Distance Learning Policy & Procedure Manual

Created and maintained by:
Pearl River Community College
Office of eLearning
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Pearl River Community College Mission Statement

Pearl River Community College is a public institution committed to providing quality educational and service opportunities for all who seek them.

Pearl River Community College Goals

1. To prepare students to transfer and be successful in their studies at baccalaureate institutions and/or to be successful in careers for which they have been prepared.

2. To provide quality student services.

3. To provide access to college classes and programs using various instructional methods, including distance education.

4. To employ qualified faculty and staff, compensate them well, and provide opportunities for their professional development.

5. To provide facilities, technology, and support staff in order to improve student learning, enhance faculty and staff performance, augment community services, and make college services available via the Internet.

6. To improve communication among campus personnel and community members regarding the College goals, objectives, and activities.

7. To recruit and retain students from a diverse population.

8. To provide workforce training programs that meet requirements of business, industry, educational, and public service agencies for basic skills, specific job skills, and technical skills training.

Mission of Distance learning

The mission of Distance Learning at Pearl River Community College is to provide quality instruction through electronic technologies to enable students to attain their educational goals consistent with our Institution’s strategic initiative to provide access to college classes and programs using various instructional methods, including distance education. The program will extend the offerings of Pearl River Community College to the community and beyond through distance learning.

Distance Learning Goals

The identified goals are designed to reflect qualities of the College’s stated goals.

Transfer/Career

- To identify, provide, expand, and coordinate the development of quality classes and programs to meet the needs of distance learners.

Student Services

- To develop or modify procedures for providing support services to distance learners in areas such as testing, admissions, registration, counseling, library services, financial aid, and advising using such means as email, telephone, web pages, and mail.
Instructional and Qualified Faculty/Professional Development

- To support and encourage the internal development of the distance learning program by promoting and providing guidelines for training, inclusion of distance learning classes in instructor workloads, and technical support.
- To provide strategies for effective delivery of distance learning alternatives through the development of policies for consistency in distance learning.
- To evaluate periodically and comprehensively every facet of the distance learning program and to use these results to restructure and improve the program.
- To recruit, train, counsel, evaluate, and retain highly qualified online instructors.
- To use previous semester data (enrollment number and type of classes) in the creation of classes schedules for each upcoming semester.

Resources

- To provide, through the Mississippi Community College Board (MCCB), resources to be used for instructional purposes and by students (e.g., Canvas, Collaborate, Turnitin).
- To provide orientations for online instructors, students, and newly hired online instructors.

Communication

- To maintain open and direct lines of communication with students and all college personnel including faculty, administration, and professional staff regarding current distance learning procedures.

Recruit/Retain

- To assist in the recruitment of students to Pearl River Community College with an emphasis on distance learning as a class option.
- To monitor and appropriately utilize data for purposes of retaining students in online classes each semester.
## Policies and Procedures

### I. Educational Programs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality of Courses</th>
<th>Online courses are comparable to traditional campus-based courses in terms of: (1) syllabi, (2) textbooks, (3), grading, (4) methods of evaluation, and (5) learning outcomes.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Course Review</td>
<td>A course review will be conducted for each first-time instructor and each new course. Criteria will include but not be limited to student satisfaction, student learning outcomes, student retention, class presentation, and class management.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course Development Process</td>
<td>An open invitation is extended to all faculties for the development of Distance Learning classes; however, college staffing and curriculum priorities will require evaluation on a course-by-course basis. Faculty wishing to develop or conduct classes must submit a request to the eLearning Coordinator. All aspects of the course development must be complete prior to submission to the MSVCC master schedule.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ownership of Material</td>
<td>Pearl River Community College reserves the right of ownership of all electronic documents, programs, curricular, etc. developed under the auspices of the College.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mississippi Virtual Community College (MSVCC)</td>
<td>Pearl River Community College offers online classes through the Mississippi Virtual Community College (MSVCC). The MSVCC is a consortium composed of all 15 community and junior colleges in the state. Online classes taught by PRCC instructors and approved classes taught by others colleges are part of the PRCC Online Classes Offerings for each semester. Classes from the MSVCC are advertised each semester to students registering through Pearl River Community College. Pearl River Community College online classes must follow the policies and procedures that have been established by the MSVCC.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interaction with Students</td>
<td>Communication between students and faculty is vital for the success of Distance Learning. Pearl River Community College has adopted the following Student Structured Access Policy:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pearl River Community College full-time and part-time faculty must provide structured access to online students. Access methods must be clearly stated within the Learning Management System course site and also within the course syllabus. Access in the form of stated “office hours” may consist of, but not be limited to, structured email response (within 24-48 hours) policies, designated live chat sessions, and/or discussion board postings, scheduled phone accessibility, or combinations of such methods.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The MCCB has a contract with Instructure, which provides PRCC a Learning Management System platform called Canvas. Canvas is available for all PRCC classes via a website. The URL for the Pearl River Community College Canvas site is http://prcc.instructure.com.

All Pearl River Community College provided classes must administer two (and not more than three for 1-3 credit hour classes and not more than four for 4-credit hour classes) proctored tests during the fall and spring semesters. All PRCC provided classes must administer one (and not more than two) proctored test during the summer semester. At the Poplarville Campus and the Forrest County Center, Pearl River Community College provides proctored testing. These tests are given in a secure environment. A federal, state, or institutional photo ID is required, and students must schedule appointments at least 48 hours in advance. No cell phones, coats, children, food, or drinks are allowed in the testing areas. To schedule a proctored exam click on the SmarterProctoring button within the online course in Canvas.

Pearl River Community College students enrolled in a Pearl River Community College mathematics classes should contact the instructor for proctoring information. Mathematics proctored exams are administered in the Math Labs in Poplarville and at the Forrest County Center.

Proctored exam password information must be added to SmarterProctoring each semester. This information is available to proctors ONLY. Proctors use the password information to log students into the proper exam. In order to maintain security of exams, proctors are prohibited from sharing password information with students or other college personnel or non-PRCC proctors. **Students should never be provided a proctored exam password.** It is recommended that instructors change their proctored exam password each semester.

