

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT DISTANCE EDUCATION COURSE APPROVAL AND REVISION

According to the Chancellor's Office Guidelines, a course is being taught in the Distance Education mode if any traditional face-to-face class meetings are eliminated. (Guidelines section 55206).

For curriculum approval purposes at Cuesta College, a course is a "Distance" course if there are no required face-to-face class meetings, and a "Hybrid" course if there are some required face-to-face meetings-- for the purposes of orientation, study sessions, proctored exams, group project presentations, etc.

The same standards of course quality shall be applied to distance education as are applied to traditional classroom courses. Determinations and judgments about the quality of distance education shall be made with the full involvement of faculty within the division, cluster, and curriculum committee (Section 55202). *Also according to the Chancellor's Office Guidelines, there must be a separate curriculum course approval and revision procedure for Distance Education courses (Section 55206).*

As part of Program Review DE courses should be assessed by the division for compliance to current standards of quality and accommodation.

Initial Proposal of a DE Course

Note: The division curriculum representative is responsible to assist the faculty members in completing the curriculum forms properly and completely and certify for accuracy by signing off and forwarding to the division chair for review and sign off.

1. For a New Course that is also being proposed as a DE course, follow the established new course approval process. Also complete and attach the DE Course Addendum and the DE Course Preparation Review forms.
2. To add the DE Mode to an existing course, complete and attach the DE Course Addendum and the DE Course Preparation Review Form to the current course outline.

Attach a copy of the division minutes (or other record of communication) to document "collegial discussion" regarding a new DE course or initial adaptation of an existing course with divisional faculty, including the division chair and the division curriculum representative, to determine the impact on enrollments, loading, the program (if applicable), room scheduling, student need, access, and success. It is expected that all faculty in the division planning to teach the course in the DE mode will be part of the course design, conversion or revision process-- i.e., collegial discussion and mutual decision making.

Revision of an Existing DE Course

Revisions to an existing DE course that require curriculum approval include one or more of the following:

- Class size limit
- Change from hybrid to DE or DE to hybrid
- Method of Student-teacher contact (Regular and Effective Contact)
- Modifications to existing DE/hybrid course to address changes in course content (i.e. as a result of a major course curriculum change)

Document the design changes on the DE Course Addendum and attach the following:

- Course Outline of Record
- Initial DE Course Approval (Addendum) Form

Note: if major changes are made to the traditional course outline and the course is also taught in the DE mode. The division curriculum representative must alert the division faculty teaching the course in the DE modality to review the major changes and determine if course design changes are warranted. If so, s/he must attach the DE Course Addendum to assure the changes are accounted for in the DE course at the same time.

Approval

1. The Chair of the Curriculum Committee, in consultation with the Vice President of Academic Affairs, reviews and approves for submission to the Standing DE Subcommittee of the Curriculum Committee for review and recommendation of DE course proposals to the Curriculum Committee.
2. The Standing DE Subcommittee will be composed of at least three (3) faculty members who have been previously approved to teach DE courses at Cuesta College and have at least one-year experience successfully teaching in the DE modality. At least one of the DE subcommittee members, when possible, should be an existing Curriculum Committee representative. Subcommittee members are appointed or re-confirmed at the annual September Curriculum meeting.
3. The DE Subcommittee will evaluate DE course proposals (including the Distance Education Course Preparation Review) based on the established guidelines approved by the Senate.
4. Curriculum Committee reviews and approves for submission through the Academic Senate to the Board of Trustees.
5. Board of Trustees reviews and approves.

DE COURSE ADDENDUM INSTRUCTIONS

Rationale DE Course Offering

Address specific access issues, and the impact, if any on enrollments, loading, the program (if applicable), room scheduling, student need, access, and success.

Class Size Limit

The number of students assigned to any one course section offered by distance education shall be determined and be consistent with other district procedures related to faculty assignment (section 55208). If the class size limit is different than the traditional course, provide an explanation.

DE Course Description

State if the course is fully at a distance, or if it requires any face-to-face meetings. If meetings are required, state their purpose and frequency.

