

CCCCD Faculty Senates Coordinating Council (FSCC)

Resolution in Support of Regular and Substantive Interaction (RSI) – DRAFT 5/5/26

Background

The Faculty Senates Coordinating Council (FSCC) affirms that Regular and Substantive Interaction (RSI) is a foundational requirement for high-quality distance education and an essential component of equitable, student-centered teaching and learning. Recent updates to federal regulations, state regulations, accreditation standards, and district policy clarify and strengthen expectations for how instructors and institutions ensure meaningful interaction between faculty and students in online and hybrid courses.

The Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC) has adopted updated language and the Quality Continuum Rubric for Distance Education, which places increased emphasis on demonstrable, documented, and intentional RSI. These expectations are not solely for accreditation review; rather, they provide an opportunity to improve instructional practices, strengthen student engagement, reduce equity gaps, and enhance student success across modalities.

As a multi-college district, consistent, faculty-driven guidance, professional development, and shared resources are necessary to support instructors in meeting RSI requirements while preserving academic freedom, discipline-specific pedagogy, and local college needs. Districtwide collaboration can ensure clarity, alignment, and sustainability while avoiding compliance-only approaches.

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Whereas, substantial research and practice demonstrate that meaningful instructor presence, timely and individualized feedback, structured communication, and opportunities for interaction and reflection are strongly correlated with student learning, persistence, belonging, and success—particularly for historically underserved and disproportionately impacted students; and

Whereas, Regular and Substantive Interaction (RSI) is required by federal regulation (Title 34 §600.2), California Code of Regulations Title 5 (§55204), ACCJC accreditation standards and policies, and district Board Policy and Administrative Procedures governing distance education; and

Whereas, RSI is the defining characteristic that distinguishes distance education from correspondence education and requires instructor-initiated, predictable, and substantive engagement with students throughout the term; and

Whereas, the district-developed RSI Rubric and the ACCJC Quality Continuum Rubric for Distance Education provide reflective, non-punitive frameworks that align RSI with equity, Universal Design for Learning (UDL), accessibility, student support, assessment practices, and responsible use of educational technologies.

Resolved, that the Faculty Senates Coordinating Council (FSCC) affirms RSI as a core element of instructional quality, equity, and student success in all distance education offerings, and supports faculty leadership in defining, implementing, and continuously improving RSI practices; and

Resolved, to support student learning and success and help ensure compliance with RSI requirements, the Faculty Senates Coordinating Council recommends that, **effective Fall 2026, all faculty teaching online and hybrid courses fully implement the 4CD RSI Rubric standards in their courses, and** use the 4CD RSI Rubric as a reflective tool to annually review their courses; and

Resolved, that the Faculty Senates Coordinating Council recommends that the district provide local colleges with sufficient resources to develop and deliver ongoing faculty professional development in Regular and Substantive Interaction, in order to support effective implementation of the 4CD RSI Rubric, compliance with ACCJC RSI standards, and enhance student engagement in online courses; and

Resolved, that the FSCC requests regular communication, active partnership, and collaborative problem-solving with shared governance and union partners regarding RSI implementation, accreditation expectations, and districtwide supports, with the goal of preserving academic freedom while ensuring institutional compliance and instructional excellence.