In order for students to request an off-campus proctor they must be located or living outside of Mississippi. Students that are in the state of Mississippi can take proctored exams at any of the community colleges in the state. A student living out of state who needs to take a proctored exam is to follow this process:

1. Students must print the Off-Campus Proctor Request form which is located on the PRCC eLearning website (www.prcc.edu/elearning - click on ‘PRCC Proctor Centers’).
2. The student must locate a local proctoring center at a community college or university.
3. The student must complete the middle section which includes the student’s information.
4. The proctor must complete the top part of the form.
5. The proctor will fax the request and a copy of their faculty/staff ID or statement of affiliation on organizational letterhead signed by an organization officer to 601-403-1009.
6. The Office of eLearning will either grant or decline the request and notify the student.
7. The Office of eLearning will e-mail the proctor requesting the date the student will be taking the proctored exam.
8. After receiving the scheduled date, the Office of eLearning will then reply to the proctor’s e-mail with the proctored test information.

Note: All Off-Campus Proctor requests must go through the Office of eLearning, not the online instructor. It is not the instructor’s responsibility to interact and communicate with off-campus proctors.
II. Support Services

Admissions

Online students are held to the same admission standards as traditional students and must follow the same process for enrollment at Pearl River Community College. Students may apply for admission, register for classes, and pay tuition fees without coming to campus. The following webpage has links to a Pearl River Community College application and financial aid information: [http://www.prcc.edu/admissions](http://www.prcc.edu/admissions).

Registration

Students who wish to register for online classes should (1) consult with an advisor and (2) complete the self-registration process by accessing the distance learning website at [http://www.prcc.edu/elearning](http://www.prcc.edu/elearning).

Registration is not complete until classes have been verified by College personnel. Following are reasons that classes may not be verified:

- Students must satisfy all pre- or co-requisites for certain classes. See the [Pearl River Community College Catalog](http://www.prcc.edu/catalog) for a complete listing.
- Adequate ACT scores must be on file before taking certain classes.
- A student cannot register for more than 18 total hours per term. If the student requests online classes that will make the TOTAL hours (the sum of day, evening, and online classes) more than 18 hours, the entire online registration will be denied. It is highly recommended that a student does not take more than 18 hours with some of them being online classes. Students who attempt this have a very low rate of success. Online classes take more time than traditional classes, not less.
- A hold in the Business Office or Registrar’s Office will result in removal from requested online classes.
- Classes will not be verified if the student registered using his or her social security number. Pearl River Community College Student IDs must be used when registering for online classes.

Advising

Pearl River Community College recognizes the importance of a thorough program of academic advising. While it is ultimately the responsibility of the students to select and follow a program of study which will lead to their instructional objectives, the College provides counselors who are equipped to advise students regarding career path and class selections. Students are encouraged to contact a faculty advisor who is an expert in the student’s field of study.

Students considering an online class are encouraged to self-assess their technology preparedness by completing the SmarterMeasure Assessment which is available on the eLearning website at [www.prcc.edu/elearning/student-resources](http://www.prcc.edu/elearning/student-resources).

Graduation requirements can be found by accessing the College catalog ([http://www.prcc.edu/catalog](http://www.prcc.edu/catalog)) or the Graduation webpage.
Financial Aid

Financial Aid information, scholarships, qualifications and applications are available to all students through the College website at [http://www.prcc.edu/financial-aid](http://www.prcc.edu/financial-aid). Financial Aid support services may also be reached at financialaid@prcc.edu or (601) 403-1029.

Student Records

A transcript will be issued upon receipt of a written and signed request from the student. Students may request a transcript by accessing the Transcript Order Form on the PRCC Admissions website at [http://www.prcc.edu/admissions](http://www.prcc.edu/admissions).

Student Disability Services (ADA)

The ADA/Civil Rights Coordinator is the official contact for students with disabilities. The ADA Coordinator serves as an advocate for students with disabilities and assists them in achieving equal access to all college programs and services.

If you have a disability that qualifies under the Americans with Disabilities Act and you require special assistance or accommodations, you should contact the designated coordinator for your campus for information on appropriate guidelines and procedures: Poplarville Campus, Tonia Moody at 601-403-1060 or tmoody@prcc.edu; Forrest County Center, Kirk Powell at 601-554-5530 or epowell@prcc.edu; Hancock Center, Raymunda Barnes at 228-252-7000 or rbarnes@prcc.edu. Distance Learning Students who require special assistance, accommodations, and/or need for alternate format should contact Tonia Moody at tmoody@prcc.edu.

Based on the specific nature of each student’s documented disability, the plan may include but is not limited to the following adjustments: Assertive Technology, Peer Tutoring, Readers, Individualized Testing, Special Registration, Counseling, Student Skills Assistance, Text Enlargement, and any other Reasonable Accommodations.

Student Grievance Procedure

Pearl River Community College attempts to resolve internally all types of grievances at the level where they occur and in a timely manner.

It is the student’s advantage to keep communication open with faculty, staff, and peers, thus avoiding the necessity for appeals. Any distance learning student wishing to make a formal complaint regarding a college program, a service of the college, an employee of the college, or any other individual or aspect of the college, must take the following steps:

1. Discuss the problem with the faculty member, staff member, or administrator involved. Direct communication between the two parties usually resolves most of the problems.
2. If informal efforts to resolve the problem are not productive, the complainant should then contact the eLearning Coordinator to help in processing the complaint. The complaint must be in writing and sent to distancelearning@prcc.edu.
Coordinator will organize the information regarding the student’s issue.

3. If the complainant, at this point, wishes to file a formal complaint, he or she should express the nature of the complaint and all pertinent information in writing to the Director of Office of distance learning. A response will be sent within ten working days.

4. If the student is not satisfied with the resolution of grievance, that student may then appeal in writing to the Vice President for General Education and Technology Services. The appeal to the Vice President must be made within three days of the previous decision. The Vice President’s decision will be final.

