



Distance Education Instructor / Student Absentee Policy

1. Title 5 – § 55204. Instructor Contact.

In addition to the requirements of section 55002 and any locally established requirements applicable to all courses, district governing boards shall ensure that:

(a) 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, voice mail, e-mail, or other activities. Regular effective contact is an academic and professional matter pursuant to sections 53200 et seq.

(b) Any portion of a course provided through distance education is conducted consistent with guidelines issued by the Chancellor pursuant to section 409 of the Procedures and Standing Orders of the Board of Governors.

Note: Authority cited: Sections 66700 and 70901, Education Code. Reference: Sections 70901 and 70902, Education Code.

2. Lack of regular meaningful contact can be considered an "absence." Definition is valid for both students and faculty. Attendance is more than logging into the virtual classroom environment and meaningful contact means active engagement by the student and the instructor.
3. Meaningful regular contact includes, but is not limited to at least once a week interaction:
 - submitting / grading assignments
 - participating in discussions
 - responding to emails / phone calls
 - attendance at scheduled chats
 - adherence to scheduled events in the syllabus
 - reviewing messages and responding to messages in the virtual classroom
 - Web conferences or other live events scheduled for the class
 - Proctored exams
 - On-campus events or other locations where instructor and students meet for class; e.g. museum, observatory, etc.
4. Last date of attendance is defined as participation in the last known academically related activity. This can be documented by entries into the grade book or Course Completion Report.
5. When students complain of lack of contact / response from instructor, the dept. chair shall be notified. The department chair monitors attendance / engagement in online courses in a manner consistent with monitoring attendance in face-to-face classes.
6. The Distance Education (DE) instructor needs to define in his/her syllabus what constitutes an "absence" in the class and the policy for being dropped due to absences. When a student has multiple absences, the instructor can exclude the student from the class in the same way the student would be excluded due to excessive absences from a class that meets on campus.

History: Approved by DDL Cmte. 2/8/08 and Academic Senate 4/8/08;

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