



**Title of Document:**

ACAD\_Distance Education Plan

**Date(s):**

2024

**Department:**

Academics

**Description:**

This plan outlines the scope of technology use and online course design and implementation at RLNC, including describing faculty expectations and course design expectations for online instruction.

# Red Lake Nation College



## Distance Education Plan 2021 - 2025

June 28th, 2024

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## Introduction

All courses within the Associate in Arts in Liberal Education Program, whether face-to-face, hybrid, online, or HyFlex follow the same guidelines set forth by this Distance Education Plan.

RLNC's course offerings are managed by the Dean of Academic Affairs. Other collaborators include the following:

- Chief Financial Officer
- Associate Dean of Academic Affairs
- Director of Information Technology (IT)
- IT Technician
- Director of Distance Education
- Business Office Specialist
- Extension Program Coordinator
- Faculty Senate Chair
- Director of Library Services

- Director of Assessment and Institutional Effectiveness

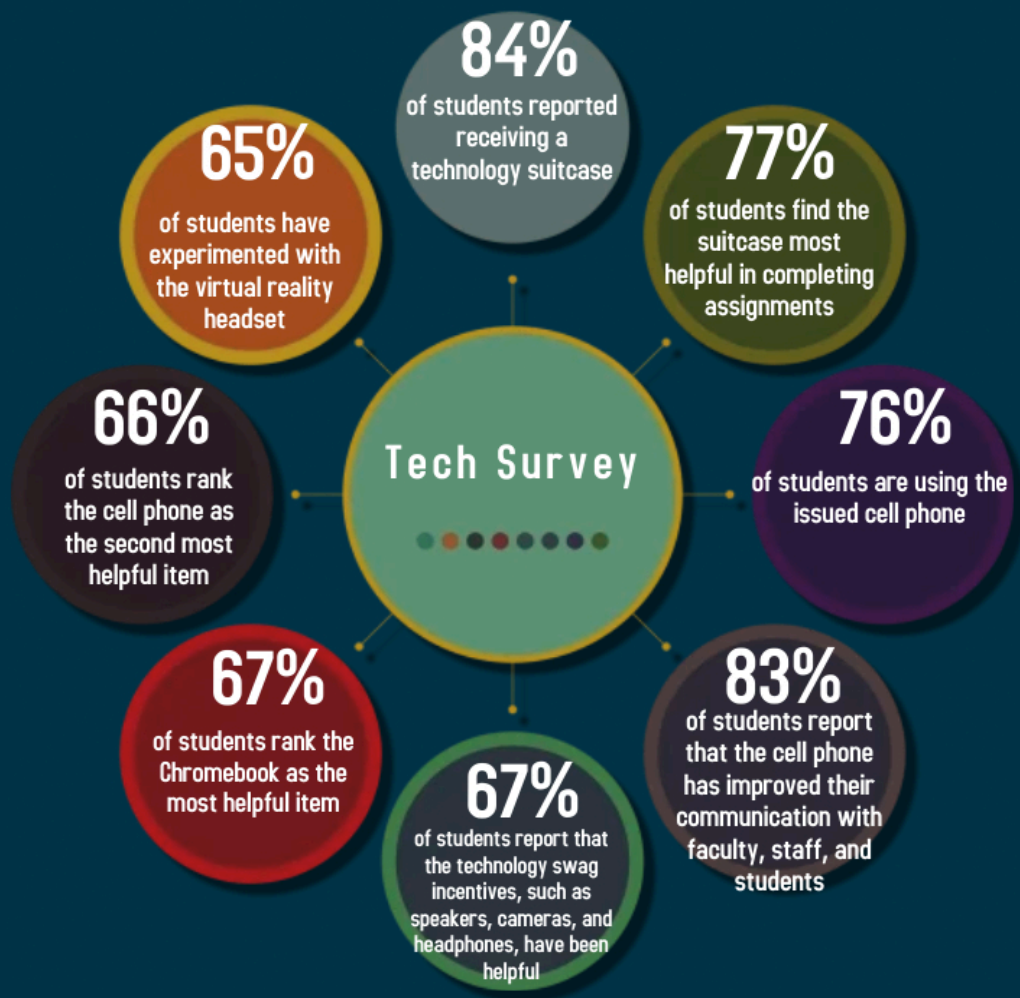
In the Fall of 2017, Red Lake Nation College (RLNC) implemented the Canvas Learning Management System (Canvas LMS) and began outlining course shell expectations in conjunction with the master syllabus template. All classes, regardless of delivery mode, were required to meet the minimum threshold of course navigation, syllabus, and student grades. Every semester since implementation, additional requirements have been added. Required features for all courses include:

- Standard course navigation on each Canvas page
- Syllabus Page listed as the Home Page
- Syllabus Page completed according to a template designed in Canvas
- Syllabus uploaded to Syllabus / Home Page - must use Master Template
- Student grades are updated in a timely manner
- All course assignments, quizzes, files, documents, and discussion boards are housed in Modules
- Attendance is taken daily in Populi

All this laid the groundwork for our effective rapid transition to online classes in the Spring of 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. In the Fall of 2020, all RLNC courses were delivered via distance education, using the Canvas LMS, Populi Student Information System (Populi SIS), Google Meet / G Suite (renamed Workspace as of late 2020), and online tutoring. Students were provided with technology suitcases, each of which included a Chromebook, iPhone with hotspot and unlimited data, and an Oculus VR headset. Issuing technology suitcases to students has continued with all components except the Oculus headset.

In the Spring of 2021, a student technology survey was conducted and 43 students responded. Students were overwhelmingly pleased with the technology suitcases, finding their issued Chromebooks and iPhones especially helpful.

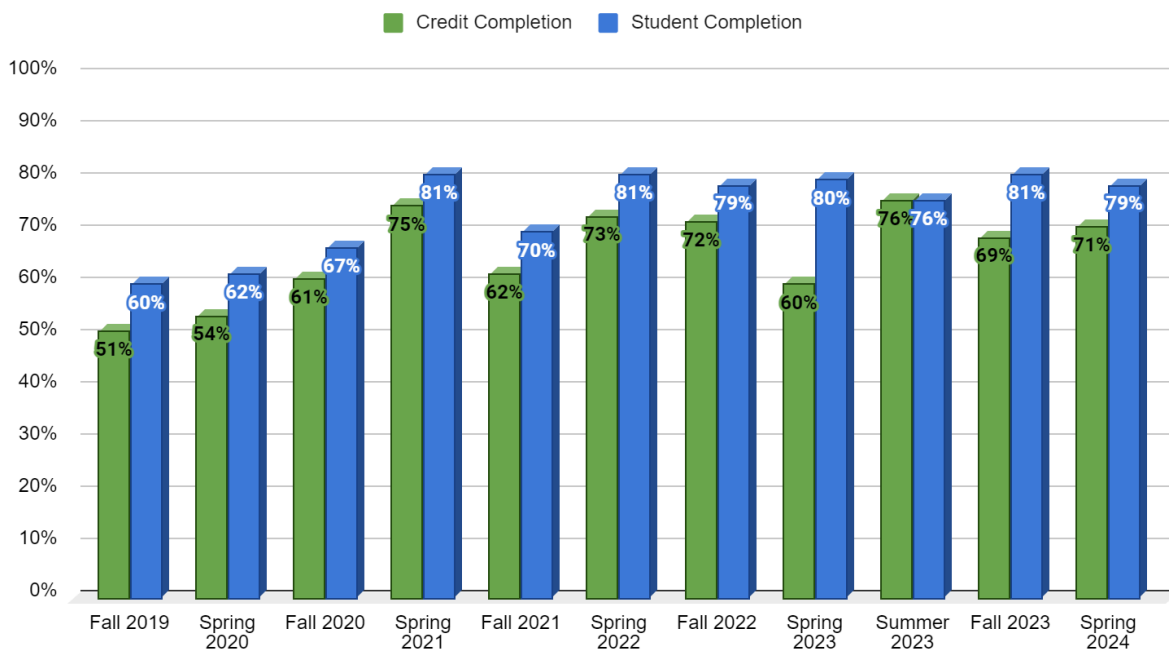
# 2020-2021 Technology Survey



Red Lake Nation  
College

Since 2019, RLNC had been on an upward trend until the COVID-19 pandemic caused a sudden drop in completion rates across both credit and student metrics. As we shifted a majority of our courses to the HyFlex model, we saw notable increases to both completion rates during the 2020-2021 Academic Year. Retaining more than half of our courses in HyFlex, the credit completion rate rose to 75% in Spring 2021, marking a 20% increase from Spring 2020, a full year since the pandemic began. Since Spring 2021, student completion rates have held firm around 80%, with a slight reduction in numbers in the 2023-24 Academic Year, likely due to the increased number of overall students. In a promising development, credit completion percentages have risen since 2021 and remain consistently around 70%.