5. Students who do not submit a written appeal by the appointed date forfeit any further consideration in this matter.

6. No adverse action will be taken against a student for filing a complaint.

In order for PRCC online students to withdraw from an online class they must visit the Office of eLearning website (www.prcc.edu/elearning). On the site is a withdrawal form that must be completed by the online student. When the student submits the withdrawal request, the Office of eLearning processes the request in both the College’s database and the State’s Enrollment Tool. **Note:** There is no refund once the student has completed an assignment/activity in their online classes and he/she is responsible for all charges associated with the online classes. If the student decides to withdraw from an online class, he/she will receive a “W” as long as the withdrawal is received by the MSVCC deadline date.

If a student asks to be withdrawn, promptly refer them to the eLearning website. Withdrawals cannot be submitted after a certain date in the semester (a calendar with this date is provided to all online instructors and is posted on the eLearning Calendar on the eLearning website).

Each community college has a different procedure for reporting requests to withdraw.

At the student’s discretion, the student has the right to withdraw from an online class by the MSVCC withdrawal deadline without having an instructor’s approval. This is allowed until the 75% point in the semester. After the MSVCC withdrawal deadline, the student will NOT be allowed to initiate a withdrawal.

If the student is other than a PRCC student, refer them to their home college for withdrawal directions.

Students are allowed to withdraw with a grade of “W” from online classes until the last date to withdraw. This is not always the same date as the PRCC campus calendar. Refer to the MSVCC and eLearning Calendars.

**Honesty Policy**

Academic misconduct is a serious offense because it diminishes the quality of academic scholarship; defrauds society, the institution, the faculty, and other students; and, undermines the efforts of those who eventually depend upon
Academic misconduct is any activity which may compromise the integrity of PRCC. Academic misconduct includes, but is not limited to, deceptive acts such as the following:

1. Asking for or giving another student information during a test;
2. Copying answers from another student’s paper or intentionally allowing someone to copy from one’s own paper during a test;
3. Using materials prohibited by the instructor during a test;
4. Either impersonating another student during a test or having another person assume one’s identity during a test;
5. Changing answers on a previously graded test in order to have a grade revised;
6. Stealing examination materials;
7. Plagiarism which is copying material, either exactly or in essence, and not providing appropriate documentation;
8. Copying or falsifying a laboratory or clinical project/assignment, including computer programs, in either disk or hard copy form;
9. Allowing someone else to compose or rewrite a student’s assignment;
10. Stealing, buying, selling, or otherwise providing research papers.

As with other violations of student conduct, academic misconduct may result in disciplinary action.

Procedure for Violators of Academic Misconduct

1. When academic misconduct has occurred in an online class, the instructor has the responsibility of assigning an appropriate penalty in accordance with the instructor’s policy. This may include failure of the assignment or failure of the classes. This should be documented in the course syllabus.
2. Online faculty are to report all incidents of academic dishonesty to the eLearning Office in writing. The report will include the date, time and place of the event, names of students involved, a summary of the infraction, and the action taken by the instructor.
3. If the misconduct occurred during a proctored test, the Proctor will email a detailed account of the incident to the instructor of the class and carbon copy the eLearning Office.
4. Appeal of the action must be made in writing to the eLearning Coordinator within 10 working days of the notification of the action that will be taken.

When academic misconduct has occurred, the instructor has the responsibility of assigning an appropriate penalty. This may include failure of the assignment or failure of the classes. Online instructors must make certain to clearly state the consequences of academic misconduct in the course syllabus.
Resources

provided through a variety of methods including the College's participation in statewide online learning resource cooperatives including MAGNOLIA, and MELO. The online library catalog, the Magnolia Project, and other online databases listed on the Databases page can be searched from any computer, on or off campus that has Internet access. Patrons can access the library’s catalog many ways; clicking on the Online Library Catalog link on the Library’s homepage, logging into RiverGuide and clicking on the Library tab, downloading the BookMyne app to a mobile device, or by going to The Libraries at Pearl River Community College Facebook page. The Magnolia Project and other online databases can be located through the Database page of the PRCC Library’s homepage. Patrons will notice that there are also links to newspapers, news magazines, online library catalogs of other colleges, museums, and government sites when the additional resources link is clicked from the database page. If online students are unable to come to campus, they have the option to use the Mississippi Electronic Libraries Online (MELO) service that is available through the MSVCC and Canvas. This allows the online students to search multiple databases using this system.

Bookstore

Textbooks for PRCC students, enrolled in PRCC provided online classes, can be purchased at PRCC’s Textbook Store at both the Poplarville and Forrest County locations. However, if students are taking non-PRCC classes which were pulled-in from MSVCC, those textbooks will not necessarily be available immediately at the PRCC Textbook Store. To order your textbooks online visit the Bookstore website at bookstore.prcc.edu. Online students must view their Student Profile which will indicate whether an eBook is being used or not. The eBook will be located within the online course in Canvas.

Technical Assistance

Pearl River provides technology support to online faculty and students. Labs are available for student use and proctored exams, and e-mail accounts for all Pearl River students and faculty are provided by the college.

Requests for technical assistance from students should first be made to the providing instructor. Online students who are enrolled in hosted classes should contact the eLearning Coordinator for technical assistance unless the issue is related to specific classes-related software in which case the host instructor should be contacted.

Students and Faculty can request technical assistance for Canvas 24 hours a day by visiting the ‘HELP’ button located in the top, right-hand corner after logging into Canvas. Students or Faculty may submit a ticket (preferred method), chat, or call the 1-800 telephone number for assistance. If Canvas support is unable to resolve the technical issue, documentation of the issue and Canvas ticket number needs to be forwarded to the Office of eLearning.

