Dr. Sharon B. Colton 2002
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INTRODUCTION:

The Online ALI (Adult Learning Inventory) can be used both as a formative evaluation for assessing the application of classical adult learning principles to the development of fully-mediated World Wide Web-based instruction and as an evaluation tool to assess completed courses.

DIRECTIONS:

Place a checkmark either in the YES or NO box.

NOTE:

Reliability statistics, the average measure intraclass correlation, gave a range from .8018 to .9360 from a field test, indicating moderate to high positive values for inter-rater reliability.

- A.** *Adults' orientation to learning is problem-centered. Thus they are motivated to learn and ready to learn to the extent that they perceive learning will help them perform tasks or deal with problems that can relate to their life situations.*

	YES	NO
1. Assignments incorporate activities to which students can relate; to real situations or events.		
2. Content and theory are presented in a practice-oriented context.		
3. Opportunities are included for solving problems in groups.		
4. Assignments reflect the maturity level of adult learners.		
5. Students are encouraged to apply their life and work experiences to learning.		

B. *Adults need to know what learning will occur, how learning will be conducted, and why learning is important.*

	YES	NO
1. An online syllabus identifies key course activities, assignments, and grading criteria.		
2. Clear expectations are set for the course.		
3. Clear expectations are set for each learning unit.		
4. Clear expectations are set for how projects or papers are to be completed.		
5. Models of "best practice" behavior are provided in order to let students know what they are doing compared to a known model.		
6. Information is provided about the course's intended learning outcomes and benefits.		
7. Information is provided about the skill and technical requirements for the course.		
8. At the beginning of each lesson, learners are oriented to the objectives or central focus of that lesson.		
9. At the beginning of each lesson, a summary of the required activities is presented.		

C. *Adults come into an educational setting with a wide range of experiences which can serve as a basis for new learning.*

	YES	NO
1. If students are not familiar with each other, the class is opened with introductions.		
2. Assignments encourage students to share and reflect upon their prior experiences.		
3. Course assignments allow students to incorporate their prior knowledge into their learning.		
4. Guidance is provided to help students incorporate their life and work experience into learning.		
5. Peer critiques or mentoring is encouraged and facilitated.		

D. *Because of their prior experience, adults tend to develop mental habits and biases and may need to reassess their beliefs in order to adopt alternate ways of thinking.*

	YES	NO
1. Orientation activities are provided at the beginning of the course that allow learners to develop the skills necessary to complete the course (e.g., "introduce yourself to the discussion forum," "send me e-mail saying you were able to log on").		
2. The instructor of the course encourages all students to post responses to questions, read other comments, and reflect. (Threaded discussions allow students to see and reflect on each other's responses in comparison to their own, which has an enormous benefit in assessing different attitudes.)		
3. The course provides a conceptual framework that helps learners to develop new conceptual frameworks or mental models.		
4. The instructor uses common language characteristics between old and new models or concepts and introduces new jargon appropriately.		
5. Students are encouraged to share with other students their derivation of meaning and their progress through discussion postings, reflection papers that are posted, or e-mail.		

E. *Adults have a self-concept of being responsible for their own decisions, for their own lives, and their own learning. They need to be provided the tools and opportunities for independent, self-directed learning.*

	YES	NO
1. The course is designed to allow students to direct their own learning.		
2. The instructor provides organizers that allow students to manage study and homework with minimal questions.		
3. The instructor provides flexibility in assignments that allow for students to work ahead.		
4. The instructor encourages and reinforces self-sufficiency through timely feedback.		

F. *In any group of adults there will be a wider range of individual differences, thus the individualization of learning experiences is important in many situations.*

	YES	NO
1. A variety of instructional methods and media are used to meet the differing needs and learning styles of students.		
2. Students can move through the instruction at their own pace.		
3. Students can review previous learning whenever they want.		
4. The instructor is available to coach students or to suggest outside mentors.		
5. The instructor provides links to a wide variety of web resources.		
6. Students with different levels of computer skills and resources can succeed in this course; the course conforms to accessibility requirements.		
7. Ample time is allotted for students to master the content.		

