Important Policies

Authentication:
A federal mandate appeared in the reauthorization of the Higher Education Opportunity Act in 2008 that requires faculty to have students sign into courses using identification provided by the college. Interpretation of the language in the Act shows a governmental concern that students taking GAVILAN COLLEGE online courses are the students enrolled in them.

The changes require GAVILAN COLLEGE to have students complete tests and quizzes in the iLearn system. Faculty can no longer use their own websites to accomplish testing even if the students log into the site. GAVILAN COLLEGE will be held accountable through the accreditation process. The only exception is when faculty are using publisher content that requires the students to purchase a key and log in, which still requires that the students pass through the Gavilan iLearn system.

Academic Integrity
It is a requirement for GAVILAN COLLEGE faculty to define cheating and plagiarism in course documentation and syllabus. Faculty should have a link to the technology acceptable use policy and student conduct policy. Very often community college students do not understand what plagiarism means. A recommended method would be to hold a discussion forum asking students to write what it means to plagiarize. It should be made clear in the course content that the topic should be course specific. The following link would serve as a good example:

Rutgers — Interactive Plagiarism Video, Real Life Examples, and Quiz and How to Avoid Plagiarism Online.

Faculty can assist students to be ready to take an online class, which will help with online course retention rates. GAVILAN COLLEGE offers a faculty-facilitated online orientation that begins the week of the start of every semester and is also available for self-enrollment during summer session and winter. At the beginning of spring and fall semesters, students are automatically enrolled into this self-paced, non-credit, free course, LIB 732 Intro to Online Learning at Gavilan College. They see this course when they login to the online course system, iLearn.

Regular Effective Contact
When administration receives complaints from students about online courses, the top complaint is that the instructor has not kept in touch with them either by not answering emails promptly or by not posting announcements or discussion responses. GAVILAN COLLEGE has adopted a Regular Effective Contact Policy, as mandated by Title 5 regulations. The policy pertains to instructor-initiated contact with students. It has been found that student
retention and success rates are directly tied to how well faculty communicate with online students. Faculty are required to participate in discussion activities with their students.

Copyright

Understanding what copyright is, why it exists, and being able to effectively apply “fair use” guidelines for copyrighted materials used in a course are essential tools for any educator.

However, teaching online generally adds some additional challenging questions to the mix. To ensure faculty are provided with a clear and comprehensive overview of the topic, faculty are requested to read the shared Copyright 101 module created by BYU. “Copyright 101” is designed to:

- Increase faculty knowledge and understanding of copyright and licensing issues; and know what it means to say that someone owns the copyright to a creative work.
- Learn more about why copyright law exits and where it all started (the history of copyright).
- Know how to resolve basic copyright/licensing questions and when and who to ask for more help.
- Realize and respect the ethical/moral aspects involved in using materials protected by copyright.
- Be able to answer a variety of copyright questions and solve specific case studies.

The Teach Act: The Technology, Education, and Copyright Harmonization (TEACH) Act of 2002 extends an instructor’s legal use of copyrighted materials in online instruction at accredited nonprofit education institutions. Applying the TEACH Act is complex and relies on the instructor’s adherence to a specific set of criteria. Faculty are encouraged to speak directly with members of their own institution to understand if specific use of copyrighted materials in their online classes is within the guidelines of the TEACH Act. Faculty may find the resource, The TEACH Act: How the Law Affects Online Instruction created and shared by Florida State University helpful.

Creative Commons: Dialogue about the friction between copyright law and digital media has led to the development of Creative Commons. Creative Commons (CC) provides flexible copyright licenses that copyright owners may choose to apply to their work. The CC licenses grant more flexibility than traditional copyright but not as much as “public domain.” A work in the public domain may be used freely. A Creative Commons licensed work still requires the user to adhere to specific guidelines but may be as simple as “crediting the author.” The popularity of CC has resulted in the fostering of a culture of sharing, and there are now thousands of works online that faculty may use without violating copyright. If the instructor is seeking images or audio for a class, it is in the interest of the instructor to check for CC licensed work. The following link can be helpful in this regard: “What is Creative Commons?”

This document contains several links to resources. As such, it is best viewed online here: www.gavilan.edu/tlc/facultyhandbook2014.pdf