ANNUAL REPORT ON DISTANCE EDUCATION

Status: Information

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Vice President, Academic Services

Issue
Deborah L. Nolan, Ph.D., Distance Education Coordinator, will present the annual report on Distance Education.

Background
Dr. Nolan will update the Board of Trustees on Distance Education (DE) at College of the Sequoias, including the adoption of Canvas, online class enrollments, online class success, out-of-state students, accreditation, accessibility training, online teaching certification, and the DE Plan.

Recommended Action
No action is required.

Canvas Implementation

The Canvas implementation that began in fall 2015 is complete. Blackboard has been phased out. Student and instructor satisfaction with Canvas appears to be high. 250 instructors and 7,287 students have participated in 1,335 courses on Canvas. 90 instructors have taken advantage of the in-house online orientation to Canvas, and many attended multiple face-to-face training sessions throughout the 2016-2017 academic year. Many instructors prefer one-on-one coaching sessions provided by the Distance Education Coordinator. Some prefer learning on their own! More training sessions are planned for 2017-2018.

Online Classes

Divisions across campus continue to schedule DE classes, including Business,
Consumer Family Studies, English/Fine Arts, I&T, Math, Counseling, Fire Technology, Library, Nursing, and Social Sciences. The Science division offered its first online class during the 2017 summer session. Instructors schedule classes in three main formats: (1) entirely online; (2) online with orientation; and (3) hybrid (requiring scheduled meetings in addition to online activity).

The table below indicates the number of DE sections offered in the Spring 2013 – Spring 2017, Summer 2013 – Summer 2017, and Fall, 2013 – Fall 2017. Spring, summer, and fall 2017 show significant increase in sections offered.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semester</th>
<th>Online Sections</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spring 2013</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring 2014</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring 2015</td>
<td>106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring 2016</td>
<td>107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring 2017</td>
<td>115</td>
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<table>
<thead>
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<th>Semester</th>
<th>Online Sections</th>
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</thead>
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<td>Summer 2013</td>
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<tr>
<td>Summer 2014</td>
<td>20</td>
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<tr>
<td>Summer 2015</td>
<td>27</td>
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<tr>
<td>Summer 2016</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer 2017</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semester</th>
<th>Online Sections</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2013</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2014</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2015</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2016</td>
<td>106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2017</td>
<td>126</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Annual FTES for DE have gone from 612 in 2011/12 to 817 in 2016/17. DE headcount for spring 2017 was 2959. Approximately 2000 students were enrolled in online classes for summer 2017 and over 4000 students are enrolled in online classes for fall 2017 semester.

Online Class Success

DE student success (C or better) rates continue to be about 10% lower than face-to-face success rates for the same course. Students withdraw from DE courses at about 10% higher rate than students withdraw from face-to-face classes. Division chairs are provided annually with course-by-course comparisons to support discussion among the faculty about ways to improve DE course success.

![Chart Title](image)

Quest for Success

For many years, COS has offered a variety of online learning readiness tools and resources to faculty who choose to implement them and to students who seek them. This year, a new resource is available to COS to support online student success at a more global level. The Academic Senate has endorsed the adoption of an online readiness platform to be made available free of charge to COS through the Chancellor’s Office as part of the Online Education Initiative (OEI). The platform is called Quest for Success and comprises online learning readiness inventories and related resources. The platform will be available within Canvas beginning in the fall 2017 semester. Faculty will be made aware of the variety of ways they can support their students’ engagement with Quest for Success.
Out-of-State Students

The District monitors the numbers of students living outside California who take online classes to comply with federal regulations concerning State Authorization for DE programs. State Authorization is required from each state where COS would be considered to be “doing business.” Our interpretation is that we would not be required to pursue State Authorization from any state at this time.

The Office of RPIE could not identify any students residing outside of California taking online classes in Fall 2016 or Spring 2017.

Accreditation

DECOS has developed initiatives for the 2017-2018 academic year to support gathering and reporting on data relative to Department of Education and ACCJC requirements. DE data will be duly reflected in the Institutional Self-Evaluation Report in preparation for our Accreditation visit scheduled for fall of 2018.

Accessibility Training

Sandra Calderon, Director of the Access and Ability Center, and Deborah Nolan have planned an accessibility training strategy for the 2017-2018 academic year. The goal is to support faculty understanding and development of accessible online course materials. Resources will be developed and shared, and a regular schedule of faculty training opportunities will be provided during fall 2017 Convocation week and continuing throughout the academic year.