Student & Credit Completion % from Fall 2019 to Spring 2024



## Approvals

The Board of Regents approved the pursuit of a substantive change request to the Higher Learning Commission to offer one program (Associate in Arts in Liberal Education) via Distance Education. RLNC Board of Regents' approval occurred on July 15, 2021. Red Lake Tribal Council approval occurred on July 20, 2021 and RLNC Faculty Senate approval occurred on September 15, 2021.

The Board of Regents approved the pursuit of a substantive change request to the Higher Learning Commission to offer all programs (including the Associate of Applied Science in Social and Behavioral Sciences) on April 7, 2023. Red Lake Tribal Council approval occurred on May 9, 2023. On September 12, 2023, RLNC received a message from the HLC that our accreditation stipulation for Distance Education had been changed automatically to reflect new guidance set forth by the United States Department of Education (USDE), listing RLNC's Distance Education stipulation as: "Approved for distance education courses and program."

## Strategic Planning

All RLNC operations are guided by the [Institutional Strategic Plan](#). Strategic planning goals are as follows:

1. Being Purposeful 21st Century Leaders
  - To harness the innate and individual leadership abilities of students through the delivery of a value-based learning environment
2. Relentless Innovation
  - To pursue learning strategies and technologies that utilize creative solutions to extend the academic knowledge base in key subject areas
3. Passion for Growth
  - To cultivate a mindset of evaluation, improvement, and innovation
4. Holistic Student Success
  - To shape the future of RLNC through student experience, oneness, and feedback
5. Breakthrough Performance Environment
  - To provide a solution-based working environment based on accurate data and information
6. Language Revitalization and Cultural Preservation
  - To provide place-based Indigenous knowledge of the Red Lake Nation

## Mission of Distance Education at RLNC

The Mission of Distance Education at Red Lake Nation College is to provide excellent higher education grounded in the culture and values of the Red Lake Nation, through the use of online technology that facilitates access to diverse and underserved students. Red Lake Nation College Without Borders is our initiative to expand academic opportunities beyond our homeland reservation geography and reduce barriers to student success.



# Student Needs

Students at Red Lake Nation College face an array of life challenges relating to childcare, housing, transportation, job requirements, and community issues such as poverty, high unemployment, an opioid crisis, and historical trauma. All of these are considered during development and implementation of academic programming and student services, and we offer extensive academic support, emergency aid, and counseling services.

We are proud that over 90% of RLNC students are Native American and 65-75% are First Generation college students. About 50% of RLNC students have dependent children at home, and most of those are single parents. Additionally, 5-10% report being responsible for the care of elders, and many more provide support for other family and community members.

Housing security is a big issue on the Red Lake Reservation and for RLNC students. In recent years, 4-5% of students report being homeless and another 11% report living in overcrowded housing. 40% of new RLNC students indicate that they lack food security and/or receive SNAP.

Household income for RLNC students averages around \$16,000 to \$18,000. Over 90% of RLNC students have income levels that result in zero expected family contribution on the FAFSA, making them eligible for Pell grants. Many students hold part-time or full-time jobs while attending RLNC. 40-50% of students work over 20 hours per week and another 15-20% work less than 20 hours per week.

Since the Spring of 2020, COVID-19 has contributed significantly to everyone's needs and burdens, putting even more stress on working parents and further limiting safe public transportation options. Like many colleges, RLNC switched to delivering courses online in 2020 for the safety of students, faculty, and staff. This was a big adjustment for all, but many students appreciated the flexibility online courses offered for managing children/child care, jobs, and other responsibilities. Many Red Lake Tribal Members in the Minneapolis area took advantage of the new opportunity to participate in culture, language, and history courses offered at RLNC through online learning.

Expanding distance learning options at RLNC helps meet student needs through increased flexibility to manage jobs, children / child care, and other responsibilities while taking courses. Distance learning also offers more options to students living around Red Lake with limited transportation as well as expanding the RLNC reach to serve Red Lake Tribal Members and others located in urban areas.

## Vision of Distance Education at RLNC

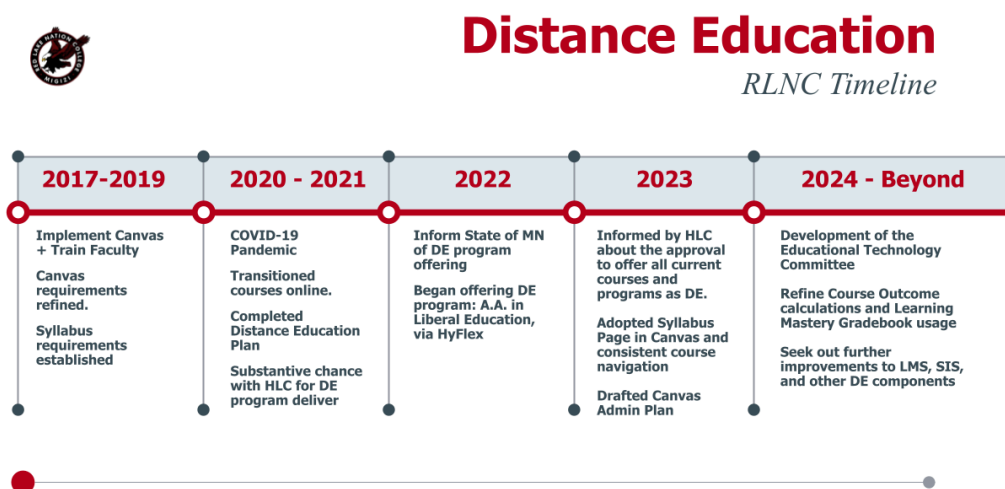
The Strategic Vision for Distance / Online Education aligns with Red Lake Nation College's mission of providing excellent higher education that is grounded in the culture and values of the

Red Lake Nation. RLNC will deliver an online educational experience that enhances access to underserved students, meets emerging needs and interests, and maintains the quality of the RLNC experience for diverse student populations.

RLNC is committed to providing a student-centered college experience. Quality online education requires individualized student attention (reflected in class size), an online student orientation and advising component, creative opportunities for interaction and collaboration with faculty and peers, rigorous coursework that prepares students for successful careers, responsive technical support, and access to updated technology.

## Timeline

RLNC implemented the Canvas LMS in the Fall of 2017 and at that time, began requiring faculty members to utilize the gradebook and syllabus portions of the course shell. From there, additional course management tools were required every semester. By the Fall of 2019, all courses were utilizing the gradebook, Syllabus Page, and Learning Mastery Gradebook (for course, program, and co-curricular assessment). Additionally, most instructors were using quizzes, assignments, discussion boards, etc. to facilitate the delivery of course content. As of the Spring 2024 term, instructors adhere to a specific course navigation model, implement a fully-detailed Syllabus Page (to easily facilitate mobile access), and deliver almost all instruction both in-person and with an online component to support HyFlex and remote students. Additionally, RLNC is in the process of ensuring compliance with embedded assessment (connected to Course Learning, Program Learning, and Institutional Learning Outcomes) in all courses, with a goal of 90% compliance set for Summer 2025 term.



# Goals

According to the Market Study conducted by Marquette Advisors (2021), there are approximately 50,000 Native Americans living in the Minneapolis / St. Paul area, with approximately 8,000 of them being Red Lake Tribal Members. RLNC seeks to reach all Red Lake Tribal Members and other Native Americans through Distance Education offerings that meet the cultural, academic, and social needs of students.

RLNC's goals for offering the A.A. in Liberal Education and the A.A.S. in Social and Behavioral Sciences via Distance Education programming include the following:

1. Expand program offerings to include a Distance Education Program.
2. Expand access and educational availability to tribal members who may be unable to attend face-to-face classes.
3. Enhance current support systems for students taking online courses.
4. Develop and market RLNC's Online Education Program offering.
5. Enhance and expand support for RLNC faculty regarding the use of technology and distance education teaching.