While Pearl River Community College is pleased to assist online students with technical issues, students who are not technologically literate should acquire computer-use skills before opting to take online classes. Also the Office of eLearning is not liable for computer problems. It is the students’ responsibility to make sure their computer is equipped with the proper hardware and software before taking online classes.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Tutoring Services</strong></th>
<th>Instructors should contact Information Technology by completing the online workorder to request technical assistance related to RiverGuide or email.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Proctor Centers</strong></td>
<td>NetTutor is a comprehensive online tutoring service that is available to online students in the courses in Canvas. Students are given live one-on-one tutoring. Also available to online students is asynchronous tutoring which allows the students to submit a question to a tutor offline. The tutor will then provide an answer. There are no fees assessed to the student for these services.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Off-Site Proctor Options</strong></td>
<td>At the Poplarville Campus and the Forrest County Center, Pearl River Community College provides proctored testing. No fee is assessed to students participating in the Mississippi Virtual Community College when using a proctoring site on a Mississippi community/junior college campus.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>In order for students to request an off-site proctor they must be located or living outside of Mississippi. The off-site proctor requests that include other universities or community colleges must be approved by the Office of eLearning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>However, students wanting to use virtual proctoring must contact their online instructor. Online instructors can make this service available to the online students. The virtual proctoring system that is used at PRCC is called B-Virtual. B-Virtual is a service that is offered through SmarterProctoring and allows the students to take the proctored exams with a virtual proctor. All sessions are monitored live. During the testing process, B-Virtual uses visual identification (PHOTO MATCHING) to authenticate a student. They require a government issued photo ID for verifying the student. B-Virtual captures and store evidence of the valid ID. The entire session is recorded from start to finish with both student and proctor. B-Virtual utilizes leading remote monitoring technologies to monitor the student’s screen, and all computer activity. Students must have a webcam and microphone in order to use the virtual proctoring service. Students needing to use off-site or virtual proctoring may be assessed a testing fee for site utilization.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Business Office</strong></td>
<td>There is no refund for online classes once the student has completed work in the classes. This means if the student participated in at least one assignment, the student will be charged for the class. For more information regarding fees, contact the Business Office at 601-403-1206.</td>
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</table>
### III. General Information about Online Classes

NOTE: The information in this section is the information provided to the students through the Office of eLearning and should be used when planning a class.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Availability of Online Classes</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A complete list of online classes offered through the MSVCC can be found at msvcc.squarespace.com. Students may only enroll in online classes that are listed in the PRCC catalog. All MSVCC classes are not offered by PRCC because some classes are not listed in the PRCC catalog and/or are not equivalent to PRCC classes. Students can request an MSVCC online class by emailing <a href="mailto:distancelearning@prcc.edu">distancelearning@prcc.edu</a>. Once requested, the course approval process will take place. The student will be notified by email as to whether the course has been approved or denied. Pearl River Community College reserves the right to change instructors, change class’s schedules, and cancel classes due to insufficient enrollment or unforeseen circumstances.</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Registration Confirmation</th>
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<tr>
<td>The Office of eLearning will e-mail a registration confirmation to all PRCC students registered for online classes. Students should receive an email confirmation of registration within three days of completing PRCC registration. If a student does not receive confirmation, the student should email <a href="mailto:distancelearning@prcc.edu">distancelearning@prcc.edu</a> for assistance. Students that register through the self-registration also receive an e-mail if there are problems with the registration information. Students can also view their Student Profile to confirm their registration has been completed. The student profile can be accessed by visiting the Student Profile website at <a href="https://sbcjcweb.sbcjc.cc.ms.us/ET/SelfService/Signin.aspx">https://sbcjcweb.sbcjc.cc.ms.us/ET/SelfService/Signin.aspx</a>. Use of username and password by anyone other than the registered student may be cause for dismissal from online classes(s).</td>
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</tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Online Class Start Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students will not be able to access their classes until the first day of online classes. All PRCC online classes are taught using the Instructure Canvas learning management system.</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pre-requisites for Classes</th>
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<tr>
<td>All students must meet pre-requisite requirements as outline in the PRCC college catalog.</td>
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</table>
Computers for Online Classes

Each student planning to take an online class should have his or her own personal computer. Computers should be equipped with at least the following:

- **Screen Size:** A minimum of 1024x600. That is the average size of a netbook.
- **Computer Speed and Processor:** Use a computer 5 years old or newer when possible. 1 GB of RAM, 2 GHz processor.
- **Internet Speed:** Minimum of 512kbps.
- **Operating System:** Windows XP SP3 and newer, Mac OSX 10.6 and newer, Linux chromeOS, iOS 5 and newer, and/or Android 2.3 and newer. It is recommended that you install the Mobile Apps for iOS or Android devices.
- **Web Browser:** Canvas supports the last two versions of every browser (Internet Explorer, Chrome, Safari, Firefox) and Flash release. It is recommended that you update to the newest version of whatever browser you are using, as well as the most up-to-date Flash plug-in. JavaScript must be enabled in your browser. To see which browsers Canvas supports, visit this link: [http://guides.instructure.com/s/2204/m/4214/l/41056-which-browsers-does-canvas-support](http://guides.instructure.com/s/2204/m/4214/l/41056-which-browsers-does-canvas-support).

The college is not responsible for technical problems that students may have with computers used to access their online classes.

Internet Access

Students will need to have their own Internet Service Provider to access their course site. The College is not responsible for technical problems that students may experience with their Internet Service provider or computer.

Attendance/Absences

Pearl River Community College is a member of the Mississippi Virtual Community College (MSVCC), which allows students to take online classes that are taught by PRCC instructors (provided classes), as well as classes that are taught by instructors from the other community colleges (hosted classes). Each college will have its own absence policy. At the beginning of the classes, the instructor must communicate with the student by documented classes policies his/her expectations regarding the format and frequency of class attendance.

Online classes at the community college level are not independent study/self-paced classes. The instructor is the person responsible for setting the pace, not the student. Taking attendance is an important part of the instructor’s responsibility and is critical to retention. The following is the attendance policy for online classes:

MSVCC defines attendance in online classes as active participation in classes learning activities. Attendance should be measured weekly and should be based upon documentable engagement with course content.

