Supplemental Questions for Distance or Blended Course Approval Requests
Merced Division of the Academic Senate
Graduate Council

The following questions are to be answered by the instructor proposing the course, to be submitted along with the course approval form and syllabus.

Instructor Name: _____

Graduate Group, Course Title and Number _____

1. Will this course be delivered completely through distance technologies, or will it be a hybrid, with a significant component (at least 1/3 of contact hours) in person and a significant component (at least 1/3) delivered by distance?

2. What modes of instruction will be used, particularly those specific to technologically mediated instruction (e.g., moderated discussion lists, email, chat rooms)?

3. The course must at least provide an equivalent educational experience for students. What specific pedagogical advantages does the technologically mediated format offer and how will potential detriments be countered? Specifically, how will the instructor maintain the high proportion of faculty contact hours needed for graduate education?

4. Studies of distance learning show that students take best advantage of distance learning if the course is structured so as to develop cohorts of learners. How, if at all, will the course facilitate cohort building?

5. How would this way of delivering the course change modes of learning (e.g., auditory or tactile) and affect learning experiences?

6. What is the nature of instructor involvement in the proposed alternative mode of instruction? What are the means by which the instructor will foster learning, and how will the instructor be available for consultation?

7. How will student progress be monitored? Describe graded activities mediated through technology and how materials will be handled to ensure that students receive credit only for their own work. (If the course does not include the required in-class final examination, a variance request for the exemption of this requirement must be submitted simultaneously.)

8. Is specific technical or pedagogical expertise (on the part of the student or instructor) necessary for this course? If so, what? Does the proposal fully recognize the amount of faculty time that will be required to develop, train for, and deliver the proposed course or program of instruction?

9. What specific technical support does the department have available for instructors and students? What plans are there for malfunction, disruption, or unavailability of technical support?

10. In the case of distance learning courses offered collaboratively between campuses, what are the specific responsibilities of instructors on this campus? How will coordination be maintained between campuses, and who will be responsible on this campus for consultation with students?