# Definitions

The [U.S. Department of Education](#) defines distance education as follows:

**Distance education** means education that uses one or more of the technologies listed in paragraphs (1) through (4) to deliver instruction to students who are separated from the instructor and to support regular and substantive interaction between the students and the instructor, either synchronously or asynchronously. The technologies may include--

- (1) The internet;
- (2) One-way and two-way transmissions through open broadcast, closed circuit, cable, microwave, broadband lines, fiber optics, satellite, or wireless communications devices;
- (3) Audioconferencing; or
- (4) Video cassettes, DVDs, and CD-ROMs, if the cassettes, DVDs, or CD-ROMs are used in a course in conjunction with any of the technologies listed in paragraphs (1) through (3).

Distance Education is defined by the [Higher Learning Commission](#) as follows:

Education that uses one or more of the technologies listed below to deliver instruction to students who are separated from the instructor and to support regular and substantive

interaction between the students and the instructor, either synchronously or asynchronously. The technologies may include:

- The internet.
- One-way and two-way transmissions through open broadcast, closed circuit, cable, microwave, broadband lines, fiber optics, satellite or wireless communications devices.
- Audio conferencing.
- Video cassettes, DVDs and CD-ROMs, if the cassettes, DVDs or CD-ROMs are used in a course in conjunction with any of the technologies listed above.

**Synchronous online learning** requires students to participate in class together at a specified time each week.

**Asynchronous online learning** allows students to access instructional materials each week at any time they choose and does not include a live lecture.

**Hybrid learning** includes some face-to-face learning and some distance learning. Flexibility can be added to this model to give students the choice of delivery.

**HyFlex learning** is an instructional approach that combines face-to-face and online learning to better accommodate student needs and preferences. Students can choose to participate in person, synchronously online, and in some circumstances, asynchronously online on any given day.

## HyFlex Classroom Instruction Model

The HyFlex (Hybrid-Flexible) model is an instructional approach that combines face-to-face and online learning to better accommodate student needs and preferences. Students can choose to participate in person, synchronously online, and in some circumstances, asynchronously online on any given day. All instructors have made modifications to their courses in order to facilitate this approach which began in the Fall 2021 for the 2021-2022 academic year.

This mode of instruction is the best method of delivery to adapt to modern student needs and preferences due to transportation issues, childcare needs, and health, safety or pandemic concerns. Since many of our students are employees with children, this best adapts to their lifestyles and needs in order to remain in college. Further, with health and safety issues likely to be with us for several more years, this allows us to easily adapt if any issues arise. It is anticipated that this mode of delivery will help improve student success, completion and attendance given the increased opportunities to attend class based on online learning.

# Organizational Structure and Support

The following individuals support Distance Education at Red Lake Nation College in the following capacities:

- *Dean of Academic Affairs*: ultimately responsible for the administration of the courses offered in a distance education modality.
- *Education and Technology Committee*:
  - Chief Financial and Technology Officer
  - Dean of Academic Affairs
  - Associate Dean of Academic Affairs
  - Director of IT
  - Dean of Students
  - Director of Library Services
  - Registrar
  - Extension Coordinator
  - Business Office Staff Member
  - Student Success Staff Member
  - IT Technician(s)
- *Innovation Center*: provides instructional design support and assistance to faculty members. Training and one-on-one support is also provided for use of Canvas, Populi, external integrated applications (LTIs), Google Workspace, and other platforms.
- *Curriculum Committee*: responsible for the separate approval process for online and hybrid courses. The Curriculum Committee maintains reviews of online courses to ensure that they meet the requirements of RLNC's Distance Education program.
- *Assessment Committee*: responsible for ensuring all course, program, co-curricular, and institutional assessment is captured within Canvas and shared drives. The Assessment Committee evaluates student ePortfolio work and improves upon quality artifacts that align with each goal area of the MN Transfer Curriculum.
- *Faculty Senate*: The Faculty Senate is responsible for representing faculty interests through shared governance with RLNC administration. The Faculty Senate is responsible for exercising its authority in ensuring that academic freedom is encouraged and protected, and for acting as a guiding body to oversee curriculum that promotes student learning through rigorous courses of study. The Faculty Senate is responsible for proposing, evaluating, and advising on actions or policies that support the mission of Red Lake Nation College to provide quality education that is grounded in the Ojibwe language and culture of the Red Lake Nation.

## Institutional Support

- The College will provide administrative support to staff to facilitate Distance Education offerings.
- The College will provide Distance Education operational support in order to support faculty and Distance Education students effectively.

- The College will continue to support infrastructure needs, including staff, hardware upgrades, software upgrades, training, and support for faculty and students.
- The College will ensure that adequate financial resources are allocated for Distance Education, which include, but are not limited to, human resources, library and student learning support services, counseling, student services, and technical support.

During the 2020-2021 academic year, RLNC purchased several LTIs (Learning Tools Interoperability) that integrate within the Canvas LMS. The following tools are currently available within RLNC's Canvas platform.

<b>Tool</b>	<b>Active dates</b>	<b>Cost</b>	<b>Funding Source</b>
Canvas -including Impact, Studio, Catalog, and Credentials (free)	Current period expires 5/31/25 (renewed 6/1/23)  Renewed 6/1/25-5/31/26  Renewals completed on 3/31/23	\$18,000  \$52,550.90  \$28,091.99	Renew using Broadband Grant  NTIA Broadband Grant  Academic Budget
Populi	Student Information System	Approx \$8,000	Ongoing renewal
Dropout Detective	Current period expires 9/27/25 (Renewed 9/28/23)	\$8,000	Renewal paid for with Broadband Grant
TutorMe	Paid on a per-unit basis	Approx. \$5,000	Broadband Grant can purchase more hours
Labster	Good until 6/1/25	\$18,000	Academic budget
InfoBase American Indian History	Good until 12/31/23	\$539.72 annually	Academic budget
TurnItIn	3/1/23-2/28/25	\$5,675 for two years	Broadband Grant
Peerceptiv	Paid on a per-unit basis	Approx. \$2,500	Academic Budget

RLNC has equipped main campus classrooms with state-of-the-art Logitech Rally equipment, taking a significant step towards enhancing the learning experience for our students. This cutting-edge audio solution, managed centrally through a user-friendly web portal, leverages the power of artificial intelligence to optimize audio quality within the classroom environment. With

advanced algorithms, the system intelligently identifies and tracks the speaker, autonomously aiming the camera at the individual who is speaking. This ensures that remote students attending virtually can fully engage with the classroom discussions, while also creating a seamless experience for those attending in person. Furthermore, RLNC implemented Vibe branded interactive displays in classrooms, with exceptional integration with Google applications and their ability to enable "whiteboarding" sessions virtually. These solutions empower both in-person and remote students to actively participate and contribute, regardless of their physical location. By integrating these innovative technologies, we aim to provide a superior educational experience, reduce the learning curve for usage, and foster collaboration in an increasingly hybrid learning environment. Additionally, all Minneapolis-site classrooms are equipped with Vibe smart boards that allow for video conferencing, whiteboard through Vibe Canvas, and easy user interfacing through Google's Chromium.

All staff and faculty utilize Google Workspace for Education. This product includes the following Google Applications: Gmail, Calendar, Drive, Meet, Docs, Sheets, Slides, Forms, and Sites, among others.

RLNC has also invested in the following Instructure / Canvas products:

#### *Canvas Catalog*

Canvas Catalog is an all-in-one learning platform which streamlines the registration, payment, and enrollment process for Canvas courses, simplifying the ability for non-matriculated guests and community members to enroll in continuing education courses at Red Lake Nation College.

#### *Impact by Instructure*

Impact by Instructure helps institutions improve technology adoption and evaluate the impact of educational technology through targeted in-line messaging.

#### *Canvas Studio*

Canvas Studio is a communication tool that allows instructors and students to actively collaborate through video and audio media.

## Lab Needs

Students enrolled in HyFlex courses with labs elect at the beginning of the semester whether they will be attending face-to-face or on Google Meet. Those who elect to attend virtually via Google Meet receive lab kits in the mail. These kits contain all the materials and equipment that students will be using in-class, such that distance students can perform the same mandatory class functions, but in a remote capacity. Students who elect to participate in labs virtually via Google Meet must join synchronously with their class and then perform the same lab exercises as their face-to-face peers using the lab kits provided by the College. In this way, remote students participate in the same labs at the same times as students who are present in the classroom, ensuring equitable experience and access to learning outcomes.

Science courses also supplement lab activities with the use of STEM software, including Labster and Science Interactive. Labster is an LMS-supported SaaS app that uses simulations to help students develop safe lab practices, hone lab work techniques, and experience discipline specific lab environments, offered through the familiar structure of Canvas LMS. Labster is available to both face-to-face and remote students and is assigned per the instructor's discretion. Science Interactive is a software that tailors its programming to instructor syllabi, delivering physical and online cartridge lab kits to students while providing online instructions in the use of those lab kits. Science Interactive instructional and lab content is hosted on the Science Interactive website, which can be accessed through a student's Canvas course.

