Richmond Community College Distance Learning Faculty Manual

Contents

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Introduction

Richmond Community College is committed to making the student learning experience a priority throughout all aspects of the college, especially when considering 21st century delivery of learning content. Distance learning provides students and faculty with opportunity to deliver course credit hours using digital learning technologies including online, hybrid, and interactive video teleconferencing technology. Learning or teaching in a distance learning environment can be a rewarding and engaging experience. While instructors and students encounter different challenges than a traditional classroom, distance learning courses are designed with the same rigor, taught with the same enthusiasm for learning, and filled with the same stimulating communication and collaborative experiences. Distance learning at RCC is committed to ensuring all distance education courses demonstrate the same quality rich learning experiences as traditional courses as well as providing superior support services to distance learning instructors and students.

Mission

Supporting the mission of the college, Richmond Community College's distance learning mission is to provide courses and degree programs through convenient online, hybrid, and virtual formats to students while maintaining quality rich instruction. Distance learning will strive to foster student learning by providing personal and secure learning environments that support meaningful and consistent engagement with highly-trained faculty, established support services, and accessible resources.

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Moodle Instructor Certification

All instructors teaching distance learning courses are required to complete the Richmond Community College Moodle Instructor Certification. Upon successful completion of the certification, instructors will demonstrate through a series of tasks the basic skill needed to successfully teaching using the Moodle interface. Instructors have the opportunity to earn up to **35 possible points**. A minimum of 30 points is required to pass the certification.

- *Tasks 1-6: **20 Points***
- *Task 7 (Moodle Certification Quiz): **15 Points***

This certification is managed by the Distance Learning department. Other colleges may have similar certification processes in which may be accepted in place of RCC's certification. All documentation of similar certification must be submitted and approved by the Distance Learning department.

Online and Hybrid Course Development

As of fall 2012, Richmond Community College will review all new distance learning courses using the **Richmond Community College Distance Learning Course Standards** (see below) prior to the course being delivered. Once a course has been reviewed and approved according to the minimum requirements described in the standards, the course will be documented as a mastery level course. Courses earning mastery level will not be reviewed again for 2-3 years. Recommended dates for submitting online and hybrid courses to the distance learning department for review will be published every semester.

In addition to instructors creating master level course, the college requires all instructors to adhere to the **Richmond Community College Distance Learning Instructor Expectations** (see below). These standards of expectations will be assessed by the corresponding department chair and/or lead instructor at the time of the instructor's **faculty observation** (see below). The distance learning online student survey will also reflect the instructor expectations.

Designation of Courses for Review and Frequency of Course Review

RCC online and hybrid courses will be reviewed for instructional design and course presentation as follows:

1. Any online or blended (hybrid) course in which the most recent review was conducted 2-3 years prior
2. Any online or blended course that is completely new to RCC
3. Any existing face-to-face RCC course that is converted to the online or blended format
4. Any online or blended course which has undergone major revisions requiring substantial change to the existing course

Richmond Community College Distance Learning Course Standards

(✔) Standard elements are complete in all necessary areas within the course
(✔-) Standard elements are complete in some but not all necessary areas within the course
(-) Standard elements are not complete within any of the necessary areas within the course

At a minimum, all courses must meet the ✔- criteria for all standards. The course must meet the ✔ criteria for all standards in order to receive "master course" status.   All master courses will be reviewed every 2-3 years.

OFFICIAL USE ONLY:	Course Developer: _____	__ Affected Programs of study
Date of Review: _____	Course Code: _____	__ SACS Notification
Next Review Date: _____	Course Name:_____	__ Marketing Notification
Course Type ___HY ___IN	Reviewed By: _____	

