# Instructional Continuity for Emergency Preparedness

Distance Learning Committee (DLC) recommendations, March 10, 2020

### **Background**

Instructional Continuity is the term being used to describe the process of setting up remote, temporary instruction in the event of a campus closure.

The Department of Education (DOE), ACCJC, and Chancellor’s Office have all issued guidelines on instructional continuity. While some institutional processes may be temporarily bypassed to allow campuses to respond quickly to emergencies, there still are some processes campuses will need to follow. Remote instruction does not continue after the end date of the emergency; when the campus reopens, we revert to established practices.

Campus decisions on remote instruction do not supersede licensure guidelines. Individual disciplines have probably been informed by their accreditation boards whether they will accept remote instruction or not. Those decisions are obviously not within the purview of the DLC.

### **Preparing for a campus closure**

While the campus is still open, the DLC identified steps we can take to prepare for an emergency closure. Courses that are currently offered online should not be affected by this eventuality, so the following recommendations apply to in-person classes only.

* ***Identify courses that could be offered via temporary remote instruction***. The DLC recommends that departments use their discipline expertise to evaluate the current courses for remote instruction. Typically, we would look to department chairs to organize and communicate the department decision.
  + Courses that already have been approved via the DL amendment process are, obviously, good to go and can be converted online with no further communication with the Chancellor’s Office. A list of courses that already have DL approval follows. (If a DL-approved course is missing from this list, please contact the Distance Learning Faculty Coordinator, Carol Impara, cimpara@mtsac.edu.)
  + **ACTION ITEM:** Each department should compile a list of non-DL approved courses that they could move to remote instruction. The Chancellor’s office has given instructions for submitting an Emergency Blanket Distance Education Addendum, so this information needs to be submitted together ***soon***.
  + If discipline experts deem that a course cannot be moved to remote instruction, they should work with their division dean and instruction office to address student needs.
  + The Chancellor’s office states that “institutions may enter into temporary consortium agreements with other institutions so that students can complete courses at other institutions but be awarded credit by their home institution.”
* ***Full adoption of Canvas by all faculty***. The DLC strongly recommends that Canvas be used by faculty. All courses (both credit and non-credit) have Canvas course shells created for them every semester, and every faculty member has the opportunity to publish a course shell immediately. In an emergency, Canvas provides the most flexible and intuitive method of providing remote instruction. Canvas also fulfills authentication and FERPA guidelines, which are still mandated by ACCJC and DOE. (Email and other web servers do not.)
  + **ACTION ITEM:** If faculty are teaching courses that may be moved remotely, they should access their Canvas course shells and publish them immediately if they have not already done so.
* ***Commence faculty training in Canvas***. The Chancellor’s office and ACCJC has advised that campuses may waive local approval processes for online teaching (our SPOT process). The DLC recommends that departments communicate with faculty immediately to discuss remote instruction possibilities and gauge faculty readiness. Departments should recommend Canvas training as needed, to commence immediately.
  + **ACTION ITEM:** Canvas training should commence immediately if faculty skills need updating.
    - The FCLT is offering an **Emergency Preparedness Workshop for Using Canvas** especially designed to introduce and set up basic tools that faculty can use to communicate and hold class from a distance. Two hours of instruction will be followed by one hour of open lab time. This workshop has been tentatively set for March 20. (If the campus closes before then, the FCLT will hold workshops online from 2-4 p.m. the first two days of the closure and would be available for web conferencing and email the first day of the closure. They would schedule regular workshops online as well.)
    - The FCLT Team is creating a **YouTube Playlist of useful videos** that can support faculty use of specific functions in Canvas.  <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCt-jxS4kTvOhl6YgL1BLqEQ/playlists>
    - Faculty have the option of holding class synchronously by using the **Conferences link** (a native tool). (Offering class via video during the same time it ordinarily meets negates many of the concerns about regular effective contact, particularly Title 5 requirements for among-student contact.) The FCLT has provided a tutorial on using this tool in the YouTube playlist, above.
    - An **Intro to Canvas** workshop is scheduled for March 19. Sign up via POD.
    - FCLT launched **Teaching Effectively During Times of Disruption** – text version with links to learn more.  [Mt. SAC Document   (http://bit.ly/mtsac-teach)](http://bit.ly/mtsac-teach)
    - FCLT added a course template into the Mt. SAC Commons. Click on **Commons link** in the gray global navigation menu, and, if it is your first time, accept the license to enter the Commons repository. Search for **Ground-to-Online Template** and look for the "Canvas in a Can" logo.
    - The Canvas Community is a place for faculty to share resources. <https://community.canvaslms.com/> The Canvas Community includes a guide to [moving a course from on ground to online](https://community.canvaslms.com/groups/designers/blog/2020/03/11/2020-course-design-essentials-home-page-sample-module-template).
    - The Online Network of Educators (@ONE) is the training arm of the CVC OEI. Their emergency preparedness resources can be found under <https://cvc.edu/about-the-oei/resources/>.
    - **FCLT Office Hours** are held Wednesdays and Thursdays from 2-5 p.m.
    - Departments can identify **Faculty Mentors** to help other faculty improve their Canvas skills.
    - Self-training through the Canvas Instructor Guides, accessed by clicking the **Help icon** in the gray global navigation menu in Canvas
* ***Proactively respond to student concerns***. Faculty are urged to address student concerns about the potential for emergency closure and prepare them for remote instruction.
  + The DLC recommends that faculty use existing class time to introduce Canvas tools such as posting to discussions, uploading assignments, or taking quizzes as necessary.
  + The DLC urges faculty to remember that students may not own computers, and will rely upon their phones to complete online assignments. (If limited campus availability still exists, students can use a computer lab: <https://www.mtsac.edu/computerlabs/>).
  + The DLC suggests faculty remind students they can still access online tutoring (through NetTutor) and counseling (through Cranium Café).

Respectfully,

Carol Impara

Distance Learning Faculty Coordinator