October 2020 Newsletter

Legal Opinion: Camera-On Requirements

Read the **full memo** from the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office for detailed info.

Question: Can I require students to keep their webcam on?

Answer: If there are circumstances where full audio and visual student participation is **essential to instruction**, a carefully tailored camera-on requirement might be appropriate.

Recommendations

- Cameras should be presumptively *optional* for live synchronous online classes.
- If audio and visual student participation *is essential*:
  - Allow faculty to require cameras to be on, but only to the extent necessary, and with adequate notice to students.
  - Clearly identify the essential nature of video for instruction and consider a student's privacy or technical objections and create a confidential "opt-out" mechanism that allows a student to decline video participation.
  - Encourage the use of electronic video backgrounds.
  - Allow students flexibility to turn off their cameras or mute audio unless needed.
- Encourage the use of the chat feature for attendance or discussion.
- Include camera-on course requirements in the syllabus or applicable course documents when appropriate.

Legal Opinion: Real-Time Captioning

Read the **full memo** from the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office for detailed info.

Question: Is real-time captioning required in live synchronous online classes?

Answer: An auxiliary aid or service is **required if** the class includes deaf or hearing impaired students.

Recommendations

- In most cases, this will be satisfied by the provision of real-time captioning in live, synchronous online classes.
- However, colleges must give "primary consideration" to the choice of aid or service requested by the student. The requests will be weighed against the burdens it imposes upon the college program. In other words, the college will honor a student's choice of aid or service where possible.

Captioning 101

There are a number of technologies that accommodate students' needs. They may include, but are not limited to:

- **Offline captioning:** captions added in the post-production process. Offline captioning allows for the most accurate captioning possible.
- **Real-time captioning:** captions that are created in real-time while an event is taking place. This type of captioning has a higher rate of errors and should be used only when offline captioning is not possible.
- **Speech-to-text:** spoken communication and other auditory information are translated into text in real-time. A service provider types what is heard and the text appears on a screen for the consumer to read.
- **Open captions:** captions that are part of the video image that are always present and cannot be turned off.
- **Closed captions:** captions encoded in the video signal that can be turned on/off.

New Canvas Updates

- **Global Navigation Update:** The Global Navigation Menu now includes a Recent History link to helps users remember what page they last viewed in one or multiple courses.
- **Notification Preferences Interface Update:** The user-level Notifications page has been updated to match the design of the course-level Notifications page. Additional enhancements have been added to clarify notifications between each level.
- Check out this quick **2 minute video tutorial** outlining both updates or the Canvas release notes website for more.

Online Equity Practices

College of Alameda is committed to providing a supportive online learning environment that closes achievement gaps. Check out the Canvas features and resources below that may contribute to a more equitable online experience for all students:

- Canvas Accessibility Checker
  - Note: the Accessibility Checker will not flag *all* accessibility issues. Use it as a starting point.
- Anonymous Grading in SpeedGrader
- Updating Personal Pronouns
- 'Message Students Who' Option
- Name Coach
- Align to the Peralta Online Equity Rubric