G. *Situational differences, or the context of the learning environment, impact the learning process of adults.*

	YES	NO
1. Support services are available in this course to meet student needs. (They may include the following services: textbook purchasing, library services, disability services, admissions, enrollment, and transfer of credit.)		
2. The psychological climate of the course is conducive to learning. It suggests to the student that the learning activity is going to be rewarding and positive.		
3. The screen is easy to read.		
4. Directions are easy to follow.		
5. The learning resources in this course can be personalized.		
6. Students work in small groups.		
7. The instructor has a procedure for determining each student's support structure in order to find ways to supplement that support structure, if needed.		
8. Back up assistance is available to students outside the major communications media used for this course (800 number, help desk, et cetera).		

Appendix 4
Sample Policy: Training Process for Online Teaching
(Solano Community College)

Training Process for Online Teaching

A clear, equitable, and practical training process is needed for instructors teaching in our online program. This process will ensure that all of the online instructors have the same skill set and familiarity with the distance education teaching and learning environment.

Instructors who are already teaching online would use one or more of their existing online course shells to complete the training. Instructors new to online teaching would develop a new course shell as they proceed through the training process.

This training process will be coordinated by the Distance Education Committee, a new permanent standing committee of the Academic Senate.

Step 1: Departmental and Division Discussions

All initiatives in online instruction should begin with discussions among the faculty member's departmental colleagues and Division Dean. Once a general agreement is achieved on at least the possibility of teaching a particular course online, the instructor can proceed to the next step.

Step 2: Completion of eCollege Training Course (recommended)

It is highly recommended that instructors new to online enroll in and complete the introductory course provided by eCollege, "Developing Online Courses." (Course tuition fee is covered by the existing eCollege contract.)

Step 3: Assignment of a Course Shell and Mentor

Each new prospective online instructor will be assigned a developmental course shell, which will be housed in the "Future Development" section of the eCollege server. This course shell will be used to complete the skill exercises outlined in Steps 4 and 5 below. Each prospective instructor will also choose a mentor instructor to assist him/her in the training process. Veteran online instructors would use their existing course shells for the training process, and may choose to work with a mentor if they wish.

Step 4: Achievement of Technical Competency

The online instructor will achieve competency in the following technical aspects of online teaching:

- Email (reply, forward, cc, bcc, folders, attachments, file types, viruses)
- Web navigation skills (URLs, following links, new windows, history, bookmarks)
- Use of Basic Course Tools (document sharing, grade book, course announcements, threaded discussions, drop box, webliography, etc.)
- Development of course syllabus
- Development of unit structure and course schedule
- Development of content items such as text, discussion, exams
- Use of basic multimedia (images, video clips, powerpoint)

Mentors will assist new online instructors in developing these skills. Experienced online instructors will develop and maintain competence in these skills which have been mastered and are a part of their existing courses. Flex-cal workshops covering these skills will also be offered.

Step 5: Achievement of Pedagogical Competency

The online instructor will achieve competency in the following pedagogical aspects of online teaching:

- Creating an interactive online learning environment
- Constructing effective online discussions
- Incorporating different learning styles
- Constructing effective examinations and other assessment tools
- Achieving a clear, understandable navigation structure
- Understanding ADA issues. Ability to use accessibility evaluation tools and to make modifications to the web site as needed.
- Maintaining regular effective instructor-initiated student contact (course announcements, email communication, grading comments, virtual office hours, video conferencing, etc.)

Mentors will assist new online instructors in developing these skills. Experienced online instructors will develop and maintain competence in these skills which have been mastered and are a part of their existing courses. Flex-cal workshops covering these skills will also be offered.

Step 6: Completion of the Training Process

A checklist of the skills listed in steps 4 and 5 will be developed to assist the instructor in accounting for the skills that have been mastered. When all of the skills have been mastered, the instructor will complete the checklist in consultation with the mentor and then submit it to the Distance Education Committee. The Distance Education Committee will maintain a list of the instructors who have completed the training.