## Student Support Services for Distance Education Students

### Innovation Center

Contact Information:  
(218) 380-7100

RLNC's Innovative Technology Center is staffed by the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs, who is available to assist students and faculty, in addition to other Distance Education staff. The position is responsible for establishing and maintaining the institution's educational equipment, hardware, educational technology platform, integrated external applications, and leads on developing and implementing support and training for students, faculty, and staff.

Distance Education staff, including the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs, also provide instructional design support for faculty. A key part of these positions is to help students, staff, and faculty to creatively use technology to create online media content for assignments and classroom use. Services can be provided in-person, virtually, or HyFlex to students at any location.

### Technology Suitcases

Contact information:  
(218) 380-7100

Technology suitcases are distributed through the Innovative Technology Center and include a Chromebook, cell phone with hotspot, and unlimited data. These Technology Suitcase tools are a major part of the required RLNC supplies, as essential as textbooks. The suitcase items help provide improved student participation and success in our RLNC classes.



## Student Success

Contact information:

(218) 380-7100

[recruitment@rlnc.edu](mailto:recruitment@rlnc.edu)

[financial.aid@rlnc.edu](mailto:financial.aid@rlnc.edu)

[registrar@rlnc.edu](mailto:registrar@rlnc.edu)

<https://www.rlnc.edu/student-services>

Student Services offers academic support and advising in-person or virtually to provide academic and financial aid assistance. Emergency aid grants are also available to all students through Student Success. Additionally, students have access to the Student Pantry for food and household supplies.

## Life Coaching

Contact information:

(612) 523-5359

[counseling@rlnc.edu](mailto:counseling@rlnc.edu)

<https://www.rlnc.edu/counseling>

The RLNC Life Vision Coach is a credentialed counselor who is available to provide in-person or virtual counseling services to assist students in navigating their academic, personal and life obstacles and challenges. These life coaching and counseling sessions are available either in person or online.

## Disability Services

Contact information:

(218) 380-7100

[counseling@rlnc.edu](mailto:counseling@rlnc.edu)

<https://www.rlnc.edu/disability-services>

Students with disabilities are encouraged to meet with RLNC's Life Vision Coach to assess their needs and determine what accommodations may be needed to promote student success.

## Medweganoonind Library

Contact information:

(218) 380-7100

[library@rlnc.edu](mailto:library@rlnc.edu)

<https://www.rlnc.edu/medweganoonind-library>

The Medweganoonind Library provides access to e-books, electronic databases, and librarian support. This is a college library and a community library, as well as our official Red Lake Nation Tribal Archives.

## RLNC Learning Center

Contact information:

(218) 380-7100

<https://www.rlnc.edu/learning-center>

The Learning Center provides in-person and online synchronous tutoring services.

## Tutoring

Contact information:

(218) 380-7100

<https://www.rlnc.edu/learning-center>

Tutoring is provided free of charge to students in person in the Bremer Learning Center or virtually via Google Meet.

RLNC students also have access to TutorMe. TutorMe is an online tutoring platform that connects students to live tutors, 24 hours a day in over 300 subjects, right from their homes. They have a network of over 10,000 verified tutors to assist students in improving their grades, understanding difficult concepts, or answering simple questions. Students also have access to TutorMe's Writing Lab, which provides detailed feedback on their essays or reports in less than 12 hours.

## Migizi Bookstore

Contact information:

(218) 380-7100

[bookstore@rlnc.edu](mailto:bookstore@rlnc.edu)

<https://www.rlnc.edu/bookstore>

All textbooks are available to students, in-person and online, through the Migizi Bookstore.

## Admissions and Registrar's Office

Contact information:

(218) 380-7100

[registrar@rlnc.edu](mailto:registrar@rlnc.edu)

<https://www.rlnc.edu/admissions>

All student admissions and registration records are maintained by the Registrar's office. Student records requests can also be made here.

## Career and Transfer Services

Contact information:

(218) 380-7100

<https://www.rlnc.edu/career-and-transfer-services>

RLNC provides a variety of career and transfer services, both in person and online. Upcoming events are posted on our website.

## Community Education and Extension Services

Contact information:

(218) 380-7100

<https://www.rlnc.edu/community-education>

The mission of the Red Lake Nation College Extension Program (RLNCEP) is to promote holistic health and wellness and sustainable interaction with natural resources grounded in our Ojibwe language and culture. The goal of the Community Education program is to enrich the lives of our community through “apane nanda-gikendang,” always seeking knowledge.

## Continuing Education and Workforce Development

Contact information:

(218) 380-7100

<https://www.rlnc.edu/continuing-education>

RLNC offers programs and courses to adult students on a part-time basis to assist in updating their knowledge and skills in a professional field. RLNC is also developing programming to provide to area businesses in need of employee training.

## Business Office

Contact information:

(218) 380-7100

The business office manages student tuition payments and distributes financial aid checks.

## Financial Aid

Contact information:

(218) 380-7100  
[financial.aid@rlnc.edu](mailto:financial.aid@rlnc.edu)

The financial aid office is available to assist all students through completion of the FAFSA as well as grant and scholarship applications.

## Canvas + Tech Support

RLNC provides institutionally-driven support through an online ticketing system operated through the Help Desk Portal. Students can easily access the Help Desk portal to create and submit tickets directly, providing all the necessary details for their support needs. Additionally, the Help Desk allows users to create support requests by sending an email to [Support@RLNC.edu](mailto:Support@RLNC.edu). When an email is received, Help Desk automatically generates a ticket, capturing the email's contents as the ticket description. This seamless integration between email and ticketing system ensures that users have the flexibility to choose their preferred method of communication while maintaining a centralized and organized support system. Furthermore, to ensure comprehensive reporting and analysis, technicians are responsible for entering phone requests into the Spiceworks Help Desk system. This practice enables all support requests, regardless of the source, to be included in the reporting metrics, providing a holistic view of the support landscape and facilitating data-driven decision-making. This ticketing system is monitored during business hours Monday-Friday by support staff at RLNC. For all after-hours help requests, students are encouraged to access the Canvas 24/7 Help Desk.

RLNC ensures that students have 24/7 access to Canvas LMS support. Canvas provides assistance to students through a 24/7 Help Desk.

Contact Information:

Canvas Support Hotline: (833) 882-6397

Canvas Support Chat: Available through Canvas

Training Services Portal: Available through Canvas

Canvas Guides: Available through Canvas

## Accessibility Services

Accessibility services are provided on an as-needed basis and may include: print enlargement, captioning, and text-to-audio.

## Distance Learning Orientation

Distance Learning Orientation is required for all students. During these orientation sessions, students log in to all of their accounts, including Canvas, Populi, Gmail, and Google Calendar (Google Workspace). Students also set up their cell phones and Chromebooks, which are included in the technology suitcases issued to degree-seeking students. Distance Learning

Orientation is offered synchronously with an option to complete the orientation asynchronously (with tracking) to provide flexibility. The Associate Dean of Academic Affairs, in addition to other Distance Education staff, will record, review and assess the Orientation process annually to ensure students have met the designated objectives.

## Distance Education Policies and Guidelines

Distance Education is a mode of delivery. According to Title 5, Section 55202 Course Quality Standards, the same standards of course quality shall be applied to any portion of a course conducted through Distance Education as applied to traditional classroom courses. Content, objectives, and student learning outcomes of any Distance Education course should be equal to the content and objectives of that same course delivered traditionally.

The decision to offer a course online or as a hybrid should be strategic and supported by data and Program Review. RLNC faculty are encouraged to take the following factors into account when proposing, developing, approving, and offering an online or hybrid course:

- Access: Explore and develop educational initiatives using advanced communication and computing technologies to address student access issues related to geographical, cultural, disability, and facility barriers.
- Success: Careful consideration should be given to the suitability of available technologies to the successful achievement of student learning outcomes for a given course.
- Completion: Special consideration should be given to the development and scheduling of Distance Education courses that will facilitate timely completion of programs.
- Enrollment: Departments are encouraged to consider Distance Education courses as an alternative delivery method for reaching students currently underserved.