A student participating in a provided online class will be allowed two (2) absences for full-term (15 weeks) online classes and one (1) absence for short-term (8 weeks) online classes. Attendance will be monitored by timely submission of assignments, including tests, homework, projects, discussion board entries, etc. A student is expected to complete such assignments by the appropriate due date. Failure to complete such assignments by the due date will be recorded as an absence. Upon the third absence in a full-term classes and second absence in a short-term classes, the student will be administratively withdrawn from the classes barring any extenuating circumstances.
Extenuating circumstances do occur, such as an extreme illness, death in the family, legal matters, or military duty. * It is the student’s responsibility to provide appropriate documentation to substantiate such circumstances, at which time the instructor will determine if any extension is warranted. Students and instructors of online classes will adhere to the academic calendar and the process of appeal.

*Circumstances NOT considered extenuating:
- registering late for the class
- failure to read the syllabus
- failure to plan appropriately
- not having the appropriate textbook or software
- technical problems

When an instructor marks a student absent in GradesFirst (Attendance/Audit System), the student will receive a warning notice about their absence. The Warning Notice informs the student that he/she has a specific date by which to contact the instructor and/or continue working in the classes or withdraw from the classes. If the student fails to continue working in the classes or present evidence of extenuating circumstances, then the instructor will have the student administratively removed from the online classes. After the student has reached the maximum number of allowed absences, the student will no longer receive a warning notice and will be cut from their online classes (based on the instructor’s request).

Each community college has a different procedure for reporting instructor drops. For example, non-PRCC instructors may not send a warning notice before cutting a PRCC student.
IV. Faculty

Faculty Load

An instructor is limited to teaching no more than fifteen semester hours in a summer semester. An instructor may be assigned no more than three different course preparations during the summer semester. Adjunct faculty is allowed to teach two online classes during each of the fall and spring semesters. Full-time faculty is offered online classes as needed to meet the demand from students. If these classes are in addition to the required full-time faculty load, then overload compensation may be required.

In addition to the faculty requirements outlined by the College for all instructors, the Office of eLearning considers the development of the online faculty to be a critical element to the success of the distance learning effort. Online faculty will exhibit the following characteristics:

1. Participate in the orientation session for online faculty. The state-provided Teaching Effectively Online course serves as a training class for teaching online classes. New faculty members must also complete Canvas training (LMS used to teach online classes) offered by the Office of eLearning and the eLearning Boot Camp orientation class in order to teach online at PRCC.

2. Possess or are capable of developing enhanced technology skills.

3. Meet the basic requirements for instruction within the discipline using the SACS criteria as stated in the Pearl River Policy & Procedures Manual.

Adjunct Faculty

Through PRCC

Adjunct faculty employed by Pearl River are a vital component of the online program. These instructors are paid in the same manner as adjuncts teaching day, night, or weekend classes- $500 per credit hour. Adjuncts are employed for one semester, and the college determines whether adjuncts are asked to teach each succeeding semester. Pearl River adjuncts are required to follow the class syllabus provided to them by the college and must use class materials such as a textbook to teach the online class.

Adjunct Faculty

Through Hosted Classes

In the event that Pearl River Community College students participate in a hosted class, instructors will be considered adjunct employees of Pearl River Community College in terms of credential qualifications. In such cases, the provider will fulfill the full-time faculty requirements of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS).

Adjunct Faculty Credential Review of a hosted class is conducted prior to the decision to host a class.

1. A written request for a class is received by the eLearning Coordinator. The request may come from a student, an instructor, or an administrator.

2. The eLearning Coordinator determines which institution(s) offer the requested classes giving preference to institution using the same text and supplementary materials as PRCC. After determining which Institution(s) teach the classes, the Coordinator prints the classes syllabus and the instructor’s credentials (transcript and/or Certification Form), includes an approval form, and sends the information for approval to the:
1. The Department Chair is responsible for certifying that the class syllabus meets the standards of Pearl River Community College syllabi.

2. Other individuals review the entire packets of information indicating approval or non-approval of the classes.

3. The Vice President for General Education and Technology Services is to certify through his/her signature and date that the instructor either does or does not qualify as an instructor in compliance with the SACS criteria.

The completed credential file(s) will be maintained in the Office of eLearning.

In all academic areas, the master’s degree with eighteen (18) graduate semester hours of specialization in the teaching field is considered the minimum requirement. In specialized, professional, career or technical fields, evidence of professional competency is acceptable in lieu of formal academic preparation.

Adjunct online faculties are held to the same standards as full-time Pearl River Community College faculty members.

Pearl River Community College must supply online faculty credential information to the MSVCC central repository for restricted viewing by the appropriate host college. A Faculty Credentials Certification form is posted on a secured site called the MSVCC Enrollment Tool that is maintained by the Mississippi Community College Board. (Appendix A)

The Office of eLearning provides professional development opportunities and support services to online faculty. A list of training sessions is available on the eLearning training webpage at http://www.prcc.edu/elearning/training.

Pearl River provides technology support to online faculty. Canvas, RiverGuide and E-mail accounts are provided for all Pearl River students and faculty.
V. Planning and Evaluation

Institutional Planning

Pearl River Community College’s planning, budgeting, and policy development processes reflect facilities, staffing and equipment and other resources essential to the viability of the distance learning program.

Education Effectiveness

The Office of Planning and Research provides reports of educational effectiveness of distance learning programs to ensure comparability to campus-based programs. Student success and retention rates for distance learning classes are collected through the Pearl River administrative software system and the state-maintained Enrollment Tool and are analyzed at the conclusion of each semester to ensure comparability to campus-based programs.

Evaluations of eLearning Office

The Office of eLearning and staff are evaluated annually. The Director of eLearning is evaluated by Vice President for General Education and Technology Services. The eLearning Coordinator and the eLearning office in general are evaluated by the online instructors and the Director of eLearning. (Appendix B & C) The remaining of the staff is evaluated by the Director of eLearning.