Standard	Standard Elements	Comments
1.0 Accessibility	(✔) (✔-) (-)	
1.1 Provides instructor, department and program contact information (should be located in ICR, additional locations are optional)	__ Contact information for the instructor __ Contact information for academic department __ Faculty member introductory information	
1.2 Provides access to plug-ins or other applications supporting course content	__ Provide *directions* for accessing any required external websites or specific course software downloads (all links are working) __ Provides *directions* for accessing any required course resources (ex: registering for "MyMathLab")	
1.3 Complies with Section 508 (ADA Compliant)	__ Instructional images are optimized for rapid display and include alternative text __ Universal accessibility concerns are addressed throughout the course, including transcripts of any non-text objects __ Alternative formats of materials are provided, when possible (e.g. print packet of reading materials, CD of audio used in course, video transcripts, etc.) __ Use of color adds interest but does not disadvantage those with color blindness	
2.0 Communication	(✔) (✔-) (-)	
2.1 Use of a variety of media (graphics, audio, video, etc.) to communicate course materials	__All courses should use at least 3 different types of media which may include but not limited to... • Graphics/images/photos — • Audio clips — • Video clips • PowerPoint presentations — • Flash animations — • Tutorials with screen captures and voice over • CD-Rom or DVD supplemental materials — • Other learning objects, simulations or interactivities — • Other	
2.2 Use of standard online communication tools	__All courses should use at least two of the following standard communication tools... • Email — • Discussion boards — • Synchronous "chats" • Instant messaging — • Group discussions, when appropriate for group activities	
3.0 Assessment	(✔) (✔-) (-)	
3.1 Student learning outcomes are clearly identified for the course (should be located in ICR, additional locations are optional)	__ Course objectives are present and measurable __ Course completion requirements are present __ Expectations of students' participation, honesty, "Netiquette", etc. are identified __ Timeline for student participation is clear __ Activities lead to learning desired concepts __ Prerequisite knowledge and/or any competencies are clearly stated	
3.2 Assignments and grading standards are clearly stated (*preferably in the form of rubrics*)	__ Clear directions are given for each task or assignment __ Samples assignments and/or outlines illustrate instructor's expectations (when appropriate) __ Estimated amount of time needed for completing any major assignments successfully __ Criteria used to evaluate *all* types of assignments including participation in online discussion groups, quizzes, exams, and projects.	

Standard	Standard Elements	Comments
3.3 Use of self-tests or other feedback provided throughout the course	__ Rich and rapid feedback is provided for learning application (self-grading practice assignments, discussion groups, etc.) __ Self-tests similar to the final evaluation instruments (when appropriate)	
3.4 Ongoing assessment of student knowledge, attitudes and/or skills	__ Students are not assessed solely on tests/quizzes but are provided ample opportunity to demonstrate proficiency in different ways __ Reading assignments match learning objectives __ Activities lead to desired learning concepts __ Study guides are provided (when appropriate) __ Acceptable methods for completing assignments are identified (group work, open book, etc.) __ Reading and writing requirements are consistent with student abilities and course unit load	
4.0 Navigation	(✔) (✔-) (-)	
4.1 Syllabus and/or the course ICR provide course navigation guidance	__ Syllabus and ICR is easily located __ Navigational guidance is provided and is specific to course. **For Example: "**All assignments will be posted after each chapter lesson."	
4.2 Course is well organized and easy to navigate	__ Navigation is clear, simple and user friendly __ Course schedule is summarized is easily located __ Course content is organized in a logical format __ Organization and sequencing of the course content is logical and clear __ Instructional materials required are easily located __ Topics are clearly identified and subtopics are related to topics __ Links to other parts of the course or external sources are accurate and up to date	
5.0 Design	(✔) (✔-) (-)	
5.1 Course is visually and functionally consistent	__ Spelling and grammar are consistent and accurate __ Written material is concise, sentences and paragraphs are brief __ Language of written material is friendly and supportive __ Typeface (font) is easy to read __ Course pages are a comfortable length __ Sufficient contrast between text and background makes information easy to read __ Numbers or letters are used to identify sequenced steps or priority and not to list items __ Bullets are used to list items rather than to prioritize or sequence __Appropriate images supporting course content add visual interest __Use of standard icons or terminology are used to appropriately identify course tools	
5.2 Entry Assignment is visible and can be easily accessed by students	__ Entry assignment is clear upon entering the course __ Entry assignment is academically related to the course __ Attendance Policy is clear and accurate with the RCC online attendance policy	

Online Instructor Expectations

Instructor's Presence and Interaction

Instructor will demonstrate presences and interaction within the course by:

- Regularly communicating with the students;
- Replying to student questions in a timely manner;
- Regularly posting announcements and reminders about course related content and;
- Grading assignments and providing feedback in a timely manner.