Accessibility

Both the Faculty designing or revising a DE course and the District have an obligation to ensure all course materials have "built in" accommodation for students with disabilities-- i.e. closed or open captioning, descriptive narration) and/or interface design/content layout, which is accessible to "industry standard" assistive computer technology in common use by persons with disabilities. (Section 55200)

Describe how the DE course design accommodates students with disabilities. Web pages must conform to the standards for accessibility as specified in Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act (<http://www.access-board.gov/sec508/guide/1194.22.htm>). There are several ways to check web pages for compliance with these standards. Cuesta College policies and resources are available at <http://academic.cuesta.edu/acasupp/DSPS/curbcut/index.htm>. DSPS also has a document called "Basic Requirements for Providing Access." Issues concerning accommodation should be resolved through DSPS.

Regular and Effective Contact

Any portion of a course conducted through distance education shall include regular effective contact between instructor and students, through group or individual meetings, orientation and review sessions, supplemental seminar or study sessions, field trips, library workshops, telephone contact, correspondence, voice mail, e-mail, or other activities (55204 (a)).

Describe how regular and effective contact among instructor and students will be facilitated. Effective contact between instructor and students is based on timeliness of delivery (*response to an emailed student question is usually within two working days*), accuracy of the subject matter, and provision in a manner and medium appropriate to the significance of the message and the abilities of the student. Describe specific synchronous and asynchronous modes.

Example: *Students and instructor respond to questions and comments regarding a course topic on the class discussion board. Students can contact the instructor during regularly scheduled office hours or any time via e-mail. The instructor posts responses to frequently asked questions on a FAQ web page.*

Example: *Students and instructor meet once a week for a mandatory discussion session where the instructor summarizes material from weekly assignments and poses integrative questions to which students discuss and respond in small groups. Students have access to the instructor by phone, email or during regularly scheduled office hours.*

Adaptations of Methods, Materials, and Delivery of Instruction

The DE course design must adapt the learning environment present in a traditional course. Describe both the adaptation of the method of instruction and the communication and computing technologies used to deliver the instruction. If the delivery system is not an industry standard, such as Blackboard, provide some detail in describing its features and their function. Also describe any special software or technology students will have to purchase and if the technology will be provided in any campus labs. Indicate if the text and materials of the traditional class are being supplemented or replaced.

Example: *Presentation of major trends in Twentieth Century History will be accomplished using instructor prepared web pages which include written topic introductions, analyses, summaries, references to textbook content, links to appropriate reference sites, historical websites, and self-assessment quizzes. Critical discussion of both instructor posed questions and student response will take place asynchronously using the Blackboard course management system discussion board in both group and whole class settings. Students complete an online orientation which familiarizes them with the course website and other course tools.*

Example: *Students attend a face-to-face orientation to learn how use the course software and website. The course website is instructor maintained and has links to directions for course assignments, due dates, course policies, and links to supplemental assignments. Course content is presented using Plato System's Interactive Mathematics. The software contains audio and visual explanations and demonstrations, guided practice problems, and online quizzes. Graphing calculator applications are demonstrated using instructor-developed audio video clips, with web links to problems and solutions. Students are required to purchase a graphing calculator. The students do not use the same text as the lecture course. Students and instructor meet once a week for a mandatory discussion session where the instructor summarizes material from weekly assignments and poses integrative questions to which students discuss and respond in small groups*

Adaptations to Assignments and Activities

Describe how assignments will be disseminated. If the course traditionally requires in-class presentations or special activities, describe how they will be incorporated. If the course requires critical thinking as specified in the course outline of record, describe how this will be facilitated.

Example: Groups develop, review, and discuss class projects using tools in the course management system (i.e. chat rooms, discussion boards) asynchronously. The group posts work to the class website for broadcast and review.

Example: Written homework and scores from online quizzes are turned in at weekly face-to-face discussion sessions (or mailed if the student can not attend). The instructor demonstrates solutions to questions about homework, summarizes material from weekly assignments, and poses integrative questions to which students discuss and respond in small groups.

Adaptations to Methods of Evaluation

Describe how the instructor will appropriately verify that students have met the course objectives. Specifically describe any special software or process used in the adaptation. This might include:

- proctored exams
- timed-online or password-protected testing environments
- comparing submitted papers with sample writing assignments or discussion posts
- use of plagiarism detection software (such as TurnItIn.com)
- face-to-face demonstrations of knowledge or skill.

Example: 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. 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.

Example: Students submit written solutions to homework problems, scores from online quizzes and take proctored exams.

Example: Students will complete exercises and submit them online, will contribute to online discussion, and will take a timed online exam that is password protected with randomized questions.

Example: Students will write a learning journal to be posted online, contribute to discussion requiring analysis of the readings and submit a final paper which will be submitted through TurnItIn.com.