Evaluations of Online Classes

In order to promote a quality program, the collection of data and generation of reports for analysis and evaluation is critical. Pearl River Community College Distance Learning program conducts the following assessments to assist in the collection, analysis, and evaluation process:

- **Student Evaluation of Classes and Services**
  The College utilizes MSVCC student data to determine effectiveness in the area of quality of online instruction and support services. (Appendix D & E) Student Classes and Services Evaluations are administered through the Mississippi Virtual Community College (MSVCC) website toward the end of each semester for every online class in which a student is enrolled. The survey evaluates the course content, materials, instructor, and services. These results are extracted by the Office of eLearning.

  Evaluation by students is emphasized because they routinely experience all facets of an instructor’s contribution to the learning process. The purpose of this evaluation is to provide feedback for the improvement of instruction. A secondary purpose may be, in some situations, the provision of information to be used as one factor in making personnel decisions.

  The following guidelines are to be observed regarding student evaluations of instruction:

  - The evaluation will be administered by the MSVCC.
  - Confidentiality of student responses is to be insured.
- The instructor is to be given a composite of the results after the end of the grading period.

**Supervisor Evaluation of Faculty**

The purpose of supervisor evaluation of faculty is to improve instruction. The evaluations focus on the appropriateness of learning objectives, the validation of desired learning outcomes, and the appropriateness of class policies.

Supervisor Evaluation of Faculty is an in-depth evaluation that is very detailed. (Appendix F) This evaluation is conducted every year by a Lead Online Instructor or eLearning Coordinator (if Lead Online Instructor doesn’t exist) and more often if:

- the previous evaluation revealed significant concerns, and the instructor was asked to address the issues. A follow-up evaluation is conducted the next semester to ascertain whether the concerns were addressed.
- an unusual number of complaints are received, an unscheduled evaluation of the classes may be warrant.

Upon completion of the evaluation process, an Academic Quality letter from the Vice President for General Education and Technology Services and the Director of eLearning will be issued to each chief academic officer of the MSVCC membership stating:

*We have reviewed the evaluations of classes and instructors both as a host and as a provider of all instructors used by Pearl River Community College as a member of the Mississippi Virtual Community College for _____ term. I further certify that the instructors have adequate academic preparation for classes offered, classes content criteria is as stated in The Uniform Classes Numbering System in Mississippi Public Community and Junior Colleges, and that instructor evaluations have been viewed.*

**Scheduling of Online Classes**

Online classes will follow the MSVCC schedule that is established by the State Dean’s Association. Any exceptions must be authorized by the Director of eLearning and the eLearning Coordinator. It is the intent to host classes available on the MSVCC. Pearl River reserves the right not to host classes which are not within our programs or for which exceptions on faculty credentials and/or classes comparability exists.
## VI. Administration, Facilities/Equipment, & Finance

### Personnel
- The College has designated qualified personnel for the purpose of the administration of Distance Learning at Pearl River Community College. The eLearning Coordinator reports to the Director of eLearning.

### Quality of Distance Learning
- The eLearning Director is responsible for the quality of Distance Learning at Pearl River Community College.

### Marketing/Recruitment
- Online classes are advertised on the Pearl River Community College website. Pearl River Community College is also part of the MSVCC Consortium in which PRCC is advertised on the MSVCC website. Pearl River Community College recruits students by advertising through the college website, in state and local media, and direct mail. Additionally, college classes are promoted through individual campus tours, high school visits, industrial visits, and career fairs.

Students that are interested in online classes at PRCC can email distancelearning@prcc.edu, download the PRCC eLearning app, or call our office at 601.403.1110.

### Facilities/Equipment
- The college provides laboratories, facilities, and equipment necessary to meet program/classes requirements and train/support current and potential online faculty members.

### Funding
- Designated funds for the operation of distance learning programs are administered through the general educational program budget.
APPENDIX

APPENDIX A: Faculty Credential Form (for ET)

In accordance with the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) faculty requirements, this statement is provided to assist community college districts participating in the Mississippi Virtual Community College (MSVCC) with verification and authentication of faculty credentials.

Originating College:

Faculty Name: Faculty ID #:

Faculty Status: □ (F/T) □ (P/T) □ Technical

Area: □ Academic □ Career

Highest Degree Earned: From:

Comments:

List MSVCC Teaching Area(s) with 18 Graduate Hours: (1)

(2)

List the Graduate Classes, 18 Semester Hours, and Institution for each MSVCC Teaching Area:

(Area 1) Class# # Hrs. Institution   (Area 2) Class# # Hrs. Institution

Total Hrs.: Total Hrs.:
Original Transcript on File:  
☐ (Yes)  ☐ (No)  

Date of Employment:  

Date of last review of official documentation:  

I, ____________, as the Chief Academic Officer of ____________ Community College certify to the above faculty credential statements and state that the attached copies of transcripts represent the referenced faculty member's original documents on file in the Human Resources office of this college.  

_________________________________________  
Chief Academic Officer  

_____________________________  
Date
APPENDIX B: Office of eLearning Evaluation by Online Instructors

Online Instructor Evaluation of PRCC Office of eLearning

This brief survey evaluates the Pearl River Community College Office of eLearning.

Responds promptly to requests for assistance.
- Agree
- Disagree

Offers opportunities for training/learning.
- Agree
- Disagree

Is knowledgeable about College and State policies and procedures.
- Agree
- Disagree

Is consistent regarding the enforcement of policies.
- Agree
- Disagree

Overall, contributes positively to the growth of the College.
- Agree
- Disagree
If you disagree with any of the above, please explain.

Strengths of the Office of eLearning:

Recommendations for improvement:
APPENDIX C: eLearning Coordinator Evaluation by Online Instructors

Evaluation of PRCC’s Office of eLearning’s Coordinator

The brief survey evaluates the PRCC’s eLearning Coordinator.

Clearly explains the expectations of the College and the Office of eLearning
- Agree
- Disagree

Is approachable.
- Agree
- Disagree

Is supportive.
- Agree
- Disagree

Provides constructive feedback.
- Agree
- Disagree

Effectively communicates with instructors.
- Agree
- Disagree

Responds promptly to requests for assistance.
- Agree
- Disagree
Is knowledgeable about the technology and tools used in teaching online classes.
☐ Agree
☐ Disagree

Overall, is a good supervisor.
☐ Agree
☐ Disagree

If you disagree with any of the above, please explain.

