

April 10, 2024

Dr. David Martin
Chancellor
City College of San Francisco
50 Frida Kahlo Way
San Francisco, California 94112

Dear Chancellor Martin:

Your Accreditation Liaison Officer has informed ACCJC that:

50% or more of total enrolled students at your institution take at least one course offered through distance education.

50% or more of all your institution's courses are now offered in the distance education modality.

This change has been **approved** administratively by designated senior staff. Thank you for bringing this to our attention and please let us know if there are any changes in the information provided by the College.

On behalf of the Commission, thank you for your continued commitment to accreditation and academic quality in higher education.

Sincerely,



Kevin Bontenbal, Ed.D.
Vice President

Cc: Ms. Kristin Charles, Accreditation Liaison Officer
Ms. Martina Fernandez-Rosario, U.S. Department of Education

Substantive Change Application

Distance Education – 50% of Students or Courses

Directions: Complete each section, keeping narratives concise and direct. Should you have any questions, please contact substantivechange@accjc.org and we will be happy to assist you.

Email completed application to substantivechange@accjc.org.

Institution name:	City College of San Francisco				
Address:	50 Frida Kahlo Way, San Francisco, CA 94038				
ALO name:	Kristin Charles	Phone:	415-239-3677	Email:	kcharles@ccsf.edu

Select the type of Distance Education approval:

- 50 percent or more of all the institution's students enrolled in at least one course offered through distance education

18,055 Total number of students | 11,239 Total number of students enrolled in at least one distance education course

- 50 percent or more of all the institution's courses available to be offered in the distance education modality

_____ Total number of courses in catalog | _____ Total number of courses, not sections, available to be offered in distance education modality

It is the institution's responsibility to demonstrate the effect of a substantive change on the quality, integrity, capacity, and effectiveness of the total institution. The substantive change process requires evidence of institutional planning, resource commitment to the proposed change, and evidence that following the change, the institution continues to meet the Eligibility Requirements, Accreditation Standards and Commission policies. References to the Accreditation Standards are intended to help provide the institution with a framework for its response, and along with the required documentation, align with federal regulations for accreditation standards¹. Your thorough responses to the questions below and submission of required documentation will assist ACCJC in making its determination.

¹ 34 CFR § 602.16(a)

Describe how the distance education modality is consistent with the mission of the institution (Standard 1.1).

The College's primary mission is to provide programs and services leading to: Transfer to baccalaureate institutions; Associate Degrees in Arts and Sciences; Certificates and career skills needed for success in the workplace; and Basic Skills, including learning English as a Second Language and Transitional Studies (see [Evidence 1](#)). By offering classes via distance education, students have greater access to achieving their educational goals (aligned with our Mission) through the flexibility that online learning offers. Currently, roughly 1/3 of the College's class offerings are in the distance education modality, and, when a student chooses to do so, they may complete all General Education requirements via distance education. As evident in the number of students who are enrolled in at least one distance education class (greater than 50%), the majority of students do avail themselves of the flexibility that distance education classes provide.

Describe how distance education will be integrated into the institution's regular review of relevant and meaningfully disaggregated data to evaluate its progress and inform plans for improvement and innovation (Standard 1.3).

Modality for both credit and noncredit classes is now built into the College's Argos datablocks, which are used for analyzing disaggregated data (see [Evidence 2](#)). These datablocks are available to all departments at the College, and department chairs can avail themselves of training to use and understand the datablocks through the Office of Research and Planning. These datablocks are used during Program Review for reflection on areas for improvement, particularly related to equity populations (see [Evidence 3](#)).

Describe how the distance education modality meets students and curricular needs and promotes equitable student learning and achievement (Standard 2.6).

Distance education breaks down geographical barriers, allowing students from diverse locations to access quality education. This is especially beneficial for students residing in remote areas or having limited access to campus due to physical disabilities, family responsibilities, or work commitments.

Distance education is flexible. Students can access learning materials and participate in classes more conveniently, accommodating their learning styles and schedules. This flexibility enables students to balance their education with other commitments, such as jobs or caregiving responsibilities, promoting greater equity in educational access.