Instructional Support

Instructors will provide adequate instructional support by:

- Ensuring the course operates on an reasonable schedule;
- Provide suggestions for time management for major assignments;
- Provide expectations of participation within the course;
- Using multiple instructional methods within the course and;
- Using a variety of assessment methods.

Course Content

The instructor is responsible for ensuring the quality of the course content by:

- Ensuring all links within the course are working and accessible;
- Providing accurate and relevant content within the course;
- Providing appropriate and useful instructional content and;
- Ensuring all content is grammatically correct and free of any spelling errors.

RICHMOND COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Distance Learning Faculty Observation Form

Instructor   _____   Course   _____

Semester   _____   Academic Year _____

Observer   _____   Title   _____

The purpose of the supervisory course observation is to offer a somewhat objective approach to the evaluation of faculty members to provide useful data to assist the instructor in meeting his/her goals. Based on your observation, decide which of the available choices apply to this evaluation

	A **Excellent**	**B** **Satisfactory**	**C** **Needs** **Improvement**	**D** **Not** **Satisfactory**	**E** **Did Not** **Observe**
1. Instructor maintains regular communication with the students.					
2. Instructor replies to student questions in a timely manner.					
3. Instructor posts announcements and reminders about course related content.					
4. Instructor grades assignments and provides feedback in a timely manner.					
5. The course operates on an obvious schedule.					
6. Suggestions for time management are provided for major assignments.					
7. Expectations of participation within the course are provided.					

	A	B	C	D	E
	Excellent	**Satisfactory**	**Needs Improvement**	**Not Satisfactory**	**Did Not Observe**
8. Multiple instructional methods are provided within the course.					
9. A variety of assessment methods are used.					
10. All links within the course are working and accessible.					
11. Content provided is accurate and relevant to the course.					
12. Instructional content is appropriate and useful to learners.					
13. All content is grammatically correct and free of any spelling errors.					
14. The course content and evaluation methods align with those provided in ICR.					

Comments by Observer: **Comments by Instructor:**

_____   _____

_____   _____

_____   _____

_____   _____

Signature   Date   Signature   Date

Course Review Process

Step 1:

- A new online course will have an impact on department offerings, staffing, and long term goals. **Schedule a meeting with corresponding department chair and complete "New Distance Learning Course Notification"** form (see below).

Step 2:

- The department chair will submit the proposed course to the Director of Distance Learning who will send a copy to the Vice President for Instruction/Chief Academic Officer.

Step 3:

- Instructor/course developer develops the course in line with the RCC Distance Learning Course Standards.

Step 4:

- The instructor/course developer notifies Director of Distance Learning via e-mail stating the course has been completed and is ready for initial review (see below for semester deadlines).

Step 5:

- The course will be reviewed for compliance with the Richmond Community College Distance Learning Course Standards and feedback will be provided to course developer.

Step 6:

- The instructor/course developer will make any requested changes and re-submit.

Step 7:

- Once the standards are met, the review is finalized, and the course is designated as the new master for that course.

New Distance Learning Course Development Notification

Please provide the following information and submit for to the Director of Distance Learning.

Course Name:

Course Number (Ex: SOC-210):

Number of Credit Hours:

Number of Contact Hours:

Which delivery method will this course be utilizing?

_____IN   _____HY   _____IH

The course developer is responsible for developing course by the corresponding deadline. All distance learning courses should be approved BEFORE the first semester of delivery.

Semester	Course Submission Deadline	Course Analysis Report	Revised Course Submission Deadline
Spring Semester	September, 1st	September, 15th	October, 1st
Summer/Fall Semester	February, 1st	February, 15th	March, 1st

NC Community College System's Virtual Learning Community Courses

The NC Community College System's (NCCCS) Virtual Learning Community (VLC) is an information resource for learners to find information about distance learning opportunities from the 58 member schools. This resource also houses the North Carolina Learn and Earn program, where high school students can enroll to take online courses for both high school and college credit.