## Course Syllabus and Communication of Distance Education Requirements

A complete syllabus must be uploaded to Canvas and available to students on the first day of the semester in which the course is being offered. All syllabi must use the Master Syllabus Template for the current semester. The syllabus should include the following components:

- Required RLNC Course Learning Outcomes for student transparency
- Required technology equipment and skills
- Communication + Timely Response Policy
- Synchronous activity and course participation standards, including, where practical:
  - Discussion board posting standards
  - Assignment submission instructions
- Methods and mechanisms that foster student-to-student interaction as well as student-to-instructor interaction are listed
- Information on where and how to receive technical support

Instructors must also ensure the following items are present in their Canvas Course Page:

- At least two reliable methods for contacting faculty throughout the semester
- Course content and materials organized in modules
- Consistent course navigation across courses, with unused tabs hidden from students

## Record of Student Attendance

Federal regulations require that students demonstrate a record of attendance in order to be eligible for financial aid. In the Distance Education context, documenting that a student has logged into an online class is not sufficient, by itself, to demonstrate academic attendance by the student. Students enrolled in Distance Education courses must demonstrate active weekly participation, consistent with attendance in a traditional (in person) environment. To this end, instructors must require a minimum of one assignment or activity per week.

Examples of actions that might constitute class participation include, but are not limited to:

- Submitting an assignment or exam
- Documented student participation in an interactive tutorial or computer-assisted instruction
- Providing help or feedback to peers online
- Participating in online discussions or synchronous learning activities
- An e-mail message from the student or other documentation showing that the student initiated contact with a faculty member to ask a question about the academic subject studied in the course.

Academically-related activities do not include the following:

- Logging into an online class without active participation.
- Viewing a prerecorded video class session without completing any assignments or discussion posts.
- Participating in academic counseling or advising.

Faculty should note when students stop participating (e.g., last date of submission). This date will be needed for withdrawal and financial aid refund purposes.

## Third-Party Course Content

Faculty members are permitted to use publisher cartridges or other pre-packaged course content cartridges, but are not to rely solely on this material for the content of a course, regardless of course format.

## Copyright Law

Printed and digital materials must be used in compliance with current copyright laws.

## Student Commitment

The information that follows will be available to students who enroll in RLNC Distance Education courses via the revised Student Handbook. It is also important for faculty to know and reinforce these expectations of students.

Students who enroll in Distance Education courses at RLNC are expected to:

1. Take the initiative to learn about the technical equipment and technical skill requirements for the course in advance of the course start date, and access training materials related to the course technologies when and where appropriate.
2. Ensure they have consistent and reliable access to the online environment and have a backup plan in place to prevent incomplete or late assignments. Instructors may choose not to accept incomplete or late assignments resulting from technology issues that are not widespread events.
3. Adhere to the RLNC Student Code of Conduct which can be found in the Student Handbook.
4. Use RLNC email and Canvas Conversations (Canvas' messaging system) for the duration of the Distance Education course and check both frequently (preferably daily) for course communications.
5. Review details of the course syllabus by the first day of the start of the course, taking note of all course requirements, including any synchronous meetings.
6. Drop or withdraw from a Distance Education course according to the procedures, policies, and deadlines established for traditional (in-person) courses.
7. Demonstrate participation in a given Distance Education course within the first week of the class or become immediately subject to an administrative drop/withdrawal.
8. Maintain weekly participation that provides an indication of "attendance."
9. Respond to instructor-initiated emails and inquiries within a timely manner (within two working days unless a different timeline is stipulated).
10. Understand that frequent participation in a Distance Education course (i.e., completing assignments, responding to emails, posting messages, taking course exams, etc.) is a requirement for RLNC classes. A student who fails to participate in a course for three weeks is subject to an administrative withdrawal.
11. Voice concerns about courses to the appropriate instructor, and follow RLNC's student complaint process as outlined in the RLNC Catalog and Student Handbook.
12. Access enrollment services, financial aid services, bookstore services, advising and counseling services, disability support services, library services and other college resources as needed.
13. Complete and submit the RLNC course evaluation forms available at the end of the semester.
14. Understand the Academic Rights of Students as outlined in the Student Code of Conduct.

Faculty members developing an online course are strongly encouraged to work in tandem with other experienced Distance Education faculty. Throughout the development process, faculty

should collaborate with one another to ensure best practices and to share insights into both the technology and the pedagogical ramifications of converting a traditional course for successful online or hybrid delivery. Since moving from the traditional classroom to a virtual classroom is not as simple as merely putting existing course notes and readings online, faculty should critically evaluate their courses to ensure that opportunities are created for active, student-centered learning. Faculty must comply with the Online Course Rubric requirements (see Appendix C).

## Regular and Substantive Contact Policy

### Regular and Substantive Interaction (Based on federal definition)

Institutions are expected to ensure regular and substantive interaction between students and instructors in their distance education and competency-based education offerings. An institution ensures regular interaction between a student and an instructor or instructors by, prior to the student's completion of a course or competency:

- Providing the opportunity for substantive interaction with the student on a predictable and scheduled basis commensurate with the length of time and the amount of content in the course or competency; and
- 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.

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:

- Providing direct instruction;
- Assessing or providing feedback on a student's coursework;
- Providing information or responding to questions about the content of a course or competency;
- Facilitating a group discussion regarding the content of a course or competency; or
- Other instructional activities approved by HLC or the program's accrediting agency.

The U.S. Department of Education requires that all online courses for which students may use Title IV funds "ensure that there is regular and substantive interaction between students and instructors." The Higher Learning Commission requires regular and substantive interaction between students and instructors using appropriate technologies in Distance Education courses in which the student and the instructor are physically separated.

Initiating regular and substantive contact with online students is critical to student success. To be considered regular and substantive contact, the contact with students in online, hybrid, and HyFlex classes must be instructor-initiated, with expectations for methods used, and timelines clearly established and communicated to students. Interaction must also be frequent and consistent and focused on the course subject.



## Initiated Interaction

Instructors will regularly initiate interaction with students to determine that they are accessing and comprehending course material, and that they are participating regularly in course activities. Instructors should use multiple forms of communication that address a variety of learning styles and modalities in order to ensure regular, effective contact and student success. These should include, at a minimum:

- Discussion forums with regular instructor presence and interaction.
  - Regular presence and interaction includes instructor posts and comments a minimum of three days per week.
- Contact with individuals, groups, and/or the class using email or messaging tools within Canvas.
  - The maximum response time to student questions and concerns is 48 hours.
- Regular, academically relevant course announcements.
  - Faculty will send weekly reminders about what is coming due.
- Timely feedback and comments on student work.
  - Feedback must be posted within 7 days of the due date.
- Timely grade entry.
  - Grades must be posted within 12 days of the due date.
- Faculty to student outreach occurs as needed.
  - Office hours are required by all faculty, and availability of office hours is included in the course syllabus.
  - Adjunct Instructors must set availability hours where they can be reached via phone, Dialpad, or email.

Each instructor will include a Communication and Timely Response Policy in the course syllabus, letting students know the methods of contact that will be used and the timeframe in which students can expect responses to their emails or inquiries.

Examples of initiated interactions:

- Faculty member posts a discussion question and actively facilitates the ensuing conversation.
- Faculty member asks a student to visit during office hours or to schedule a phone or video conference.
- Faculty members provide personalized comments for an individual student's assignment.

Examples of interactions that are not considered to be initiated by the instructor:

- A student happens to drop in during your regularly scheduled office hours.
- Faculty members add numeric grades to the course gradebook.
- A student submits a quiz that is automatically graded.

## Frequent and Consistent

Distance Education courses are considered the “virtual equivalent” to face-to-face courses. The number of instructor contact hours per week that would be available for face-to-face students will also be available in asynchronous and/or synchronous online modalities to students in the Distance Education format. Contact shall be distributed in a manner that will ensure that regular contact is maintained over the course of a week and should occur as often as is appropriate for the contact hours described in the course outline of record.

Daily communication isn't required, but at a minimum faculty members should seek to interact with every student at least once each week and faculty must log into every course every 1-2 days. Interactions with students should be reasonably frequent and consistently repeated throughout the semester.

Examples of frequent and consistent interactions:

- Faculty routinely posts announcements or sends messages specifically regarding the course.
- Faculty members actively facilitate a required online discussion for every course unit.
- Faculty members hold a required one-hour online review session every other week during the semester.

Examples of interactions that are not considered frequent and consistent:

- Faculty members send a welcome message during the first week of the class and a mid-semester message around week 7.
- Faculty members encourage students to participate in an optional, one-time online review session before the final exam.

