
Procedure Title: Regular and Substantive Interaction (RSI) Online
Course Audit Policy
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NWCCU Standard:

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Background

Blue Mountain Community college underwent a 2017 Title IV Review August 2017. The college received the following Distance Education Recommendation: (p. 13), No. 4: "Implement a periodic internal audit of online courses to ensure that they include RSI between faculty and students and that this interaction is documented in the Learning Management System. Share the findings of the internal audit with faculty and provide training as needed."

The following process was drafted in response to the Federal Title IV Review recommendations. The Office of Instruction will conduct audits of online courses to determine the level and quality of Regular and Substantive Interaction (RSI) between instructors and their students.

Purpose

The purpose of the course audits is twofold:

1. Produce formative, individualized feedback and recommendations that instructors can use as a guide for developing their online teaching practice.
2. Provide evidence that BMCC is striving to comply with federal Financial Aid requirements.

Process

- Beginning in winter term of 2018, course audits will be conducted in weeks 4 through 6 of each term. Conducting the audits mid-term will allow time for a pattern of interactions to develop between the instructor and the students, while allowing enough time left in the course for the instructor to adapt his or her facilitation strategies as needed.
- Audits will be conducted only those identified as fully online courses.
- Following the recommendations of the Title IV Review, only interactions inside of the Canvas course shells and Conversations Inbox will be assessed. **No outside publisher websites or personal email accounts will be accessed.**
- Approximately one-third of all online courses will be audited per term during fall, winter, and spring terms. This calculates to about 30 courses each term.

- Each BMCC instructor who teaches online will have at least one online course audited over the course of an academic year. This will ensure that every BMCC online instructor receives individualized feedback.
- Instructors will be notified ahead of time which online course(s) will be audited and when. The instructor's Department Chair will be copied on the notification so they can act as a supportive resource for the instructor if needed.
- The results of individual course audits will be shared with the instructor in a formative feedback session with the BMCC Instructional Designer. Course audit results will also be aggregated by the Office of Instruction for the purpose of providing evidence of Title IV compliance. The aggregated data will be shared with all faculty in order to allow the College to understand the overall picture of how well we are addressing RSI in online courses. **Individual names and course information will not be available in the aggregated report to ensure the privacy of each instructor and students.**
- All audits will be conducted by the BMCC Instructional Designer. The draft audit tool is comprised of two parts: first, a checklist to assess the presence of syllabus and course requirements; and secondly, a rubric to measure and qualify the instructor's interactions with students. All requirements being assessed were determined by the BMCC Online Best Practices Workgroup in November of 2017. The draft rubric tool is based on the *Quality Online Instruction Standards* developed by Chemeketa Community College in 2017. The final audit tool will be developed in collaboration with the BMCC Online Best Practices Workgroup.
- A course must meet or exceed ALL of the requirements in order to pass the audit. Instructors whose courses do not pass the audit will be asked to meet with the BMCC Instructional Designer to further develop course facilitation strategies. That course will then be audited again the next time it is offered. Instructors whose courses do not pass the second audit will not be given the option of offering that course in an online format until the course successfully passes a subsequent audit.