Online Teaching Certification Program

The Online Teaching Certification Program (OTCP) was offered in fall 2016, summer 2016, and spring 2017. There were three graduates in fall 2016, one graduate in summer 2016, and six graduates in spring 2017. To date 87 full-time and adjunct instructors have successfully completed the OTCP. The OTCP was not offered in the summer 2017 session, but the faculty were informed about an alternative program should they wish to satisfy the District’s online teaching certification requirements. @One, the Chancellor’s Office training organization, offers a rigorous online teaching certification course for a small fee. The Academic Senate has endorsed the program as one meeting the same quality as the OTCP.

Distance Education (DE) Plan

The DE Task Force, convened in 2015-2016, prepared a draft DE Plan for DECOS to consider in 2016-2017. DECOS revised the plan and gave it to the Academic Senate
for its consideration in spring 2017. The 2017-2020 DE Plan was approved by the Academic Senate in April 2017 and forwarded to the District Governance Senate. The District Governance Senate approved the plan on May 9, 2017. Plan implementation will be monitored by DECOS beginning in the fall of 2017. The executive summary (below) provides an overview of the plan’s recommendations.

DE Plan 2017-2010 Executive Summary

DE requires the support and involvement of Academic Services, Administrative Services and Student Services to meet the needs of our diverse student population efficiently and innovatively. This plan was created by the DE Task Force and DECOS comprising faculty and staff who believe that to fully integrate DE into institutional planning, access and support for students, professional development for faculty and staff, curriculum development, and technology support, the following actions are recommended:

Institutional Planning. It is recommended that:

1. DECOS support annual initiatives to educate and recruit faculty knowledgeable about DE to serve on governance committees.
2. The District complete the process to determine if a management position should be created and filled to manage the detailed needs of individual units, support accreditation efforts, and advocate for the digital campus as a whole in the larger governance structure.
3. The District complete the process to determine if a full-time computer services Learning Management System (LMS) Administrator position should be created and filled as a classified position.
4. The approved DE Plan be shared District-Wide to support decision making.
5. DECOS review and report on the DE plan annually.

Access and support for students. It is recommended that the District:

1. Provide 24/7 access to a Learning Management System (LMS)
2. Maintain the synchronization of Banner and Learning Management System (LMS)
3. Assist students who need help with Learning Management System (LMS)
4. Ensure accessibility for students with disabilities
5. Monitor Last Day of Attendance
6. Increase preparedness of students taking DE courses
7. Develop and maintain student services DE students can access online

Professional development for faculty/staff. It is recommended that the District:

1. Maintain a standard for distance education instruction.
2. Provide Faculty and Staff with the resources required to support our distance education students.
3. Support the Online Teaching Certificate Program (OTCP).

Curriculum. It is recommended that the faculty:

1. Analyze the relevance of DE programs
2. Maintain an ongoing, collegial, self-reflective dialogue about the continuous improvement of student learning and institutional processes through Program Review processes and learning outcomes assessment cycles.
3. Ensure that DE courses are included in the analysis of student learning in the same way that traditional classes are.
4. Compare assessment measures with comparable measures related to traditional face-to-face classes.
5. Monitor program development and assess program outcomes regularly.
6. Follow approved course outlines and Distance Learning Addendum (DLA) of record.
7. Present course objectives, learning outcomes, and requirements in each course.
8. Encourage the posting of assignments, due dates, and test dates at the beginning of course or in a way to give reasonable preparation time.
9. Describe any face-to-face testing or in person lab situations clearly in the syllabus.
10. Encourage the use a variety of teaching strategies, or methodologies, in online classes to support active engagement with content and with each other.
11. Review DLA at regular intervals.
12. Review instructional materials regularly to maintain currency and effectiveness as part of the course outline update process.
13. Encourage DE faculty to contact students at least one week before the beginning of the course to inform them about how to begin.
14. Provide information to students about the types and frequency of communication, including feedback to students on assignments, notifying students about how to contact the instructor, notifying students about any unexpected instructor absence or expected delay in communications.
15. Maintain mechanisms which support communication within classes, including, but not limited to, announcements, Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ), discussion forums, journals, emails, early warning or alert systems, posted class schedules, due dates, feedback on assignments, course grade or progress, and reminders.

Technology. It is recommended that the District:

1. Provide 24/7 access to a Learning Management System (LMS).
2. Provide 24/7 COS Network access.
3. Provide support to students, faculty and staff in use of LMS through on-campus support personnel.
4. Ensure students are aware of the technology requirements of DE courses.
5. Provide training to support faculty with technology use in the classroom and use of the course management system, or other required technologies.
6. Provide technology failure policies and procedures.