Distance education is accessible, creating an inclusive learning environment by accommodating diverse learning styles, preferences, and needs. Accessibility features such as closed captioning, screen readers, and alternative formats for course materials make online learning more accessible to students with disabilities. For example, students who may struggle with in-person classroom settings due to social anxiety or other mental health challenges can feel more comfortable engaging in online discussions or submitting assignments electronically.

Distance education courses require separate review and approval by the College's Curriculum Committee, which considers factors such as course suitability for distance education, regular and effective student/instructor contact, and distance evaluation integrity. The Curriculum Committee reviews and approves distance education addenda separately from the rest of the course outline (see

[Evidence 4](#)). To ensure overall quality of distance education courses, faculty who wish to teach a course online participate in District-mandated training.

Describe how the institution designs and delivers equitable and effective services and programs (e.g., counseling, advising, tutoring, library, etc.) that support students in the distance education modality (Standard 2.7).

Students enrolled in online courses and programs can access learning support services (library services, tutoring) and student support services through the College’s web site, mobile app, and a Student Success Hub in Canvas (See [Evidence 5](#), [Evidence 6](#), and [Evidence 7](#)). Many of these services have virtual counters accessible through the College’s Web site that allow students to schedule appointments online which are conducted via Zoom (see [Evidence 8](#)).

Describe how the institution ensures that “regular and substantive interaction” occurs between students and instructors (Policy on Distance Education and Correspondence Education).

Before a faculty member is assigned an online learning course, they must participate in training, including pedagogy and course design strategies that facilitate regular interaction (see [Evidence 9](#)). Training includes best practices in using discussion forums, effective email communication planning, and other interactive elements integrated into the course design. These activities promote engagement and encourage students to interact with their peers and the instructor. Instructors are trained to provide timely and substantive feedback on student work, assessments, and participation. This feedback fosters ongoing dialogue between instructors and students, ensuring that students receive guidance and support throughout the learning process.

City College uses Canvas, a learning management system that provides tools to facilitate communication and collaboration between students and instructors (e.g., Canvas Inbox and Pronto). Faculty can use Canvas tools (e.g., Discussions and Studio) and add-on tools (e.g., VoiceThread and Zoom), which include features that enable ongoing interaction. These tools support instructors in incorporating group projects, collaborative activities, and peer-to-peer interaction into distance education courses.

The Academic Senate passed a resolution requiring specific syllabus elements, including a communication plan in online learning classes (the required syllabus elements will be included in the revised Faculty Handbook; see [Evidence 10](#)). The plan outlines expectations for interaction between students and the instructor and is required in course syllabi and program materials, ensuring that both students and instructors understand their roles and responsibilities regarding communication. Additionally, the Academic Senate supports the Distance Education Coordinator and the Distance Teaching and Learning Specialist faculty positions.

The College’s Office of Online Learning and Educational Technology offers ongoing professional development opportunities and one-on-one meetings for faculty teaching online. Faculty have access to a 24/7 help line.

The College’s Curriculum Committee has established a local review and approval process that requires a Distance Education Addendum for a course that provides any portion of instruction at a distance (see [Evidence 4](#)). The addendum includes regular and substantive interaction as a requirement.

Describe how the institution authenticates students in distance education courses (*Policy on Distance Education and Correspondence Education*).

Board Policy and Administrative Procedure 6.28 outlines the College's student authentication policy and process (see [Evidence 11](#) and [Evidence 12](#)). Students enrolled in a distance education course must log into the College's secure portal that authenticates their identity through a unique username and password for access with their SFCCD-issued login and password to access Canvas. This helps to ensure that only registered students can access distance education classes.

Class lists are uploaded into Canvas four times a day to ensure that only students registered in an online class access the course.

For certain high-stakes assessments and coursework, faculty may implement identity verification measures, such as requiring students to use a webcam to verify their identity.

Some faculty require assessments for distance education courses, either in-person or via webcam, to ensure academic integrity.

Faculty teaching distance education monitor student activity for signs of academic dishonesty. Suspicious activity may be reported to the Office of Online Learning and Educational Technology for further investigation.

Describe how the institution employs qualified faculty, staff, administrators, and other personnel to support and sustain the distance education modality (*Standard 3.1*).

The College follows Board Policies and Administrative Procedures for employing qualified faculty, staff, and administrators. The policies and procedures are in alignment with Title 5 and California Employment laws for all personnel as well as local civil service requirements for classified staff (see [Evidence 13](#) and [Evidence 14](#)).

