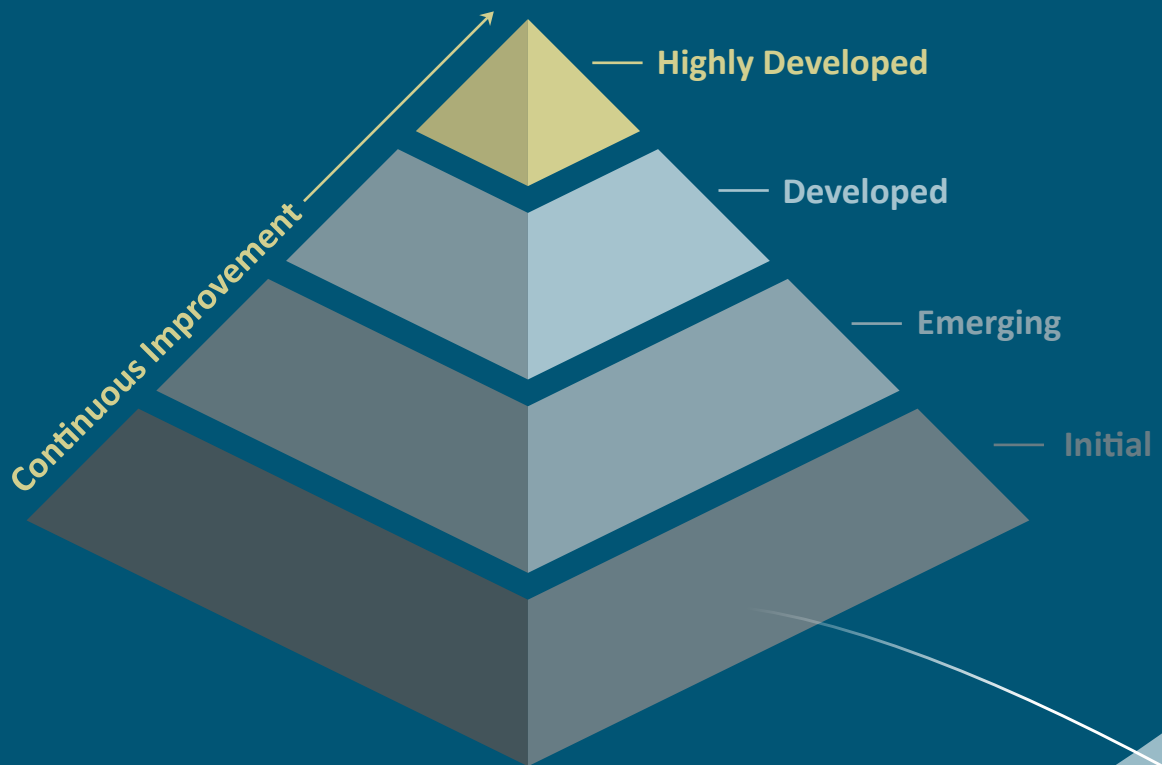


# ACCJC

ACCREDITING COMMISSION FOR  
COMMUNITY AND JUNIOR COLLEGES

Outcomes | Innovation | Improvement

## Quality Continuum Rubric for Distance Education



## What the Quality Continuum Rubric for Distance Education is:

- A resource to support institutions in the continuous improvement process to increase the depth and quality of Substantive and Regular Interaction in Distance Education and promote the achievement of equitable student success.
  - Used to prompt collegial dialogue between institutions being reviewed and peer reviewers.
  - Describes minimal compliance at the Initial level and exemplary practice at the Highly Developed level.
  - Based on the definitions for substantive and regular interactions per ACCJC's [Policy on Distance Education and on Correspondence Education](#), as well as Department of Education guidance.
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## What the Quality Continuum Rubric for Distance Education is not:

- Intended to evaluate the performance of instructional faculty.
  - Used to determine the level of quality for each course section.
  - An independent evaluation tool to determine whether an institution meets ACCJC's [Policy on Distance Education and on Correspondence Education](#).
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## Peer Review Teams:

- Are responsible for verifying that an institution is aligned with ACCJC's [Policy on Distance Education and on Correspondence Education](#) per [Accreditation Standard 2.6](#).
- Must verify substantive and regular interaction per the protocol outlined in Appendix B in the [Accreditation Handbook](#).
- Will utilize the *DE Assessment Tool for Peer Reviewers* to determine whether or not an institution meets the 85% threshold for substantive and regular interaction in the sample of course sections it reviews.
- Will utilize the *Addendum to the Protocol for Distance Education Review* to summarize their findings in the course of the peer review process.
- Will refer to and reflect on the *Quality Continuum Rubric for Distance Education* to provide constructive feedback to the institution in the Peer Review Team Report in the context of Standard 2.6.

