

REGULAR AND SUBSTANTIVE INTERACTION (RSI) REQUIREMENT CHECKLIST

Welcome Message

A personal welcome message or video from the instructor is available in the “Welcome” section of the course.

Requirements:

- Message should set a warm welcome.
- Message should address course content, what students can expect, tips for being successful in the course, etc.
- Instructor may also schedule synchronous meetings during the first week of the course.

Instructor Activity

The instructor was active in the first week of the term. Activity is defined as instructor access in the course and responses to student questions in the learning management system.

Requirements:

- Recorded instructor access to the course.
- Instructor activity (course access or response to student inquiries) took place on the first week of the class.
- The first instructor activity (either course access or response to student inquiries) took place no later than Wednesday of Week 1.

Weekly Assignments or Announcements

Course design requires student-instructor interaction at least once per week. A course schedule is available for students.

Requirements:

- Weekly announcements are sent to student that address course content, expectations, etc.
- At least one assignment or graded item is required per week.
- The instructor provides weekly feedback to student’s assignments or questions.

Instructor Communication Policy

A clear communication policy is defined in the course syllabus or elsewhere in the course.

Requirements:

- Information is provided on how to contact the instructor.
- A policy for response time to student questions is stated in the course.
- A policy for weekend communication is stated in the course.

Expectations for Student Participation

Instructors’ expectations for the nature and frequency of student participation are clearly stated.

Requirements:

- A general statement is included on the syllabus or elsewhere in the course.
- Specific guidelines for student participation should be included on discussions or any other places where the students must participate. For example, specify the number of posts/replies on discussion boards and dues dates of when posting initial posts and replies to classmates will be due.
- Provide clarity in the expectations of student activity (participation and performance)

Personalized, Specific Feedback (Substantive Interaction)

The instructor provides feedback that is both customized to the student and specific to the details of their course work.

Requirements:

- Feedback provides information students can use to understand where they are being successful and where they need improvement.
- Rubrics are used to grade and permit constructive feedback on key elements that need to be improved.
- Feedback can include instructor participation in discussion boards, recorded tutorials in response to students' questions, instructor comments on essays, or annotations in assignments. Recorded video/audio feedback provided to graded assignments.

Frequent, Timely Feedback (Regular Interaction)

The instructor provides students feedback at least once a week during the course, starting in Week 1.

Requirements:

- Feedback is given early enough and with sufficient frequency for students to correct misunderstandings and deepen comprehension while the course is in progress.
- Instructor consistently responds to student questions within the timeframe stated in their communication policy or alerts students ahead of time if they will not be able to uphold their policy.
- The instructor makes a special effort to communicate with struggling students as they are likely to benefit from early intervention.

Instructor Presence

The instructor demonstrates a strong presence by taking an active role in the online course.

Requirements:

- The instructor posts regular announcements, adds course materials, responds to questions, guides discussion boards, provides feedback, and so on.
- The instructor writes in first person where appropriate, establishing their voice in course materials.
- Students should see evidence of instructor activity at multiple points during each week.

Public Forum for Student Questions

The instructor provides an active forum for students to post course-related questions.

Requirements:

- A discussion board forum is available to all students in the course, so all may benefit from instructor responses, for example, including a frequently asked questions (FAQ's) discussion forum in the course.
- The instructor performs regular monitoring to answer student questions in a timely fashion, according to course communication policies.
- Clear guidelines for the use of the public discussion board forum are posted, including policy for personal messages.

Modeling Communication Practices

The instructor clarifies and models appropriate online communication practices.

Requirements:

- An etiquette policy for communications is posted on the syllabus (or elsewhere in the course), along with clear expectations of how students should adhere to that policy.
- The instructor consistently communicates in a respectful manner.
- The instructor acknowledges the broad range of perspectives found in the community college classroom.

Monitoring Student Interactions

The instructor fosters a safe learning environment by actively monitoring student interactions.

Requirements:

- If inappropriate communication occurs, the instructor intervenes immediately.
- The instructor redirects or counsels students in an appropriate way, including blocking students from participating in the course if necessary.

Guidance of Student-to-Student Interactions

Instructor fosters student-to-student interactions that deepen understanding of course materials.

Requirements:

- The instructor takes a strategic role in guiding, focusing, and encouraging interactions.
- Form collaborative groups to work on specific assignments, projects, or group discussions.
- Student roles in collaborative projects are clearly defined.
- Provide opportunities for students to learn from each other.

Time Management Tools

The instructor provides tools and/or updates students can use to manage their time and stay on task.

Requirements:

- The instructor gives clear directions on where to find current due dates. Ex. Deliverables table with due dates listed.
- Course calendars, checklists, or instructor reminders provide students with a way to keep track of time-sensitive tasks.
- Weekly announcements with reminders of upcoming deadlines keep students updated and on task.
- Send quick reminders from the grade center on assignments or assessments that will be due soon.

Student-to-Content Interaction

The instructor provides materials that are current, relevant, accessible, and interactive.

Requirements:

- Enhance the student interaction with accessible and interactive course content.
- Support dialogue, critical reflection and analysis, and real-world application of the content.
- Provide materials that are current, rich, and sufficient in breadth and depth.
- Identify important/relevant topics and provide context.
- Provide richness in learning materials and activities, support and instructions, instructor interactions, and tools and media.

Source:

These examples of regular and substantive interaction(RSI) were obtained and modified from Blue Mountain Community College.