



## Online Instructor / Student Absentee Policy

1. Title V - 55376. Instructor Contact.  
... district governing boards shall ensure that:
  - (a) All approved courses offered as distance education shall include regular effective contact between instructor and students, through group or individual meetings, orientation and review sessions, supplemental seminar or study sessions, field trips, library workshops, telephone contact, correspondence, voice mail, e-mail, or other activities.
  - (b) All distance education courses shall be delivered consistent with guidelines issued by the Chancellor pursuant to Section 409 of the Procedures and Standing Orders of the Board of Governors. Regular effective contact is an academic and professional matter pursuant to Title 5 '53200.
2. Absence of regular meaningful contact can be considered an "absence." Definition is valid for both students and faculty.
3. Meaningful regular contact includes, but is not limited to the following examples done on at least a weekly basis:
  - submitting / grading assignments (students / faculty)
  - participating in discussions (students & faculty)
  - responding to emails / phone calls (students & faculty)
  - attendance at scheduled chats (students & faculty)
  - adherence to scheduled events in the syllabus (students & faculty)
  - logging into the virtual classroom, reviewing messages and responding to messages (students & faculty)
  - Web conferences or other live events scheduled for the class (students & faculty)
  - On campus events or other locations where instructor and students meet for class; i.e. museum, observatory, etc. (students & faculty)
4. When students complain of lack of contact / response from instructor, the dept. chair needs to be notified and he/she needs to investigate the situation. The department chair can ask for verification of instructor and/or student logs of activity in the online class to determine the amount, the regularity, and the type of meaningful contact that took place in the virtual environment. Other types of regular meaningful contact will be researched, as well.
5. The DE instructor needs to define in his/her syllabus what constitutes an "absence" in the class and the policy for being dropped due to absences. When a student has multiple absences, the instructor can drop the student from the class in the same way the student would be dropped from a class that meets on campus due to excessive absences.
6. When an instructor is found to have multiple complaints regarding lack of regular meaningful contact, the DDL committee can investigate. If there is substantial evidence of multiple "absences" and lack of meaningful contact, the DDL committee has the ability to remove the instructor from the list of approved distance education instructors.