College Operating Procedures (COP)	FLORIDA SOUTHWESTERN STATE COLLEGE™

Procedure Title:	Online Instruction
Procedure Number: **Originating Department:**	03-0805 Academic Affairs

Specific Authority:

Board Policy	6Hx6:3.01
Florida Statute	
Florida Administrative Code	6A-14.0304

Purpose Statement: **Procedure Actions:**	Adopted: 09/19/2014; 09/25/2015; 10/16/2017; 12/15/2020; 01/10/2025
	This COP defines the responsibilities and expectations for online instruction.

This College Operating Procedure (COP) outlines the responsibilities and expectations for delivering online instruction at Florida SouthWestern State College (FSW). These procedures ensure FSW meets federal requirements for distance education.

The procedure covers key aspects of online course delivery, including initial setup, regular and substantive interaction, ongoing course management, and end-of-term responsibilities. This COP should be used in conjunction with the FSW Online Teaching Handbook, which provides more detailed guidance and best practices for online instruction, as well as the key documents that govern online teaching and learning posted on the [Academic Technology Committee website](.).

Course Design and Setup

A well-structured course is crucial for student success in online learning environments in order to provide clarity, consistency, and accessibility, enabling students to navigate course content effectively and focus on learning. At FSW, instructors have two primary options for asynchronous course setup – use a "departmental course" or follow the procedures outlined in the Collective Negotiations Agreement (CNA) to develop an "individual course" that meets FSW quality standards.

Instructors shall complete the following requirements *prior* to the course start date:

1. Confirm the appropriate course is loaded into your Canvas shell. Instructors should consult with the department chair or program director for the specific process in your academic school.

2. Provide a complete syllabus in accordance with [COP 03-0604 Common Course Syllabus](.).

3. Update all instructor-specific information, including a course introduction featuring the course instructor, instructor biographical information, contact information and a reasonably current photo or video.

4. Update all term-specific information, including assessment due dates and announcements.

5. Validate course links to ensure student access to course materials and remove any duplicate content.

6. Ensure the course set up is ready to be published before the first day of the term.

For online modalities that use a synchronous "virtual" classroom, instructors should:

1. Establish clear expectations for student participation in virtual sessions, including audio/video use, appropriate environments, and conduct.

2. Include these expectations in the syllabus and course materials.

Regular and Substantive Interaction

Regular and Substantive Interaction (RSI) is a cornerstone of effective online education and is mandated by the U.S. Department of Education. At FSW, we embrace these core concepts listed below to encourage student engagement, build community, promote student success, and serve as a foundation for vibrant, interactive learning environments. Best practices for RSI are outlined in the FSW Online Teaching Handbook.

Instructors have the academic freedom to determine the most effective strategies for implementing RSI in their courses. While specific methods may vary based on course content, level, and discipline, all approaches must align with these core principles:

1. **Frequency:** Engage in "substantive interaction" with students on a predictable and scheduled basis, consistent with the course's credit hours and duration.

2. **Substantive Interaction:** Utilize at least two different methods of "substantive interaction" throughout the course, which may include but are not limited to, providing feedback on assignments, participating in course discussions, holding office hours, and sending weekly communications and/or videos that preview upcoming course content and address common questions or misconceptions.

3. **Documentation:** Clearly communicate the plan for RSI in the course syllabus and in the course orientation. Include expected response times and methods of interaction.

4. **Instructor Initiated:** Regularly initiate class-wide and/or student-specific "substantive interactions."

5. **Monitoring:** Actively monitor student progress and engagement to cultivate a supportive and responsive learning environment.

Course Management

Course management encompasses the administrative and operational aspects of teaching an online course. Instructors are responsible for the following key areas:

1. Respond to student questions, comments, and needs within 48 business hours.

2. Remind students to complete Attendance Verification by the deadline listed in the Official Academic Calendar.

3. Maintain an accurate grade book in the learning management system and adhere to stated grading timelines listed in the Official Academic Calendar.

4. Direct students to appropriate student support services, including online tutoring, virtual research assistance, technology support, and care services.

5. Address academic integrity issues in accordance with COP 03-1503 Academic Integrity Policy.

6. Ensure ongoing accessibility of course materials and communications, and implement required accommodations as directed by Adaptive Services.

7. Adhere to FERPA regulations and manage student data responsibly.

8. If applicable, ensure that live remote instructional sessions are recorded in accordance with FSW's Zoom Privacy & Security Statement. Recordings may constitute educational records that are protected by FERPA.

End-of-Term Responsibilities

As the semester concludes, instructors must:

1. Post grades no later than the date and time listed in the Official Academic Calendar.

2. If applicable, document and process any Incomplete (I) grades, clearly communicating completion requirements and deadlines.

3. Respond to any end-of-term student inquiries or grade disputes. This may require an instructor to engage in further correspondence with students beyond the end of the term.