

DRAFT: Resolution of Support for Aligning DE Courses with Regular and Substantive Interaction (RSI) Standards

Whereas, Regular and Substantive Interaction (RSI) is the essential element that defines Distance Education (DE) and sets it apart from Correspondence Education, as outlined in federal (34 CFR § 600.2) and state (Title 5 §§ 55200, 55204, 55260) regulations. At its core, RSI means that instructors take the lead in creating and sustaining regular meaningful academic engagement with students. Such interaction must be predictable, proactive, and directly tied to teaching and learning, ensuring that students are supported, connected, and actively engaged in their educational journey.

Whereas, Ensuring RSI is therefore critical for several reasons:

- Accreditation and Compliance: The Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC) requires institutions to define RSI and demonstrate adherence in all fully online courses (synchronous and asynchronous).
- Federal and State Funding: Only DE courses with RSI qualify for federal Title IV financial aid and state apportionment; failure to meet RSI standards may result in loss or repayment of funds.
- Best Practices in Teaching and Learning: Research demonstrates that frequent, high-quality instructor-student interaction improves learning outcomes, strengthens engagement, and supports equity through inclusive pedagogy.

Whereas, RSI is not simply a compliance requirement. It is a pedagogical commitment that affirms our responsibility to provide equitable, high-quality online education for all students.

RESOLVED, That the Academic Senate of Cañada College affirms that RSI is essential to Distance Education and commits to defining, clarifying, and supporting its implementation across all DE courses; and

RESOLVED, That the Academic Senate of Cañada College holds that the standards related to regular and substantive interaction outlined in federal (34 CFR § 600.2) and state (Title 5 §§ 55200, 55204, 55260) regulations are pedagogically sound and represent best practices for online teaching and learning; and

RESOLVED, That the Academic Senate of Cañada College advises that faculty align with the ACCJC Quality Continuum Rubric for Distance Education when designing and evaluating courses across all DE modalities, and that the principles and standards of the ACCJC Quality Continuum Rubric for Distance Education be incorporated into the training provided to faculty teaching in all online modalities.