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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Procedures for Protecting the Privacy of Distance Learning Students (Online and Hybrid)

Richmond Community College will comply with the provisions of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) of 1974. This act protects the privacy of all students' educational records.

Richmond CC has adopted Moodle as it's only Learning Management System (LMS). This LMS requires unique usernames and secure passwords, and uses industry standard 128-bit encryption in order to provide a high level of security for student records warehoused within the system.

However, it is important that instructors adhere to the following procedures to ensure the privacy of distance learning students.

1. All online communication with students which deal with any records or subject matter which would fall under FERPA regulations, will take place within the confines of the LMS (using messages) or through student email. This protects the privacy of students as Richmond CC controls both of these systems.

2. Discussion boards, class forums, and other course-related communications that occur as part of the course content are accessible only to the members of the class and the course instructor(s) through the security of the LMS. Instructors will protect the privacy of these communications by only sharing information with those college employees who may have a legitimate need to access this information, such as lead instructors or department chairs. Additionally:

    a. Instructors will not share any of these communications with students not enrolled in the course.

    b. Instructors will not share course communication with other employees of the college who have no legitimate need for access to such communication.

3. By design of the LMS grade book, each student's course grades are only accessible to that student and the instructor. Instructors will use this grading system within the LMS to control access to those records.

    a. Grades will not be posted within discussion forums or any other type of posting where one student would have access to another's grades. For example, replies by the instructor to a student's discussion forum posting must not contain any grading information or indicate what a student's grade might be.

    b. Instructors are also not allowed to post class-wide grades even when such postings would use a key of some kind to hide the identity of specific students (such as the last three digits of the student ID number).

4. Any information used by instructors, lead instructors, and department chairs to construct assessment reports will not include the identity of individual students.

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 teach using the Moodle interface. Instructors have the opportunity to earn up to **40 possible points**. A minimum of 35 points is required to pass the certification.

- *Tasks 1-8: **26 Points***
- *Task 7 (Moodle Certification Quiz): **14 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 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.

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

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/.

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 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

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 must be made aware of this at the beginning of the semester.

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.

Beginning fall semester, 2016, Moodle is integrated with Datatel. Course withdrawals and additions will be handled automatically. For example, if a student is withdrawn from a course, after the withdrawal is processed in the registrar's office, the student will not have access to the course at his or her next login.

If a student has been withdrawn, but is still visible as a participant or in the course's grade book, please contact the Director of Distance Learning immediately.

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 can provide test proctoring for online courses. When contacting the ASC for proctoring, 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 quality proctoring services are provided, it is suggested that the instructor 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.