## Focused on Course Subject

Interactions should be connected to the subject of the course and contribute to the students' progress toward course, program, and co-curricular outcomes.

Examples of interactions focused on the course subject:

- Faculty member sends a message previewing concepts introduced in the next unit and lists questions for students to have in mind when reading the textbook chapters.
- Faculty posts an example from last night's Twins game in the course's “Real-World Physics” discussion to illustrate the concept of coefficient of restitution.

Examples of interactions that are not considered to be focused on the course subject:

- Faculty members remind students of the course attendance policy.
- Faculty member posts an announcement about an upcoming assignment deadline.
- Faculty members post to the course's “General Topics” discussion thread lamenting the outcome of last night's Twins game.

## Recommendations for Promoting Regular and Substantive Interaction in Online Courses

1. Set clear expectations for interaction in the syllabus.
2. Send course announcements or other messages at regular intervals throughout the semester.
3. Provide timely, individualized, and in-depth feedback on student work.
4. Actively participate in online discussions and chats.
5. Conduct regularly scheduled online review sessions, tutorials, office hours, or individual appointments.
6. Choose online tools and learning environments that make interactions easy - and easy to document.

## Accessibility Guidelines

Certain course design elements (e.g., closed captioning for audio and video files and alternate formats for print material) are necessary to facilitate compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

Public institutions of higher education are required to provide accessible materials for students with disabilities. The objective is to ensure that online classes and web-based instructional materials provide an individual with a disability an opportunity to participate that is as effective as that provided to others. Online courses, resources, or materials created “in-house” or purchased or contracted from a third-party provider must be accessible to students with disabilities, unless doing so would fundamentally alter the nature of the instructional activity or result in an undue financial or administrative burden on the College.

- Faculty putting new or revised Distance Education courses through the curriculum approval process will need to address accessibility as a component of the Distance Education Addendum that is submitted to the Curriculum Committee.
- Existing Distance Education courses will undergo review for accessibility when the course undergoes curriculum review according to the established course review process.

Ensuring an accessible and pleasant experience to all users, regardless of disability, is a key element of Canvas software. The Canvas platform was built using the most modern HTML and CSS technologies, and is committed to W3C’s Web Accessibility Initiative and Section 508 guidelines. The Rich Content Editor includes an accessibility tool that checks common accessibility errors within the editor. Instructors can use the Accessibility Checker to design course content while considering accessibility attributes. Accessibility can be assessed anywhere this image is present:



## Distance Education Course Reviews and Evaluations

Student evaluations of instructors are completed through Populi each semester. Program review for Distance Education will follow the same timeline as face-to-face programming.

Program	Review Schedule
A.A. in Liberal Education	2021-2024
A.A.S. in Social and Behavioral Sciences	2020-2023

## Staffing

The RLNC Dean of Academic Affairs and Associate Dean of Academic Affairs, in collaboration with other Distance Education Staff, work to assist all faculty in meeting their instructional design needs for courses offered online in Hybrid, HyFlex, and Asynchronous modalities.

By utilizing the HyFlex instructional model, RLNC will accommodate larger classes. Some additional adjunct faculty members will be hired to facilitate additional course sections as enrollment levels indicate. RLNC maintains a pool of qualified adjunct faculty members.

## Training and Proficiency Requirements

In order to meet proficiency requirements to teach HyFlex, online, or hybrid courses at RLNC, all newly hired faculty members (full-time and adjunct) must either demonstrate proficiency in Canvas via Canvas Certified Educator Course certification or complete the RLNC Growing with Canvas Course during their first academic term of employment. Portions of the RLNC Growing with Canvas Course are required even with prior certification. The RLNC Growing with Canvas course is monitored by the Dean of Academic Affairs, the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs, and other qualified Distance Education Staff. Instructors receive written and video guidance to complete all six modules of this self-paced course and may complete this task asynchronously or with guided support from qualified staff members. Ongoing Canvas and technology use training is offered during faculty and staff in-service/professional development at least three times annually (August PD, January PD, and May PD). Full-time and adjunct faculty members may be required to complete additional training as needed, based on reviews of performance.

Canvas provides [Certified Educator Courses](#) - Successful completion of any of the following courses within this certificate satisfies a portion of the above requirement to complete the RLNC Growing with Canvas Course. These trainings will help each faculty “adapt all of their courses” to teaching in person and online at the same time.

- Core 1: Foundational Frameworks
- Core 2: Engagement Strategies
- Core 3: Personalized Learning
- Core 4: Transformational Practices

Funding for Canvas Certified Educator training and other training not generated by RLNC Distance Education Staff are provided through faculty professional development funding. Additional funds requested for discipline-specific training will be reviewed and approved or denied by the Faculty Senate on an individual basis.

Faculty are furthermore encouraged to pursue additional training outside of what is required by the institution. [The Online Learning Consortium](#) provides self-paced workshops, certificates, conferences, and reference information. RLNC became a member institution of the Online Learning Consortium (OLC) in September 2021.

All faculty members (full-time and adjunct) are expected to demonstrate proficiency with online instruction and use of the HyFlex model.

## Instructional Design

The RLNC Curriculum Committee reviews instructional design requirements, ensuring that RLNC courses follow consistent course navigation structures, including maintenance of the Syllabus Page, hiding unused tabs, use of Outcomes in assessment, and organizing curriculum through modules. Syllabi and course shells are reviewed annually by the Curriculum Committee or designee.

The Dean of Academic Affairs evaluates full-time, part-time and adjunct faculty members on an annual basis. Faculty members are evaluated on teaching, scholarship, and service. See attached Faculty evaluation form (Appendix A) and course observation form (Appendix B) for details.

### **TEACHING**

- **Professional Objectives and Growth Plan (full-time instructors only)** - Faculty evaluations begin with the submission of a Faculty Professional Objectives and Growth Plan at the beginning of the academic year. The faculty member will complete a self-evaluation at the end of each academic year. Professional development includes continuing improvement in teaching and learning skills and methods, discipline and program content, student interactions, service to the college and professional growth related to the faculty member's employment responsibilities. A component of the professional development plan is to address course and program assessment as well as course design. Professional development opportunities are provided in multiple ways. All faculty have up to \$2000 annually to spend on professional development. All professional development must be approved by the Faculty Senate and funds may be pooled for more expensive professional development opportunities if approved by the

Faculty Senate. In-house faculty training opportunities are also provided during designated inservice days in August, January, and May of each academic year.

- **Student Course Evaluations** - All students in classes during the semester will have the opportunity to comment on the course via a student survey document as part of the course assessment process, and student course assessments will be considered by the Dean of Academic Affairs in faculty evaluations.
- **Administrative and Academic Responsibilities** – Faculty members are issued a calendar of deadlines throughout the semester and are evaluated on their timely completion of these duties. They are also evaluated on general follow-through with other academic responsibilities.
- **Course Observations** – The Dean of Academic Affairs or designee will complete a course observation during the academic year. The following areas are considered: subject matter content, organization, rapport, teaching methods, presentation, management, sensitivity, assistance to students, and physical aspects of the classroom.
- **Syllabi** – Evaluation of all syllabi is the responsibility of the Dean of Academic Affairs, the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs, and the Curriculum Committee.

### **SCHOLARSHIP**

- Faculty and student-faculty research
- Representation of the institution at professional meetings and conferences
- Development of new College courses/programs
- Consultation or technical assistance to other groups, programs or educational institutions serving the tribal community
- Participation in the organization of social and cultural events to promote healthy living

### **SERVICE**

- Contributions to the College and community
- Drafting of proposals and significant institutional documents including grants and grant reporting
- Oversee departmental grants
- Service on College committees
- Coaching or advising student activities
- Practice of the values of the College

*Some helpful resources include:*

Source: Beatty, B. J. (2019). Designing a Hybrid-Flexible Course: Creating an Effective Learning Environment for All Students. In B. J. Beatty (Ed.), Hybrid-Flexible Course Design. EdTech Books. Retrieved from [https://edtechbooks.org/hyflex/hyflex\\_design](https://edtechbooks.org/hyflex/hyflex_design)

Training podcasts: <https://thinkudl.org/episodes/hyflex-course-design-model-with-brian-beatty>

# Student Authentication and Integrity Guidelines

RLNC is required to verify the identity of students who participate in distance learning or online courses and to establish that students who register for these courses are the same students who participate in and complete the course activities and assessments and receive academic credit. Verification and authentication of student identity in RLNC courses includes Method 1 and Method 2.