Faculty and administrators at participating campuses have access to the VLC to find and share curriculum and resources including technical help. This resource can be browsed by faculty to download, modify, and implement a collection of premade resources and courses for distance learning. Faculty can browse the resources available on the VLC by going to the faculty page found at http://vlc.nccommunitycolleges.edu/faculty/index.html.

VLC approved courses are available in the following areas:

A. Continuing Education and Core Skills
B. Arts & Sciences
C. Business
D. Computer Information Technology
E. Education
F. Mathematics

Please send an e-mail requesting any VLC course or learning modules be downloaded to Moodle to the Director or Distance Learning.

North Carolina Learning Object Repository (NCLOR)

The NCLOR is a digital repository that provides one system to house your teaching and learning, research, media and library content. This FREE resource lets teachers from around the state search the NCLOR, find resources appropriate to the subjects they are teaching, and use them in their classes. Click here for more information and how to get started using the NCLOR. (http://explorethelor.org/)

Richmond Community College has an activity plugin on Moodle that provides faculty teaching distance learning courses access to all of the NCLOR resources. Please view the NCLOR online orientation at: http://www.nclor.org/nclorprod/file/156d9d08-d521-3fce-7fcf-845e8c368a19/2/NCLOR_Orientation52.zip/index.html.

Student Login Information

RCC creates a username and password for each student. Student usernames are to be used with your Student E-mail account, Moodle, and WebAdvisor.   More information about using these web-based resources is provided in the below sections.

RCC Student Username

The RCC username is created from your "**first initial**", "**middle initial**", and "**last name**". Usernames is provided to student in the acceptance letter received from the college.

Student E-mail and Moodle Password

Student e-mail and Moodle passwords are created by default using *"rcc"+"7 digit ID number".* *S*tudent ID numbers can be found on the back of the student ID badge AND on students' course schedule.

EXAMPLE: Mary Kay Smith would use the following information:
Username: mksmith
Password: rcc1234567

Students should change the default password for student e-mail and Moodle immediately after initial access. Students should also keep their username and password information secure at all times. To protect student privacy, students should not share username and password information unless a college faculty or staff member requests this information.

Student Identity

Richmond Community College takes all possible measures to protect the identity of students online by requiring a secure username paired with a unique password for access to WebAdvisor, Moodle, and Student E-mail accounts. Students only have access to their own personal information when logged into web-based accounts. In addition to secure usernames and passwords for WebAdvisor, Moodle, and Student E-mail accounts, students also have access to the RCC web-based student help desk and live telephone support.   To maintain security, students are required to provide at least two out of the three forms of identification before any student account information is released:

- Date of birth
- Home address listed with the college
- 7 digit RCC ID number

RCC Student Help Request

The Richmond Community College Student Help Request is available to all students for general technical problems involving usernames, password resets and assistance utilizing WebAdvisor, Student E-mail, and Moodle. All **course-specific questions** (such as those about assignments, tests, grades, and course content) should be directed to the **instructor** only. Student should submit a help request online from the "Help Desk" link provided on the RCC homepage (www.richmondcc.edu) OR by calling the Academic Success Center at (910) 410-1757. Help request personnel are available Monday through Thursday 8 AM – 9 PM and Friday 8AM – 2:30PM. All requests made after 2:30PM on Friday will be on as soon as possible on the following Monday.

Direct link to help request online form:
(https://docs.google.com/a/student.richmondcc.edu/spreadsheet/viewform?pli=1&formkey=dFN1N2wteWFlTndjbUlqeEJhWG1QSVE6MQ#gid=0)

Verification of Student Enrollment in Distance Learning Courses

Currently Richmond Community College uses a secure and unique username and password to ensure the each student who registers for a course is the same student who participates, completes all courses work, and receives credit for the course. All students are required to provide this information before accessing any web-based college supported learning environment. Students are only allowed to access their own personal information using their username and password. Students are advised not to share their unique username and password with any other persons to protect their personal information and privacy while participating in college supported web-based environments. Some instructors may require campus-based proctored examinations for additional verification. If the instructor does require a campus-based proctored examination, students are aware of this prior to registering for the course.

Compliance with FERPA - Issues with minors

Richmond Community College fully adheres to FERPA guidelines as they pertain to privacy of student information. For more details, refer to the faculty handbook.