Strenghts of the eLearning Coordinator:

Recommendations for improvement:
APPENDIX D: MSVCC Student Course Evaluation

This survey is provided each semester to all online students through the Mississippi Virtual Community College. During the semester, the instructor can see who has completed the survey but cannot view the survey results. The results are sent to the instructor by the Office of eLearning the following semester.

I. General Information
Choose the appropriate answer regarding your experience with this class.
  a) This class was effective as an online class.
  b) This class would be better in a traditional face-to-face setting.
  c) This class is appropriate in an online environment but would benefit from periodic face-to-face interaction.

II. Classes Evaluation
*Please respond using the following scale:*
  4-Strongly Agree, 3-Agree, 2-Disagree, 1-Strongly Disagree, 0-Not Applicable
1. This class is what you expected.
2. Class information including class goals/objectives, grading procedures, etc. was made available to me.
3. The class site was well organized and easy to navigate.
4. The class activities and assignments contributed to my learning.
5. The textbook supported the class presentations and was appropriate.
6. The supplemental materials (handouts, web links, study guides, demonstration materials) contributed to my learning experience.
7. Testing procedures were fair and supported the learning experience.

III. Interaction and Communication
*Please respond using the following scale:*
  4-Strongly Agree, 3-Agree, 2-Disagree, 1-Strongly Disagree, 0-Not Applicable
a. I had adequate interaction with the instructor.
b. I had adequate interaction with other students.
c. Various opportunities for interaction were provided.
d. Classes Interactions enhanced the learning experience.
e. I felt actively engaged with my classmates and my instructor as a part of a learning community instead of being “on my own.”

IV. Instructor
*Please respond using the following scale:*
  4-Strongly Agree, 3-Agree, 2-Disagree, 1-Strongly Disagree, 0-Not Applicable
a. The instructor conducted the classes in a way that accomplished the stated class objectives.
b. The instructor demonstrated a thorough knowledge of the subject.
c. The instructor was effective in utilizing distance learning technology.
d. The instructor responded to requests for assistance in a reasonable amount of time.
e. The instructor’s responses to class activities, assignments, and graded work were timely and appropriate.
f. The instructor displayed professionalism and respect for students

V. Comments
a. What was most effective about the classes?  Comments: ______
What suggestions do you have for improving the classes?    Comments: _____
APPENDIX E: Student Services Evaluation (services available to online students) by Online Students through MSVCC

I. General Information
   1. How many previous online classes have you completed?
      a. None
      b. One
      c. Two
      d. Three or more
   2. Classification
      a. Freshman
      b. Sophomore
      c. Dual enrolled
      d. Non-degree seeking
   3. Ethnicity
      a. Nonresident alien
      b. Black, Non-Hispanic
      c. American Indian or Alaskan Native
      d. Asian or Pacific Islander
      e. Hispanic
      f. White, Non-Hispanic
      g. Prefer not to respond
   4. Gender
      a. Female
      b. Male
      c. Prefer not to respond
   5. Age Group
      a. (Select box for Age Groups)
   6. Marital Status
      a. Single
      b. Married
      c. Divorce/Separated
      d. Widow/Widower
      e. Prefer not to respond
   7. Curriculum/Major
      a. Academic (University Parallel)
      b. Technical
      c. Career/Vocational
   8. What is your primary reason for taking an online class?
      a. Transportation Issues
      b. Classes was unavailable or a traditional section was not open
      c. Online classes fit my job/work hours better
      d. Family/Home (including child care)
      e. Recommendation by my advisor
      f. Recommendation by a friend
      g. I wanted to try taking classes this way
      h. Online experience was positive
i. Easy alternative to regular classes  
   j. Other

9. If online classes were not available, would you have enrolled in regular classroom classes?  
   a. Definitely would have taken a regular class  
   b. Probably would have taken a regular class  
   c. Probably would not have taken a regular class  
   d. Definitely would not have taken a regular class

10. Based on your experience so far, how do you feel the quality of online instruction compares with traditional classroom instruction?  
    a. Online instruction is better  
    b. Instructional quality is about the same  
    c. Traditional classroom instruction is better

11. Based on your experience so far, how do you feel the integrity of online instruction compares with traditional classes you have taken?  
    a. Online instruction integrity is better  
    b. Integrity is about the same  
    c. Traditional classroom integrity is better

II. Student Services  
Please respond using the following scale:  
4-Strongly Agree, 3-Agree, 2-Disagree, 1-Strongly Disagree, 0-Not Applicable

1. General information regarding the college was accessible or was provided to me.
2. Registration for online classes was easy and adequately supported.
3. Information regarding college policies and procedures was made available to me.
4. Program and course advisement services were made available to assist me in course selection and placement.
5. Please rate your satisfaction with communication with the following student service offices. (If you did not utilize a service, please select Not Applicable.)  
   a. Admissions/Records  
   b. Counseling/Advising  
   c. Financial Aid  
   d. Business Services  
   e. Housing  
   f. Recruiting  
   g. Bookstore  
   h. distance learning/Distance learning
6. The college provided adequate access to textbook services and classes materials.
7. The college provided adequate access to financial aid services.
8. Information regarding campus activities was accessible.
9. What suggestions do you have for improving Student Services? (COMMENT BOX)

III. Library Resources/Services  
Please respond to questions 1, 2, 3, and 4 using the following scale:  
1-Yes, 0-No

1. The classes(s) that I am currently taking require(s) library resources/research.
2. For my online class assignments, I needed books and magazines which were NOT online.
3. If I needed resources, books, and magazines which were NOT online, an alternate method for obtaining the resources was available.
4. Instructions for using library resources were adequate and effective.
5. Instructions for using library resources were provided in the following ways (select all that apply):
   a. Online through MELO
   b. Handouts
   c. Faculty Instruction
   d. Librarian
   e. Not Applicable
6. Check the following electronic resources that you have used:
   a. MAGNOLIA Products (EBSCOhost and others)
   b. MELO (MS Electronic Libraries Online)
   c. Online Library Catalogs
   d. Others
   e. Not Applicable
7. During the semester, I used library resources in the following ways:
   a. Online
   b. In person
   c. Telephone
   d. Not at all
8. What suggestions do you have for improving Library Resources/Services?
   Comments: _____