Method 1: All RLNC faculty and students participate in classes through the Canvas LMS, which is accessed through a college-administered authentication process (student ID related password protection).

Method 2: Faculty will use one of the following methods as secondary verification and authentication of student identity.

- Recorded exam or test submissions
- Instructor-proctored assessments
- Routine interactions via email, phone, and/or video
- Synchronous virtual class, small group meetings, and individual student meetings
- Student-created videos and video assignments

Method 3: All remote students must meet through video conferencing or in-person during the enrollment period to verify the identification of newly enrolled online students.

## Assessment and Tools

All assessment is stored within Canvas courses, whether the course is face-to-face, online, hybrid, or HyFlex. Faculty members build course, program, and co-curricular outcomes within each course. These outcomes are then tied to rubrics. Grading through the use of SpeedGrader allows instructors to assess students on their performance on each outcome. These scores are then generated in the Learning Mastery Gradebook. The scale used by RLNC to assess outcomes is as follows:

0	No Progress
1	Elemental
2	Developing
3	Competent
4	Proficient (*Mastery)
5	Exemplary

# Technical Assistance and Maintenance

Contact information:

(218) 679-1008

[it@rlnc.edu](mailto:it@rlnc.edu)

<https://www.rlnc.edu/it>

RLNC employs two full-time IT Technicians who can assist students and faculty with technology concerns during scheduled hours. See the [Information Technology Plan](#) for information regarding processes and procedures for technical maintenance, upgrades, etc., as well as the technology replacement cycle.

## RLNC Network Security and Disaster Recovery

In 2017, RLNC implemented cloud-based systems for our Learning Management System (LMS), Student Information System (SIS), and document storage (Google Drive) to reduce our susceptibility to cybersecurity attacks. Our strategy is to prevent and avoid these altogether.

Although cloud-based systems may seem riskier, they are actually safer, given you have huge, multi-billion dollar, global companies managing and protecting your organization. There is no possible way a small entity can match this type of high level security with limited budgets.

Cloud based systems are “prevention oriented” and provide these advantages over on-site servers:

- Much safer protection against cyber attacks, or ransomware attacks
- Offers best protection of any confidential organization data and information
- Avoid having to purchase expensive, on-site servers, maintain and upgrade them
- Avoid having to pay several, high level IT staff to manage servers and systems
- More cost-effective than managing servers and paying high level IT staff
- Avoid expensive upgrading of servers

More details on how the College utilizes each of these cloud-based systems is described below:

### **Populi (SIS)**

Populi keeps regular, automated backups of RLNC’s school data. Such backups are securely stored in a separate location and are meant to restore data in case of emergency. Secondly, the automated backups provide historical data, or snapshots, for various uses. The automated backups are performed as follows: hourly for 36 hours, daily for two weeks, and weekly for 26 weeks. Each backup is a complete copy of everything in the Populi database. IT and Distance Education Staff maintain daily back-ups of Populi as well.



### **Canvas (LMS) 7**

Canvas' data is backed up constantly on a daily basis. In case of an emergency or disaster, data is recovered from Amazon servers or Canvas' off-site backup.

### **Google (Document Storage)**

The files added to individual Google Drives and Shared Drives are stored on servers in secure data centers. The data stored with Google is encrypted during transfer from the device and while it is stored on Google Drive servers.

### **Kissflow Accounts Payable and HR Software Information-Ease Central**

RLNC uses cloud-based systems to manage accounts payable and HR software information. They offer easy-to-use and manage digital systems that are user-friendly, and with phone apps.

### **Daily Backups of All On-Site Servers**

If any on-site servers are used, we do daily, hard copy backups and keep them in locked safes, or keep them off-site. For all key information such as student operational information, college operational information and student files, we also require daily, hard copy back-ups for all information.

This will be mandatory for all on-site servers, as a backup to all cloud based systems. This ensures, in a worst case issue of physical damage to our computers or cyber attacks, we would only lose one day of data and information.

## **Advertising Integrity**

RLNC Administration reviews all new and updated advertisements to verify that they meet the standard under *Minn. Stat. §136A.65 subd. 4(7)* that all publications and advertisements are truthful and do not give any false, fraudulent, deceptive, inaccurate, or misleading impressions about the institution, its personnel, programs, or occupational opportunities.

## **References**

Marquette Advisors. (2021, July). Market Study - Red Lake Nation College - Minneapolis.

RLNC Institutional Data. Data available on the RLNC Institutional Data page:

<https://www.rlnc.edu/institutional-data>

# Appendix Items

## Appendix A



# Annual Faculty Evaluation Summary

Faculty Evaluation Rubric					
Administrative and Academic Responsibilities	1 More than 3 Unmet Areas	2 3 Unmet Areas	3 2 Unmet Areas	4 1 Unmet Area	5 All Areas Met
Course Observations	1 More than 3 Areas of Concern	2 3 Areas of Concern	3 2 Areas of Concern	4 1 Area of Concern	5 Zero Areas of Concern
Syllabi Evaluations	1 3 or More "Fair" or "Poor" Ratings	2 2 "Fair" or "Poor" Ratings	3 More "Good" Ratings than "Excellent"	4 More "Excellent" Ratings than "Good"	5 All "Excellent" Ratings
Student Course Evaluations	1 3 or More Areas with Weighted Average below 3.0	2 1-2 Areas with Weighted Average Below 3.0	3 All Weighted Averages Between 3.0 and 4.0	4 All Weighted Averages Between 4.0 and 5.0	5 More than 50% of Weighted Averages are 5.0
Assessment Reporting	1 More than 3 Areas of concern	2 3 Areas of Concern	3 2 Areas of Concern	4 1 Area of Concern	5 Zero Areas of Concern
Professional Objectives and Growth Plan <i>(Not applicable for adjunct faculty)</i>	1 Did Not Achieve Any Goals	2 Did Not Achieve Most Goals	3 Achieved Half of Stated Goals	4 Achieved Most Goals	5 Achieved All Goals

Scores	Rating	Course of Action
26-30 (FT)	Excellent	Review for salary/level increase Renew contract
22-25 (Adjunct)		

21-25 (FT)	Good	Address improvements to be made Renew contract
17-21 (Adjunct)		
0-20 (FT)	Poor	Address improvements to be made Review contract renewal or nonrenewal
0-16 (Adjunct)		

## TEACHING

### [Administrative and Academic Responsibilities](#)

[Course Observation Form Template](#) (Full Form in Appendix B)

[Syllabus and Course Review Evaluation](#) (Full Form in Appendix C)

### [Student Course Evaluations](#)

## ASSESSMENT REPORTING

### [Canvas Course Review](#)

[Online Course Evaluation Rubric \(Blank\)](#)

## SCHOLARSHIP/SERVICE

### [Professional Objectives and Growth Plan](#)

#### **Faculty Response:**

*Employee Acknowledgment*

My signature means that I have been advised of my performance status and does not necessarily imply that I agree with the evaluation.

\_\_\_\_\_

Employee Signature

\_\_\_\_\_

Date

## Appendix B

### Course Observation Form

Instructor:

Course

Date/Time:

Evaluator:

<b>Review Section</b>
<b>Subject Matter Content</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Shows good command and knowledge of subject matter; demonstrates breadth and depth of mastery; course content is of appropriate rigor for a college-level course</li></ul>
<b>Organization</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Organizes subject matter; evidences preparation; is thorough; states clear objectives; emphasizes and summarizes main points; meets class at scheduled time; regularly monitors online course</li><li>Syllabus, rubrics and course calendar are provided to students in timely manner; they are easy to follow and to understand; they measure what they are intended to measure</li></ul>
<b>Rapport</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Holds interest of students; is respectful, fair, and impartial; provides feedback; encourages participation; interest with students; shows enthusiasm</li></ul>
<b>Teaching Methods</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Uses relevant teaching methods, aids, materials, techniques, and technology; includes variety, balance, imagination, group involvement; uses examples that are simple, clear, precise, and appropriate; stays focused on and meets stated objectives</li></ul>
<b>Presentation</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Establishes online course or classroom environment conducive to learning; maintains eye contact; uses a clear voice, strong projection, proper enunciation</li></ul>
<b>Management</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Uses time wisely; attends to course interaction; demonstrates leadership ability; maintains discipline and control; maintains effective e-platform management</li></ul>
<b>Sensitivity</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Exhibits sensitivity to students' personal culture, gender differences and disabilities, responds appropriately in a non-threatening, proactive learning environment</li></ul>
<b>Assistance to Students</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Assists students with academic problems; guidance in effective use of research and information resources</li></ul>
<b>Personal</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Evidences self-confidence; maintains professional comportment and appearance</li></ul>
<b>Physical Aspects of Classroom</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Number of students in attendance; layout of the room; distractions, if any; observations of how physical aspects affect content delivery</li></ul>
<b>Canvas</b>

