

Distance Education Office/Conference Hours

(Based on Conference Hours Recommendation Approved by DE Committee April 2008)

Rationale:

Instructor office/conference hours in relation to distance education courses should be understood as an aspect of “regular effective contact,” as defined in Title 5 section 55204.

The Academic Senate of the California Community Colleges recommends that workload issues, such as office/conference hours in relation to distance education classes, be treated differently from face-to-face classes **only** “if there is good educational justification” (Walton, James-Hanz p. 20). To be sure, online office hours may be useful not only to the online student in a course, but also to face-to-face students, if they are offered outside of the normal business day. Allowing online instructors to conduct a portion of their required office hours online is one way to meet the needs of a diverse community of online students. (Academic Senate for California Community Colleges *Ensuring the Appropriate Use of Technology*, 2008)

It is important to note that the matter addressed in Recommendation 108 relates to instructor office/conference hours. Participation in shared governance should be understood as a separate issue, not to be confused with any issues associated with best practices (regular effective contact) regarding distance education courses and instructor office/conference hours. Faculty communication through interactive, online office-conference hours is an integral component of quality instruction, as well as a leading indicator of student satisfaction.

The Current PCC Contract Language regarding Conference hours states:

(PCC Contract Agreement July 1, 2013 – June 30, 2016, Article 5, Working Conditions, 5.2.2) <https://pasadena.edu/hr/docs/union-contracts/PCC-Faculty-Association-CBA-2013-16.pdf>

Full-time unit members shall schedule their five and one half (5.5) student conference hours on no fewer than three (3) different days per week. Unit members on reduced load shall schedule student conference hours on no fewer days than one less than the number of required conference hours. It is recommended that conference hours be held between the hours of 6:30am and 10:00pm. No single conference period shall be less than thirty (30) minutes in length. Conference hours will not be scheduled between 12:00 and 1:00pm on Tuesdays or Thursdays and will not be scheduled to conflict with the instructor’s class assignments. Conference hours shall be held in the unit member’s

office or in a laboratory facility readily accessible to students, based on a schedule posted no later than the first Monday following the opening of a semester.

Distance Education Committee Office/Conference Hours Recommendation

The Distance Education Committee recommends that full-time faculty who teach online may hold a percentage of office/conference hours online.

The portion of office/conference hours that may be held online should be commensurate with the percentage of teaching load that is held online (consistent with the assignment for the 16 week semester) required for faculty.

The online office/conference hours will require synchronous communication, such as chat, text messaging, video teleconference, or other similar methods.

Information about online office/conference hours along with face-to-face office hours as per the PCC Contract Agreement must be posted online in the course syllabus and a copy distributed to the Division Dean.

References:

Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges, Western Association of Schools and Colleges (August 2008). Distance Learning Manual. Accessed 10/5/09.
http://www.accjc.org/pdf/Distance_Learning_Manual_August_2008.pdf

Cerritos College, Standards for Online Instruction, *Basic Technology Competencies*, Accessed 9/7/09.
<http://cms.cerritos.edu/ic/de-standards>

College of the Canyons, Distance Learning, *Online Instructor Qualifications*. Accessed 9/15/09.
<http://www.canyons.edu/Offices/Distance%5FLearning/facsupport/fullonlineinstquals.asp>

Maxfield, M. (2006). *The Online Teacher: Examining the Time and Daily Schedules*. In E. Pearson & P. Bohman (eds.), *Proceedings of World Conference on Educational Multimedia, Hypermedia and Telecommunications*, Chesapeake, VA. (pp. 1416-1422). Retrieved from <http://www.editlib.org/p/23188>.

Mt. San Jacinto College, *Guidelines for Online Instruction*
<http://www.msjc.edu/etc/onlinemou.pdf>

Pasadena City College. Contract Agreement July 1, 2007 – June 30, 2008, Article 5, Working Conditions, 5.2.1). Accessed 11/12/09.

<http://www.pasadena.edu/hr/CTAfinal08.pdf>

Pasadena City College. Memorandum from the Office of the VP of Instruction to Division Deans Regarding Faculty Conference Hours, (August 2009).

State University of New York, College at Oneonta. (2009) *Distance Learning Policy*. "Office Hours, Faculty Presence," Accessed 11/19/09.

[http://www.oneonta.edu/academics/senate/documents/Distance%20Learning%20Policy%20%20\(approved%20by%20College%20Senate%20on%20Jan%2026%20'09\).pdf](http://www.oneonta.edu/academics/senate/documents/Distance%20Learning%20Policy%20%20(approved%20by%20College%20Senate%20on%20Jan%2026%20'09).pdf)

Walton, I., James-Hanz, P., North, W., Pilati, M. (2008). *Ensuring the Appropriate Use of Educational Technology: An Update for Local Academic Senates*. Accessed 5/13/09.

http://www.asccc.org/Publications/Papers/Education_Technology.htm