The College regularly evaluates employees. Faculty teaching distance education are evaluated on two additional items specific to distance education, student-instructor contact and course structure/navigation (see [Evidence 15](#)).

Describe the institution's fiscal resources to support and sustain the distance education modality (*Standard 3.4*).

The College has an Office for Online Learning and Educational Technology (OLET) with a dedicated Associate Dean of Online Learning who reports to the Dean of Library, Academic Tutoring, Educational Technology, and Online Programs. OLET includes two instructional designers (100%), a distance education coordinator (60%), a distance learning and teaching specialist (80%), a Canvas Administrator (80%), a faculty support position (40%), and an administrative support position (100%) (see [Evidence 16](#)). The College's collective bargaining agreement requires that faculty receive a 0.2 FTEF re-assigned time to complete online training. Training is offered in the fall and spring semesters. The annual OLET budget for distance education tools is approximately \$200,000.

Describe the institution's physical resources including, if applicable, equipment and supplies, to support and sustain the distance education modality (Standard 3.8).

The College has a dedicated physical space for OLET. The office includes a shared space for the support team and offers desktops, webcams, and supplies as needed. The College is building a recording studio (audio and video).

The College maintains computer labs with desktop computers, laptops, and other necessary peripherals such as printers and scanners. Laptops, Chromebooks, and hotspots can be checked out at the College's library for the semester. The labs and equipment provide students with access to technology for completing coursework, accessing online resources, and participating in online classes. The College provides a desktop or laptop for all employees.

The College ensures all employees and students have reliable internet connectivity by providing Wi-Fi access in campus buildings and facilities.

The College provides physical textbooks to students enrolled in some distance education courses. These materials may be checked out from the library or made available for pickup at designated locations.

Describe the institution's technology resources to support and sustain the distance education modality (Standard 3.9).

The College utilizes Canvas, a robust LMS, to manage online course content, assignments, assessments, and communication tools. Canvas is a central platform where students can access course materials, participate in discussions, submit assignments, and engage with instructors and peers.

The College provides a virtual classroom environment in Canvas through the video conferencing platform Zoom. This setup supports synchronous instruction, allowing instructors to conduct lectures, lead discussions, and facilitate interactive activities in real-time.

Canvas provides online collaboration tools (e.g., Discussions and Inbox) to facilitate communication among students in distance education courses. The College also offers access to multimedia content creation tools (e.g., Canvas Studio) that allow instructors to develop engaging and interactive course materials. (See [Evidence 17](#))

The College offers access to research databases and online resources to support students' research and academic work. These resources include e-books, scholarly journals, databases, and research guides accessible remotely through the College's portal.

OLET provides a Canvas shell, *Passport to Canvas*, to support students in learning Canvas. A Student Success Hub (on the site navigation in Canvas) and a Canvas Support Shell provide technology support to students.

The College offers technical support services to assist students and faculty with technology-related issues encountered during distance education activities through a help desk (online ticketing system and phone number). The ITS help desk is available to provide troubleshooting assistance. Students have access to 24/7 chat. Faculty have access to 24/7 chat and a 24/7 phone number.

Describe how the institution's decision-making structures support innovation and equitable student outcomes in the distance education modality (Standard 4.3).

City College of San Francisco (CCSF) has decision-making structures in place that are designed to support innovation and equitable student outcomes in the distance education modality largely through the Academic Senate's collegial governance committees. Recommendations flow from the Academic Senate to the Chancellor, engaging the College's Participatory Governance Council and/or the Associated Students Executive Council when appropriate following the College's Roles, Responsibilities, and Processes Handbook.

These structures operate as follows:

The College's leadership, including administrators, deans, and department chairs, play a pivotal role in fostering a culture of innovation and equity in distance education. They set the vision and strategic direction for distance learning initiatives, prioritize resources, and support innovative approaches that enhance student success and accessibility.

The Academic Senate's Distance Learning Advisory Committee (DLAC) and the Academic Senate's Teaching and Learning with Technology Roundtable (TLTR) bring together faculty, staff, administrators, and student representatives to explore emerging trends, evaluate technologies, develop policies, and make recommendations for enhancing the quality and equity of distance education programs.