IV. Technology
Please respond using the following scale:
4-Strongly Agree, 3-Agree, 2-Disagree, 1-Strongly Disagree, 0-Not Applicable
1. I understood that this class would be conducted completely online.
2. Prior to enrolling in an online class, I was made aware that I must have access to a reliable computer with consistent internet connectivity.
3. I was appropriately prepared with the technical skills needed to be successful in an online class.
4. Blackboard and/or Desire2Learn functioned properly with minimal problems.
5. The software used in my classes(s) functioned properly and was adequately supported.
   a. Please include the name(s) of the software application(s) you used.
   Comments: _____
6. Technical support was adequate.
7. Please list any areas where technical support was inadequate. Please be detailed and include specific names, office, or resources you used for support. (COMMENT BOX)

V. Comments
1. Please list any additional comments or suggestions.
   Comments: _____
APPENDIX F: Online Classes Evaluation by Office of eLearning – Extensive

The following evaluation is administered by a Lead Online Instructor or the eLearning Coordinator and is conducted every year unless any of the following circumstances are recognized:

- If the previous evaluation revealed significant concerns, the instructor was asked to address the issues. A follow-up evaluation is conducted before the next semester begins to ascertain whether the concerns were addressed.

- It is normal to receive complaints regarding classes. There will always be disgruntled students in classes. If an unusual number of complaints are received, this will warrant an unscheduled evaluation of the classes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality Standards for Online Courses</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Course Evaluations</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Online courses are required to meet specific criteria to ensure that the course is complete and meets quality curriculum standards for the delivery mode. The reviewer's responsibility is to review the course with the standards listed in this document and to make recommendations based on the review. Recommendations may include approval as is or suggestions for revisions to the course to meet the standards. Upon completing the review, the reviewer forwards the results to the instructor and a copy of the results will be housed in the Office of eLearning.

### Course Information

- **Course Name:**
- **Instructor:**
- **Reviewer:**
- **Review Date:**

### Rubric

- **Non-Existent** - Item is not present, but should be included in course site.
- **Exists, but Needs Improvement** - Item exists in the course, but needs to be changed or modified. If changes need to be made, see comments next to each item.
- **Exists, Meets Standards** - Item exists in the course and no changes need to be made.
- **N/A** - Not applicable

### Course Specific Orientation

#### Course Overview and Structure

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standards</th>
<th>Non-Existent</th>
<th>Exists, but Needs Improvement</th>
<th>Exists, Meets Standards</th>
<th>N/A</th>
<th>Comments</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Course Orientation Module</td>
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<tr>
<td>Course-Specific Orientation (material presented to student)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Course Orientation Activity (the student submits something – discussion board, quiz, etc.)</td>
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## Course Overview

### Course Overview and Structure

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<th>Standards</th>
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<td>Course Design (Organized with Modules and Pages)</td>
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<td>Course navigational instructions</td>
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<td>Netiquette expectations</td>
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<td>Attendance requirements</td>
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## Course Information

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<th>Standards</th>
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<td>Syllabus is easy to locate and includes:</td>
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<td>☐ Course Title &amp; Number</td>
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<td>☐ Instructor Contact Info.</td>
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<td>☐ Student Learning Outcomes</td>
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<td>☐ Course Requirements/Expectations</td>
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<td>☐ Grading Policy is in compliance with PRCC requirements</td>
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<td>☐ ADA Statement</td>
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<td>Complete Instructor Information</td>
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<tr>
<td>Up-to-date Calendar</td>
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<td>(If using an external site such as MyMtlab, a printable calendar is included with all assignments, tests, etc. with exact due dates and weekly start/stop times)</td>
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<td>Welcome/Course Introduction</td>
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## Communication, Interaction, & Collaboration

### Activities & Opportunities

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<td>Instructor Introduction</td>
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<td>Student Introduction</td>
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<tr>
<td>Student-student interaction</td>
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<td>Student-instructor interaction</td>
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<td>Student-content interaction</td>
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</table>
### Student Evaluation & Assessment

#### Goals & Objectives

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<tr>
<th>Standards</th>
<th>Non-Existent</th>
<th>Exists, but Needs Improvement</th>
<th>Exists, Meets Standards</th>
<th>N/A</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student learning outcomes, goals &amp; objectives are clearly and specifically stated</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

#### Assessment Strategies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>N/A</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assessment and measurement strategies are:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Appropriate for distance learning environment</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Comprised of multiple methods</td>
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<tr>
<td>□ Conducted on an ongoing basis</td>
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</table>

#### Feedback

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>N/A</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Standards set for instructor response time &amp; availability (recommended 24-48 hrs.)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Statement explaining 1 week turn-around time for posted grades</td>
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#### Management

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Proctored mid-term &amp; comprehensive final exam (Summer and Short-Term classes only have one proctored exam)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Specific date &amp; length of time for each assessment (if using external tool course link – ie. MyMathLab, MyAccountingLab, etc.)</td>
<td></td>
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#### Content

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standards</th>
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<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Modules are sequenced appropriately, and content is</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Presented to meet the course objectives in an appropriate amount of time and sequence.</td>
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<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assignments clearly reflect the desired performance outcomes for the course.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The course supports different learning styles by providing multiple types of teaching techniques – audio, video, images, written, etc. – to meet course objectives. (A minimum of one audio or video is required each week)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment activities are aligned and clearly reflect the desired performance outcomes for the course. (SLOs are being measured)</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Comments/Suggestions for Improvement:**

Please respond to the e-mail stating that you have read your evaluation. This response must be documented by the Office of eLearning. Thanks!