

# What is Regular and Substantive Interaction (RSI)?

## "Regular and Substantive" Interaction must:

- be with an instructor as defined by the institution's accreditor
- be initiated by the instructor
- be scheduled *and* predictable
- be academic in nature and relevant to the course
- ensure that instructors are promptly and proactively engaging students in substantive interaction
- include at least **TWO** of the following methods for substantive interaction:
  - direct instruction (i.e., discussion participation, instructor feedback, synchronous lectures, etc.)
  - providing information or responding to questions about course content
  - coursework assessment or feedback
  - facilitating group discussion of the course content
  - other instructional methods to be approved by accreditor (SACSCOC)
  - **Instructors must be able to show evidence of at least TWO of the above methods in their course.**

## What does not count as RSI?

- Pre-recorded video lecture available for students to watch at their own pace.
- Student-solicited office hours. Regularly set office hours initiated by the instructor would count as substantive interaction, even if students do not take advantage.
- A student logging into a live webinar with no opportunity for interaction.
- Asynchronous courses *without* at least two of the methods listed for substantive interaction.

Comes from the U.S. Department of Education's definition of "distance education" found in 34 CFR 600.2: "*Education that uses one or more technologies listed...to deliver instruction to students who are separated from the instructor and to support **regular and substantive interaction** between the students, either synchronously or asynchronously.*"

## What are the impacts of failure to ensure RSI?

- Impacts the Title IV Financial Aid Eligibility of the Institution.
- Increased student complaints regarding the quality of instruction.
- Failure to ensure elements of RSI in instruction can also impact accreditation and authorization to offer instruction across state and international lines.

## Questions? Contact:

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