

# Psychology & Human Services Department Minimum Standards for RSI

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## Psychology & Human Services Department RSI Plan

- I. **Assurance of Regularity:** The general goal should be that in online classes, as in onsite classes, in most cases instructors and students will be in a (virtual) classroom where frequent and substantive instruction and interactions will occur.
  - a. **Plan A:** All Psychology and Human Services courses will have at least one RSI activity/assignment per week, with the following exception: there may be two weeks without an RSI assignment in a 16-week course or one week in an 8-week course. Therefore, a 16-week course will include a minimum of 14 RSI activities/assignments and an 8-week course will include a minimum of 7 RSI activities/assignments.
  
- II. **Core RSI activities:** The following list includes possible core RSI activities/assignments. These core RSI activities/assignments should mesh with the regularity plan above. Core RSI activities will include frequent graded discussion forums and a mixture of other graded course activities and assignments. Instructors will ensure all assignments meet the minimum requirements as outlined on the Course Outline of Record. Instructors have the choice of fulfilling the Core RSI activities with Plan A OR Plan B, as outlined below.
  - a. **Plan A: Discussions:** Discussions are a crucial part of psychology and human services courses. All courses must include frequent discussion forums. For this RSI plan, frequent is defined as 80% of the weeks of instruction need to include a graded discussion forum assignment. Therefore, a 16-week course will include a minimum of 13 graded discussion assignments and an 8-week course will include a minimum of 6 graded discussion assignments.
    - i. **Additional RSI Assignments/Activities:** In addition to the discussion forums, core RSI activities/assignments will include:
      1. Written assignments,
      2. Group assignments,
      3. Individual/group presentations,
      4. Other substantive, course related assignments (graded),
      5. Quizzes – substantive feedback is provided (not including 100% computer-graded quizzes).
      6. Exams – substantive feedback is provided (not including 100% computer-graded exams). For example, exams that include short essay or essay sections.
  - b. **Plan B: Flexible RSI Assignments Plan:** Instructors can determine the mixture of RSI activities/assignments in a course, so long as there are 14 RSI activities/assignments in a 16-week course and 7 RSI activities/assignments in an 8-week course. For example, an instructor can create a 16-week course with 8 discussion assignments, 4 writing

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assignments and 2 exams with essay/short answer examinations. The combination is up to the discretion of the instructor.

- c. **Feedback:** Substantive feedback can be provided in the following ways (these are examples, not all methods need to be utilized):
- Written comments on the actual assignment in the Speedgrader.
  - Comments on a detailed grading rubric in the Speedgrader.
  - Individualized comments written in 'assignment comments' section of the Speedgrader.
  - Overall feedback provided on course assignments (via Course announcements).
  - Instructor generated feedback provided for answer choices (on quizzes or exams).

III. **Volume of RSI Contact:** The general rule should be that ALL students in a virtual classroom will experience interactions with the instructor on a regular basis. In some cases, this may be the instructor interacting with the entire class (such as posting on a discussion forum) or providing individualized interactions to each student, for instance through substantive feedback in the Canvas Speedgrader. The following plan details what is considered "substantive" interaction in the Psychology department. The following criteria details the appropriate volume and type of substantive interactions on all core RSI activities:

- a. **Discussions** - All Psychology and Human Services instructors should respond to 25% of the students' discussion posts that are posted "on-time" (for example, if the initial post/answer to the discussion question is due on Wednesday, the 25% refers to the students who post in the discussion forum by Wednesday).
- i. The responses can include interacting with the entire class (such a posting in a discussion forum) or providing an individualized, substantive interaction with student in the 'Assignment comments' section of the Speedgrader.
  - ii. If the course includes more than one weekly discussion the instructor can respond to 25% of the "on-time" posts in one forum, or a combination of responses (between the multiple forums) equal to 25% between the multiple discussion forums.
  - iii. The instructor can skip a week of participation in the discussion forum, during the same week an RSI writing assignment (writing assignment or midterm essay section) is due **AND** the individualized feedback guidelines presented in section III.b.i. are met.
- b. **Individualized Feedback** - All Psychology and Human Services instructors should provide individualized substantive feedback to at least 50% of the students on at least 50% of the course assignments (not including the discussion forums – only writing assignments and/or midterms essay

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sections) as outlined under the additional RSI Assignments/Activities section of the RSI plan (Section II.a.i).

- i. **Discussion participation exception:** The instructor provides individualized substantive feedback to 75% of the students on an RSI writing assignment (writing assignment or midterm essay section).
- c. **Course Announcements** - All Psychology and Human Services instructors should post regular course announcements. At least 15-20% of the course announcements should be academic in nature (such as overall feedback on assignments, tips for an upcoming assignment, guiding questions, critical thinking questions, etc.). For example, if a course includes two writing assignments an instructor could create the substantive course announcements around these assignments. This requirement may be waived if the instructor provides individualized, substantive feedback for all students on all course assignments.