Step 7: Class Assignments

The Distance Education Committee will periodically submit to the Academic Senate an updated list of the instructors in each division who have successfully completed the training process. The Academic Senate will transmit this list to the Division Deans with a recommendation that only instructors who have completed the training process be assigned to teach online and hybrid classes at Solano College.

Implementation Timeline

Beginning with the fall semester, 2006, instructors developing their first online course will complete the training process before their class is taught for the first time.

Veteran online instructors will be given a one-year period in which to complete their training. They can continue to teach online during the 2006-2007 academic year while completing the training.

The first list of trained online instructors will be published by the Distance Education Committee in May, 2007.

Future Changes to the Training Process

Periodically, the Distance Education Committee will review the online training process for completeness, appropriateness and compatibility with the ever-changing technology. Updates and revisions will be made as needed.

Support for this Training Process

In order to implement this process for the entire campus, the following support from the College is needed:

1. Developmental course shells available to prospective online instructors.
2. A comprehensive Training Study Guide to be created by the Distance Education Committee.
3. Initial training of experienced online faculty willing to act as mentors for other faculty. The mentor instructors are expected to demonstrate the same level of competency as is expected from faculty undergoing certification.
4. Support for the mentor instructors.

Appendix 5 – Bargaining Checklist For Distance Education

As much as possible, distinctions between distance education courses and face-to-face courses should be kept to a minimum. Below are some of the items to consider when negotiating contract language related to distance education modalities.

1. Workload: 1) percentage of load to be taught online; 2) assignment to adjunct instructors; 3) limitations on overload; professional obligations; 4) office hours; 5) class sizes (see specifics below).
2. Leave: how sick leave, jury duty, bereavement, and other kinds of leave will be calculated for online instructors.
3. Intellectual property rights: consider the current language for face-to-face faculty and determine ways to adapt language for online instructors.
4. Assignment of Courses and First Rights of Refusal: After the course has been developed, consider whether the instructor will have the right of first refusal and for what length of time.
5. Evaluation processes: 1) students evaluations of the course; 2) processes for administering student evaluation surveys; 3) processes for faculty to be evaluated by their administrator and/or peers.
6. Training process for evaluating administrators or peers: Determine whether or not you are able to bargain the training of administrators or peers who will evaluate faculty so that those who are evaluating online courses and faculty have the knowledge and skills that pertain to distance education pedagogy and course management.
7. Training in both technology and effective pedagogy: Faculty members who are offered a new technology to enhance their classroom or replace it must receive adequate training on the new technology.
8. Responsibility for Accessibility Requirements: District holds responsibility for assuring accessibility to all distance education technology (e.g. ADA compliance), which would require adequate and on-going training as well as cooperation from the course management system used.
9. Course Access and Information Storage: Consider language specifying who has access to course shells, their reasons are for accessing a course, where that information is housed, who is contractually able to access that information.

10. Liability issues: Consider language that clearly delineates the responsibilities of instructors and the institution for student remarks and online conduct, and reporting processes.
11. Hiring priority: Consideration should be given to protect full-time faculty positions and not create an unwarranted reduction in force.
12. Class size: Consider language that would ensure class sizes that are smaller or the same as face-to-face to ensure continued quality of student-teacher contact; consider the workload implications for classes in which all work must be done in writing.
13. Course assignment. Consider language protecting faculty from being compelled to teach in the online modality.
14. State Education Codes: Review laws, such as Title V in California, for additional issues related to distance education that may be negotiable.
15. Role of Faculty in Developing Policies for Distance Education Courses and Programs: Consider contractual language to provide for faculty development of online education policies.
16. Compensation: 1) additional compensation for faculty members who are offered new technologies to enhance their classrooms or replace them; 2) consider language that protects faculty members' intellectual property rights so that development compensation is not construed as "work for hire."