Regular & Substantive Interaction

MARSHALL ONLINE

Instructor Presence

is the defining feature of successful online learning. Due to these findings, the U.S. Department of Education (DOE) has set regulations regarding what qualifies as a legitimate DISTANCE EDUCATION course for institutions that receive Title IV financial aid funds.

Regular

Interactions should be:

- initiated by the instructor, based on monitored student engagement
- proportional to course duration and competency
- predictable and scheduled

+

Substantive

Interactions should engage students in:

- teaching
- learning
- assessment

*consistent with the content under discussion.

Meeting The Requirements | Exceeding The Requirements

1 Providing Direct Instruction of Course Content
Includes any live synchronous instruction where both the instructor and the student are in communication at the same time.

- Host synchronous lectures with the potential for two-way interaction
- Facilitate synchronous discussion that engages course content.
- Hold regularly scheduled synchronous office hours
- Hold regularly scheduled synchronous one-to-one meetings.

- Selectively incorporate one or two tools and design meaningful tasks centered around them. Utilize each tool multiple times throughout the term, ensuring that students invest their time in active engagement with both their peers and the content through the tools, rather than focusing on learning how to operate them.

2 Assessing and/or Providing Feedback on a Student's Coursework
Communicate expected grading schedules, frequency, and type of feedback for assignments and activities.

- Include individualized feedback on graded assignments - in keeping with the feedback timelines set forth in the syllabus

- When using automatically graded assessments, add high-order thinking questions (analysis, synthesis, evaluation) with individualized feedback.

- Include commonly used comments in the grading Content Library to save time for personalized, higher-level feedback. Consider using the Flexible Grading feature to deliver feedback through audio or visual formats.

Meeting The Requirements　*Exceeding The Requirements*

[3] Providing Information/Responding to Student Questions About Course Content or a Competency
Make details clear regarding instructor contact information and office hours, response time for inquiries, and protocols surrounding communication tools, including email.

- Create weekly, scheduled announcements addressing the most common questions and concerns or updating the class on overall progress.
- Send messages checking on the academic aspects of the course - presentation, processing, additional information.

- Provide the option for synchronous conferences to discuss progress over the duration of a scaffolded project.
- Conduct a formative course review at mid-semester. Use the feedback to make any adjustments that are necessary. Communicate why the revisions were made: i.e. clarity, complexity of content, efficiency of processes.

[4] Facilitating A Group Discussion Regarding Course Content or a Competency
The syllabus and course site communicate expectations for student engagement.

- Include individualized feedback on graded assignments - in keeping with the feedback timelines set forth in the syllabus

- When using automatically graded assessments, add high-order thinking questions (analysis, synthesis, evaluation) with individualized feedback.

- Include commonly used comments in the grading Content Library to save time for personalized, higher-level feedback. Consider using the Flexible Grading feature to deliver feedback through audio or visual formats.

REFERENCES

Davis et al. (2020). Pursuing Regulatory Compliance For Digital Instruction in Response to Covid-19: Policy Playbook. Every Learner Everywhere.

NC SARA. (2020, October 1). US Department of Education Issues Final Rules on Distance Education and Innovation. The State Authorization Guide.

OSCQR SUNY Online Course Quality Review Rubric. (n.d.) "RSI Dasboard Illustration." SUNY Online Team. https://oscqr.suny.edu/rsi/.

Piña, A., and Trey Martindale (2023). Regular and Substantive Interaction in Online Courses: Why it Matters for Administrators. *The Online Journal of Distance Learning Administration,* 26(2). https://ojdla.com/articles/regular-and-substantive-interaction-in-online-courses-why-it-matters-for-administrators

Poulin, R., & Davis, V. (n.d.). Interpreting regular and substantive interaction. WCET Frontiers. Retrieved from https://wcetfrontiers.org/2016/09/30/interpreting-regular-and-substantive-interaction/

U.S. Department of Education. (n.d.). Distance Education and Innovation Final Regulations 34 CFR Parts 600, 602, and 668, Effective July 1, 2021.

MARSHALL M
ONLINE