- Course design is clear and organized, unused tabs are hidden, grades are up to date, outcomes are set up and outcome assessment is in progress for current courses and complete for past courses, a variety of teaching methods and tools are used

**The following aspects of the evaluation include observations from outside of the classroom and review of syllabus.**

**Strengths observed:**

**Suggestions for improvement:**

**Overall impression of teaching effectiveness:**

*Signing this document indicates that this information was reviewed.*

---

**Signature/Title of Instructor**

---

**Date**

---

**Signature/Title of Observer** *(when applicable)*

---

**Date**



## Appendix C

### RLNC Rubric for Evaluating Online Courses

Course: \_\_\_\_\_ Instructor: \_\_\_\_\_ Semester: Fall Spring \_\_\_\_\_

#### Course Overview

Guideline	Met	Not Met	Comments:
Prerequisite course knowledge and experience are identified.			
Technology proficiencies are clearly identified.			
Minimum technology requirements are clearly stated.			
Information about being an online learner and rules of “netiquette” are provided.			
Instructions are made clear how to get started and where to find various course components.			
The instructor introduces themselves to the class.			
Students are required to introduce themselves to the class.			

#### Structure, Content, and Ease of Navigation

Guideline	Met	Not Met	Comments:
A comprehensive syllabus is provided.			
Schedules are provided for students that detail what they are to do each week/unit/module.			

The course portal has consistent navigation structure.			
Course and unit/module/ weekly learning outcomes that are measurable and clearly stated.			
Course content is equivalent to a face-to-face offering of the course.			
The learning activities promote the achievement of stated learned outcomes.			
The course design facilitates readability and ease of use.			
Discussion topics stimulate thought and reflection related to course content.			

### **Interactions and Assessments**

<b>Guideline</b>	<b>Met</b>	<b>Not Met</b>	<b>Comments:</b>
The assessments measure the stated learning outcomes.			
The course grading policy is clearly stated.			
Rubrics are used as an assessment tool and are provided with all assignments.			
Course uses multiple options for student-student and student-teacher interactions.			
The requirements for student interaction are clearly stated.			
The course provides multiple opportunities for students to track their progress.			
Learning activities provide opportunities for student interaction and active learning.			

**Instructional Materials & Course Technology**

<b>Guideline</b>	<b>Met</b>	<b>Not Met</b>	<b>Comments:</b>
The tools used support learner engagement and active learning.			
Technologies required in the course are made readily available.			
Course technologies are current.			
Permissions for use of materials have been acquired and attributions are made where needed.			
The course design facilitates readability and ease of use.			

**Learner Support**

<b>Guideline</b>	<b>Met</b>	<b>Not Met</b>	<b>Comments:</b>
Course instructions articulate or link to technical support available.			
Course instructions articulate RLNC's accessibility policies and services and how to access any needed services.			

**Reviewed By:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_



## Appendix D



# Education and Technology Committee Work Plan Academic Year 2024-2025

### **Guiding Principles:**

One of RLNC’s institutional priorities is to help students to “engage in the use of technology to acquire information literacy.” We achieve this level of support for our students through ethical research grounded in the highest standards of academic excellence. We accomplish providing effective support through communal discussion facilitated through a lens of support.

### **Mission of Department/Committee:**

A committee designed to facilitate engagement in the proficient and effective use of relevant technologies across RLNC while supporting students, staff, and faculty in the use of technology through sound research, comprehensive investigation, and accessible training.

*The Committee Mission is Informed by the Following Strategic Planning Goals:*

- **Goal 2:** To pursue learning strategies and technologies that utilize creative solutions to extend the academic knowledge base in key subject areas
- **Goal 4, Objective 5:** To serve students equitably, whether face-to-face, online, or HyFlex
- **Goal 5:** To provide a solution-based working environment based on accurate data and information

**Goal #1: Establish the scope of the committee work and create/fill out the committee work plan.**

**Goal #2: Complete 4 phases of committee development across AY24-25 to review and confirm mission, establish goals, and develop objectives.**

**Goal #3: Review and assess the implementation of technology-based resources and support.**

**Goal #4: Establish common data silos to be tracked for future committee endeavors.**

Long-Term Outcomes	Short-Term Outcomes	Activities	Measures of Effectiveness	Data	Time Frame	Staff Responsible
<p><i>September</i></p> <p><b>Goal 1</b> <b>Goal 2</b></p> <p><i>Phase 1: Establish Scope and Workplan</i></p>	Establish work plan	Confirm or Revise Mission Establish long-term goals.	Final Mission Finalized long-term goals.	Committee notes	Fall Term	Steve Watkins-Melgarejo

<p><b>October</b></p> <p><b>Goal 1</b> <b>Goal 2</b></p> <p><i>Phase 1: Establish Scope and Workplan</i></p>	<p>Establish work plan</p>	<p>Establish long-term goals. Determine objectives to long-term goals.</p>	<p>Finalized long-term goals. Objectives generated</p>	<p>Committee notes</p>	<p>Fall Term</p>	<p>Steve Watkins-Melgarejo</p>
<p><b>November</b></p> <p><b>Goal 1</b> <b>Goal 2</b></p> <p><i>Phase 1: Establish Scope and Workplan</i></p>	<p>Establish work plan</p>	<p>Determine objectives to long-term goals.</p>	<p>All Objectives generated</p>	<p>Committee notes</p>	<p>Fall Term</p>	<p>Steve Watkins-Melgarejo</p>
<p><b>December</b></p> <p><b>Goal 2</b> <b>Goal 3</b></p> <p><i>Phase 2: Establish comprehensive understanding of current work + resources</i></p>	<p>Introduce review of technology resources + supports</p>	<p>Generate Lists and Departments in charge</p>	<p>List created and reviewed</p>	<p>Committee notes, Google Sheets</p>	<p>Fall Term Spring Term</p>	<p>Committee co-chair</p>

<p><b>January</b></p> <p><b>Goal 2</b> <b>Goal 3</b></p> <p><i>Phase 3: Establish comprehensive understanding data that supports our work + resources</i></p>	<p>Qualitative data to support use of resources and supports</p>	<p>Generate reports, charts, etc.</p>	<p>Shared drive folder housing information</p>	<p>Generated reports, charts, etc.</p>	<p>Spring Term</p>	<p>Committee</p>
<p><b>February</b></p> <p><b>Goal 2</b> <b>Goal 3</b></p> <p><i>Phase 3: Establish comprehensive understanding data that supports our work + resources</i></p>	<p>Quantitative data to support use of resources and supports</p>	<p>Generate reports, charts, etc.</p>	<p>Shared drive folder housing information</p>	<p>Generated reports, charts, etc.</p>	<p>Spring Term</p>	<p>Committee</p>
<p><b>March</b></p> <p><b>Goal 2</b> <b>Goal 4</b></p> <p><i>Phase 3: Establish comprehensive understanding data that supports our work + resources</i></p>	<p>Determine common data sources used to inform tech decisions across campus</p>	<p>Generate reports, charts, etc.</p>	<p>Shared drive folder housing information</p>	<p>Generated reports, charts, etc.</p>	<p>Spring Term</p>	<p>Committee</p>

<p><i>April</i></p> <p><b>Goal 2</b> <b>Goal 4</b></p> <p><i>Phase 4: Develop system for uniting technology use in data collection – in service of scope of committee workplan</i></p>	<p>Determine common data sources used to inform tech decisions across campus</p> <p>List common data sources collectively</p>	<p>Generate reports, charts, etc.</p> <p>Generate List</p>	<p>Shared drive folder housing information</p> <p>List of data sources</p>	<p>Generated reports, charts, etc.</p>	<p>Spring Term</p>	<p>Committee</p>
<p><i>May</i></p> <p><b>Goal 2</b> <b>Goal 4</b></p> <p><i>Phase 4: Develop system for uniting technology use in data collection – in service of scope of committee workplan</i></p>	<p>Begin development of system to consistently capture data relevant to the functions of the committee</p>	<p>Generate reports, charts, etc.</p> <p>Generate List</p>	<p>Shared drive folder housing information</p> <p>List of data sources</p>	<p>Generated reports, charts, etc.</p>	<p>Spring Term Summer</p>	<p>Committee</p>