## Substantive Interaction

is engaging students in teaching, learning, and assessment, consistent with the content under discussion, and also *includes at least two of the following*:

### A - Providing direct instruction. (Note: this method only applies in synchronous courses.)

Initial →	Emerging →	Developed →	Highly Developed
Synchronous engagement providing lectures or presentations that cover course content.	Synchronous engagement providing lectures or presentations to cover course content.  Synchronous facilitation of class discussions, encouraging student participation.	Synchronously incorporates multiple teaching methodologies to facilitate effective direct instruction, such as flipped classrooms, critical thinking, and dialogue on the learning outcomes and competencies.	Synchronously utilizes various media and technologies to facilitate learning and competencies, effective teaching methodologies, and incorporates culturally competent strategies that yield equitable student outcomes.

### B - Assessing or providing feedback on a student's coursework.

Initial →	Emerging →	Developed →	Highly Developed
Provides grades with minimal non-automated feedback on some assignments.	Periodically provides meaningful comments on some coursework and assignments.	Consistently provides meaningful comments on most coursework and assignments, including constructive feedback and improvements needed to increase content mastery.	Frequently provides prompt, personalized, and detailed feedback on student coursework and assignments, such as written comments, detailed rubrics, audio or video notes, and examples for improvement.

### C - Providing information or responding to questions about the content of a course or competency.

Initial →	Emerging →	Developed →	Highly Developed
Provides instructional content, such as video, audio, or recorded presentations or interactive lessons visibly created or mediated by the instructor.  Responds to questions pertaining to the course content.	Periodically provides substantive information pertaining to the course content.  Periodically encourages participation and questions and responds in a timely manner.  Provides reminder announcements regarding course content and learning outcomes.	Consistently provides substantive information from various sources or mediums to engage students with course content.  Frequently encourages participation and questions and responds in a timely manner.	Frequently provides substantive information, and announcements beyond reminders that discuss previous topics, trends in assignments, or that highlights key concepts.  Frequently encourages participation and questions and responds in a timely manner with detailed information and ideas.

### D - Facilitating a group discussion regarding the content of a course or competency.

Initial →	Emerging →	Developed →	Highly Developed
Provides prompts, questions or topics to engage students.	Periodically provides prompts and occasional comments or guidance to students in discussions to ensure focus is on course content and discussion is productive.	Consistently provides comments or guidance in discussions to enhance course content/competency mastery.	Frequently provides comments or guidance in discussions, such as to pose questions, propose alternative viewpoints, connect ideas, and encourage students, in order to enhance course content/competency mastery.

### E - Other instructional activities approved by the institution's or program's accrediting agency. N/A (ACCJC has currently not approved any additional activities for substantive interaction)

## Regular Interaction

between a student and an instructor(s) is demonstrated by the *two following criteria*:

### A - Providing the opportunity for substantive interactions with the student on a *predictable and regular basis commensurate with the length of time and the amount of content in the course or competency.*

Initial →	Emerging →	Developed →	Highly Developed
<p>Policies and procedures make clear how often and when the instructor will interact with students.</p> <p>Course materials (e.g. syllabi and introductory statements) make clear to students the opportunities for interaction.</p> <p>Interaction expectations are clearly communicated to the students (e.g. in the syllabus), including response times, and explicit participation guidance (e.g. office hours, discussion boards).</p>	<p>Instructor periodically engages with students throughout the term per the institution's policies regarding frequency of postings, feedback, providing information pertaining to course content/competencies, and learning outcomes.</p> <p>Interaction expectations are communicated to the students in multiple ways encouraging students to participate in the opportunities for substantive engagement (e.g. office hours, discussion boards).</p>	<p>Instructor consistently engages students throughout the term.</p> <p>Interactions are predictable and occur in accordance with the length and course content.</p>	<p>Instructor frequently engages students throughout the term.</p> <p>Instructor engagement with students yields equitable student outcomes.</p> <p>Interactions are predictable and occur in accordance with the length and course content.</p>

### B - Monitoring the student's academic engagement and success and ensuring that an instructor is responsible for promptly and proactively engaging in substantive interaction with the student when needed on the basis of such monitoring, or upon request by the student.

Initial →	Emerging →	Developed →	Highly Developed
<p>There is minimal interaction (frequency of postings, feedback, instruction) throughout the term in the course section, or with individual students based on monitoring student engagement and success.</p> <p>Policies and/or procedures create expectations for monitoring student academic engagement and success.</p>	<p>Instructor periodically engages with students throughout the term to provide formative feedback and information based on monitoring student engagement and success.</p> <p>Mechanisms ensure that the policies and procedures pertaining to monitoring student academic engagement and success are followed.</p>	<p>Instructor consistently engages with students throughout the term to provide formative feedback and information based on monitoring student engagement and success.</p> <p>Instructor communicates and responds in a timely and prompt manner per institution's policies.</p>	<p>Instructor frequently engages with students throughout the term to provide formative feedback and information based on monitoring student engagement and success.</p> <p>Instructor promptly and proactively responds to students in response to observed concerns or at the request of students, to provide necessary support.</p>