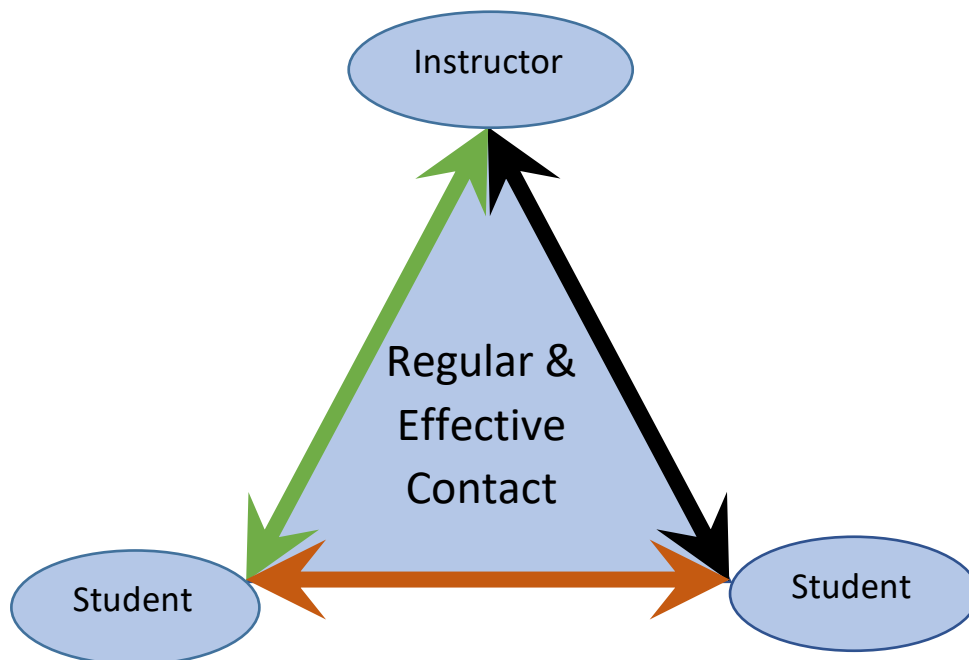


*****Please note the ACCJC guidelines are scheduled to revise their guidelines on “Regular and Effective Contact” to “Regular and Substantive Interaction” in June/July 2021. The guidelines and examples below will require revisions to adhere to the new guidelines starting Fall 2021.***

The Big Picture

- Online learners have unique needs due to their mode of study, such as time management and self-directed learning. The Distance Education Committee works together with Faculty to provide a strong foundation for success and improve the quality of the learning experience through engagement and integration into the academic community. The cornerstone of this support is regular and substantive communications between faculty and students. This document provides guidelines on online education expectations, providing examples of techniques to use when teaching online.



Regular and Effective Contact

“Regular and effective contact” is a California Title 5 educational requirement that stipulates that all instructors, including online instructors, must make certain that there are measures for instructor-initiated, regular, effective contact incorporated into online and hybrid course design and delivery. This means that it is the responsibility of the instructor to initiate contact with students, email them, send

announcements, question and involve them in discussions, reach out to them when they are absent or missing work, and monitor their overall progress.

Title 5 Section 55200 Definition:

“Distance education means instruction in which the instructor and student are separated by distance and interact through the assistance of communication” Title 5 Section 55204 states that “any portion of a course conducted through distance education includes regular effective contact between instructor and students. To be considered regular effective contact, the contact with students for online and hybrid classes must be instructor initiated, with expectations for methods used and timeliness clearly established and communicated to students.

What is a synchronous course?

Synchronous learning is online education that happens in real time. This means that students and the instructor interact in a specific virtual place at a set time. In these courses, instructors commonly take attendance, as in an on-ground course. Common methods of synchronous online learning include video conferencing, teleconferencing, live chatting, and live-streamed lectures that must be viewed in real time.

What is an asynchronous course?

Asynchronous learning does not require real-time interaction; instead, content is available online for students to access when it best suits their schedules, and assignments are completed on a set schedule.

What is a hybrid course?

Hybrid courses include components of both synchronous and asynchronous courses.

Moorpark Regular and Effective Contact in Online Teaching

Per Title 5, Section 552200, instructors must maintain regular, effective communication in online and hybrid courses. Below is a list of suggestions for initiating, maintaining, and supporting a culture of communication from instructor to student, student to instructor, and student to student.

Instructor Initiated Contact, *Instructor to Student*

Instructor initiates contact prior to the beginning of course

Examples for this method:

- Instructor sends a welcome letter to students prior to course start that is also available to students joining after the correspondence.
- Instructor sends course announcements leading up to course start.
- Instructor shares video tutorial explaining course navigation, etc.

Instructor includes regular initiated contact with students using course management system (CMS) communication tools and a clear explanation for students of when and how communication will happen.

Examples for this method:

- Instructor includes “Instructor Initiated Contact Policy” within course syllabus and/or resources, clearly explaining how they will contact students.
- Instructor explains in course syllabus and/or policies how frequently they will send announcements.
- Instructor explains in course syllabus and/or policies when students will receive grades and feedback on assessments.
- Instructor clearly explains general course contact policies in course syllabus and/or resources.
- Instructor clearly communicates the availability of college support services such as: department chair, dean, ACCESS, counseling, health services, etc.

Instructor includes guidelines explaining required levels of student participation (i.e., quantity and quality of interactions) are consistently provided.

Examples for this method:

- Instructor provides student with clear instructions or guidelines explaining required or suggested participation levels within the course overall or within specific assessments.

- Instructor clearly explains types of assignments used for assessing students throughout the course.
- Instructor provides rubrics/scoring guides to clearly explain how individual assignments will be graded.

Student Initiated Contact, *Student to Instructor*

Students are encouraged to initiate contact with the instructor through easily accessed contact information that includes expected response times.

Examples for encouraging student to initiate contact:

- Instructor clearly explains the preferred method of how students should contact them (e.g. email, Canvas Inbox, phone, office hours, chat, etc.).
- Instructor explains in course syllabus and/or policies regarding expected response times to student communication.
- Instructor provides reminders throughout the course that students are encouraged to initiate contact with them.

Student Initiated Contact with Other Students, *Student to Student*

Opportunities for unstructured student-initiated interaction with other students are available and encouraged.

Examples for encouraging student to initiate contact with other students:

- Open Discussion Boards
- Q&A Thread
- Establish Tutorial for students to use the Canvas People tool to encourage unstructured student-initiated contact between classmates.

Regular effective contact among students is designed to facilitate interaction with and about course content.

Examples for encouraging student to interact with other students about course content:

- Instructor initiated or graded discussion boards
- Instruction/Getting to Know You Discussion Board
- Study groups
- Group projects/presentations

- Establish opportunities for student-to-student discussions such as a student-only discussion, synchronous chat, or poll.
- Peer critique such as writing assignments that allow students to review and provide constructive criticism of each other's work.