In online courses, the following guidelines may be helpful
1. Only send personal information to student RCC Gmail accounts.
2. Do not share personal information or grades in public locations, such as discussion boards.
3. Do not share personal information or grades via phone unless the student identity can be verified as described in this handbook in the "Student Identity" section.

Resource and Support Manual for Distance Learners

An online student manual for Distance Learning is available on the RCC Distance Learning Web page for potential online students. This manual presents information on the unique nature and general expectations of distance learning, how to access and utilize Moodle, and provides an assessment of student readiness for online learning.

RCC User Accounts

Student e-mail accounts and WebAdvisor accounts are created when students are accepted into the college. Students receive their acceptance letter along with instructions concerning their college username and their password for their student e-mail account. All newly accepted students must come to the RCC New Student Orientation and speak with an advisor before registering for courses.

All student Moodle accounts are created at the beginning of each semester. Students will be enrolled in their courses using the Moodle interface at 8 am on the first day of each semester. Dropping of student accounts in Moodle is done by the instructors of the individual classes. Students are to be changed to the "suspended" status in Moodle if they do not access the course by the 10% census date for the course. Also, if a student does not pay semester fees by this date, the registrar's office will request that the student account be disabled until the fees are paid in full. Students who drop from your curriculum roster later in the semester, but still are visible in your Moodle course roster, should also be moved to the suspended student status. If you have questions about how to suspend a student, contact the Director of Distance Learning.

New college employee accounts are created individually and upon request from the Human Resource department. If a user has problems with their account access, please contact the Director of Distance Learning to resolve the issue. The Director of Distance Learning & Instructional Technology is available to assist faculty with questions regarding Moodle issues, general concerns, or with technical or pedagogical implementation for their courses.

All department chairs have access to courses for evaluation purposes. They are provided a special role in Moodle allowing them 24/7 access to any of their program courses. Additional roles in Moodle include:

- Student
- Student Trainer
- Instructor
- Department Chair
- Manager
- Help Desk
- Administrator

10% or Census Date Reporting for Online Courses

All courses, including distance learning courses, must adhere to state regulations for 10% reporting. This process is essential to receipt of state and federal funding. Each faculty member teaching credit curriculum distance learning courses is responsible for utilizing Moodle to access and run a Moodle report of attendance. The faculty member, after generation of the report, must submit the report in the same procedure as those teaching web-enhanced face to face courses.

Course Evaluations

During each semester, students in all types of credit curriculum courses complete and return anonymous student course evaluations which are used to gauge student perceptions of effectiveness of courses and instructors at RCC. Students should be encouraged to complete these surveys because the results can be used as a tool to find areas needing improvement in course design and instructional practice. A link for students to access the course evaluations will be e-mail to instructors. Instructors are responsible for making the link available to students on Moodle.

Proctored Exams

The Academic Success Center will be glad to serve as a test proctor for your online courses. Our requirements are that we be contacted directly by the instructor via email. When contacting us, the instructor should use his/her email account from the college at which he/she is teaching. If a proctor form is required, either the instructor or the student is responsible for completing the form. The Academic Success coordinator cannot fill out paperwork from other institutions.

To ensure that we provide quality proctoring services, we suggest that the instructor or Proctor Office send the following information:

- Student name, course number, course title.
- Time limit, if any.
- Date range the test is available.
- Items to be used/not used during test. (e.g., books, notes, calculators, scratch paper, etc.)
- A copy of the test as a Word document, PDF file, etc., mail a hard copy of the test, or email the password for an online test.
- Method of returning the test to the instructor, if applicable. (e.g., mail, email attachment, fax, etc.)
- What day and approximate time student plans to take test. The student is required to call three days prior to a test to arrange his/her date and time.

Testing hours

- Monday – Thursday: 1:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. (Lab closes at 9:00 p.m. and all testing should be completed by 8:45 p.m.)
- Fridays: 12:00 – 2:00 p.m. (Testing ends at 2:15 p.m.)
-

Students should call to ensure that the test(s) have been received BEFORE they come to the Academic Success Center. A campus map and driving directions can be found on the RCC web site. The Academic Success Center is located in the J. Richard Conder building (RCC library).