The DLAC, the TLTR, and the College's Curriculum Committee provide opportunities for faculty members to participate in decision-making processes related to distance education. Faculty input is crucial for designing effective online courses, implementing pedagogical innovations, and ensuring that equity considerations are integrated into course design and delivery.

The College prioritizes equity and access to distance education through focused initiatives and support services. This includes professional development opportunities for faculty and staff on culturally responsive teaching practices, accessibility training for instructional designers, and the development of inclusive course materials and assessments.

OLET utilizes data analytics and engagement metrics to inform decision-making processes related to distance education. By analyzing student outcomes and demographic data, the College identifies areas for improvement and measures the impact of student success.

The College actively engages students, faculty, and staff in discussing distance education innovation and equity (e.g., an end-of-semester survey). By soliciting feedback, listening to diverse perspectives, and incorporating input into decision-making processes, the institution ensures that its initiatives are responsive to the needs and priorities of its constituents.

The College collaborates with other California Community Colleges, higher education institutions, and industry partners to promote innovation and equity in distance education. These partnerships may involve joint research projects, sharing best practices, leveraging resources, and developing initiatives to address barriers, ensuring that all students have access to high-quality educational opportunities regardless of their background or circumstances.

Required Documentation

Provide a hyperlink or include documentation for each item below. Be sure to provide a clear, descriptive name for each document.

- Documentation of the institution's advertising and recruitment policies, demonstrating alignment with the [Policy on Institutional Advertising and Student Recruitment](#).

- The College does not have formal advertising and recruitment policies but conforms to the Policy on Institutional Advertising and Student Recruitment.
- The College provides a print and online catalog that contains all required elements and updates the catalog annually online at <https://www.ccsf.edu/academics/ccsf-catalog> and in print (note: all page numbers below refer to catalog page numbers).

General Information

- Official Name, Address(es), Telephone Number(s), and Web site Address of the Institution (p. II)
- Educational Mission (p. III)
- Representation of accredited status with ACCJC, and with programmatic accreditors if any (p. 2)
- Course, Program, and Degree Offerings (p. 76)
- Student Learning Outcomes for Programs and Degrees (p. 76)
- Academic Calendar and Program Length (p. 14)
- Academic Freedom Statement (p. 484)
- Available Student Financial Aid (p. 32)
- Available Learning Resources (p. 36)
- Names and Degrees of Administrators (p. IX) and Faculty (p. 496)
- Names of Governing Board Members (p. VI) Requirements
- Admissions (p. 18)
- Student Tuition, Fees, and Other Financial Obligations (p. 20)
- Degrees, Certificates, Graduation (p. 54) and Transfer (p. 62)

Major Policies and Procedures Affecting Students

- Academic Regulations, including Academic Honesty (p. 468)
- Nondiscrimination (p. XI)
- Acceptance and Transfer of Credits (p. 54)
- Transcripts (p. 490)
- Grievance and Complaint Procedures (p. 478)
- Sexual Harassment (p. 478)
- Refund of Fees (p. 21)

Locations or publications where other policies may be found (pp. 481)

The Office of Instruction ensures that all information is accurate and up to date through the annual catalog development process.

- Policies/processes for student complaints, demonstrating how the institution communicates process to students and handles complaints with due process.
 - Please see p. 478 of the College catalog (<https://www.ccsf.edu/academics/ccsf-catalog>) and <https://www.ccsf.edu/about-ccsf/administration/student-affairs/student-complaints-and-grievances>
- Documentation of institution's implementation of the required components of the Title IV Program (if applicable), including:
 - Findings from any audits and program/other review activities by the U.S. Department of Education (ED)
 - Evidence of timely corrective action taken in response to any Title IV audits or program reviewsSee [*Policy on Institutional Compliance with Title IV*](#)
 - The College is in compliance with the federal expectations and requirements under Title IV and has maintained its default rates below the maximum permitted by the U.S. Department of Education: default rates were 10.9 percent for FY 2018, 5.3 percent for FY 2019, and 0 percent for FY 2020 (see [Evidence 18](#) and [Evidence 19](#)). The College has a practice in place to monitor and manage student loan default rates and the overall student loan program to ensure compliance with all applicable requirements (see [Evidence 20](#)).

Supporting Evidence

Please provide any evidence that supports the narrative above as separate files. Please link evidence where appropriate in the narrative. Do not embed evidence files into the application.