Proposal for Amendment to Online Teaching Guidelines: RSI Plan Requirement

To: Bakersfield College Academic Senate Executive Board

From: Matt Andrasian-Jones and Alex Rockey

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1. Identification of Key Issue

The current Online Teaching guidelines detail a need to have online and hybrid courses reviewed for Regular and Substantive Interaction (RSI). An RSI Plan page in Canvas would help to facilitate this review and reduce workload both for reviewers and reviewees. Without an RSI plan page in Canvas, reviewers face an increased workload when attempting to verify compliance, and faculty lack a streamlined method to communicate their specific interaction strategies to those reviewers.

2. Underlying Rationale

Federal regulations regarding RSI have been in effect since 2021, and ACCJC began incorporating these into accreditation requirements in 2024. Implementing a requirement for an **RSI Plan** ensures that:

- Bakersfield College remains compliant with federal financial aid eligibility requirements.
- Faculty are prepared for AIQ course reviews and for ACCJC "sampling" during Distance Education Reviews.
- Faculty receive the necessary institutional support to meet these standards.

3. Relevant Background and Institutional History

The BC Academic Senate approved the current Distance Education Online Teaching Guidelines in 2025. While AIQ has worked to establish a tool and review process, the process would be facilitated by an unpublished RSI Plan Canvas page in which faculty being reviewed could explain in what areas of their course reviewers should look for evidence of RSI.

4. Anticipated Opposing Arguments

- **Administrative Burden:** Faculty may view the creation of a plan as an additional task. Department Chairs may view the requirement to review the RSI plan page along with the syllabus as an additional task.

To minimize the burden for faculty, the proposal requires only an **unpublished page** within Canvas, allowing faculty to document existing practices without needing to redesign student-facing course content. The RSI plan significantly reduces long-term workload by streamlining the review process and providing faculty a clear, standardized way to communicate their compliance to reviewers.

Additionally to minimize the burden for faculty, a template page will be provided so instructors can simply edit the page to align with their individual RSI plan. It will not be a requirement to use the template page, but it will be a support provided to faculty.

To minimize the burden for Department Chairs, the RSI plan page will be submitted along with the syllabus reducing a need to manage multiple timelines.

5. Proposed Solution

It is recommended that the Online Teaching Guidelines be amended to include the following requirements:

- **RSI Plan Submission:** All faculty teaching online or hybrid courses must develop an RSI plan and submit to their Department Chair and Dean at the same time as their syllabus each semester.
- **Course Integration:** This RSI plan must be added to the respective Canvas course shell as an **unpublished page in an unpublished module**. This allows for easy internal documentation during accreditation audits without affecting the student-facing interface.