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1111 East Artesia Boulevard
Compton, CA 90221-5393
Phone: 310-900-1600
Fax: 310-605-1458
www.compton.edu

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Greetings Faculty,

I wanted to thank you all for the tremendous work in converting our academic program to a remote format. As we move forward into fall 2020, we must begin the transition from emergency response to effective and continued operations in our new environment. One of the most significant tasks in this transition is ensuring that those classes converted to remote modalities are offered in the most efficacious manner for students and within requirements established by the U.S. Department of Education (USDE).

For fall, we will continue to offer most courses in remote/online formats. The state Chancellor's Office is allowing courses to be converted to online through the acceptance of an extended Blanket Distance Education (DE) Addendum. To receive the blanket authorization, the college has begun the process of approving a DE Addendum for each course with approvals completed by the end of the fall semester. This effort provides flexibility for the manner in which converted courses are offered; however, there are still requirements established by accreditation standards, state Education Code, Title 5, and the USDE.

These regulations and standards seek to differentiate between Correspondence Education and Online courses. The Academic Senate for California Community Colleges (ASCCC) indicates:

Correspondence education is defined in the Code of Federal Regulations as "education provided through one or more courses by an institution under which the institution provides instructional materials, by mail or electronic transmission, including examinations on the materials, to students who are separated from the instructor" (34 C.F.R. § 602.3). These courses have limited interaction between the instructor and the student, contact is neither regular nor substantive, and contact is primarily initiated by the student. These courses are usually self-paced and do not qualify for federal financial aid.

Compton College does not offer correspondence education and all converted courses must maintain the requirements for online education. Title 5 § 55204 of the California Code of Regulations specifies that "any portion of a course conducted through distance education includes regular effective contact between instructor and students, through group or individual meetings, orientation and review sessions, supplemental seminar or study sessions, field trips,

library workshops, telephone contact, correspondence, voicemail, email, or other activities.”

The Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC) policy on online education requires that institutions have policies and procedures for defining and classifying a course as offered by distance education or correspondence education, in alignment with USDE definitions and that there is an accurate and consistent application of the policies and procedures for determining if a course is offered by distance education (with regular and substantive interaction with the instructor, initiated by the instructor, and online activities are included as part of a student’s grade). In online and hybrid courses, ensuring regular effective instructor contact guarantees that the student receives the benefit of the instructor’s presence in the learning environment both as a provider of instructional information and as a facilitator of student learning. The way Compton College maintains these requirements relies upon the curriculum approval processes and faculty training. In concert, these efforts assure that faculty are engaging in online education with regular and effective contact, within federal and state requirements. In our current context, it is vital that we maintain clear expectations for converted classes. The USDE requires demonstration of evidence beyond what is required for in-person classes, where regular interaction is assumed, and this demonstration must go beyond posting a syllabus and grading assignments. To this end, all Compton College courses must ensure the following in both synchronous and asynchronous modes:

- Faculty should provide feedback and guidance to students throughout the weekly online meetings and through multiple channels (e.g. engaging in forum discussions with students, commenting on written assignments, and graded quizzes.)
 - Feedback and guidance must be related to the academic content of the course (i.e. not limited to reminders about deadlines or other logistical matters) and must go beyond perfunctory comments such as 'good job' or 'great work.'”
- Faculty must engage in regular, faculty-initiated, student contact that is predictable, is about the course's subject matter, and is qualitatively more than just a static assessment of student work.
- Faculty must ensure that there is regular student to student contact regarding course subject matter.
- Ensure that all materials meet ADA requirements for accessibility.

The regulations are not explicit on the manner in which these contacts are conducted, but it is essential that the contact is documented and available for review by the ACCJC or the USDE during a Federal Financial Aid program review for a period of at least three years. Based on a review of college procedures, the following activities are recommended to maintain consistent contact within the regulations.

- Group or individual contact
- Orientation online
- Announcements
- Online office hours
- Online chats
- Student discussion boards
- Synchronous lectures with student interaction
- Grading assignments with feedback

- The frequency of the contact will be at least the same as would be established in a face-to-face course
- The type of meaningful regular contact should be done at least twice a week for a full semester class or within 48 hours for a short-term class

To comply with the regulatory requirements, these regular and effective contacts must be documented and available. As such, courses must run through Canvas, the official Learning Management System. By utilizing Canvas functions to interact with students, faculty can meet the regulatory expectations. The College has and will continue to offer workshops and DE certification training on Canvas, and all faculty are strongly encouraged to take advantage of these opportunities.

In this time of great change and uncertainty, we understand that these requirements may seem overwhelming. Please be assured that these regulations are designed to ensure effective and accessible online teaching.

Sincerely,

Sheri Berger
Vice President, Academic Affairs

CC: Dr. Keith Curry, CEO/President