

## Preface

In presenting the following proposal for updating distance education training at COS, it has become imperative to clarify the nature and intent of this document within the context of academic senate discussions. This proposal serves as a compilation of research-based suggestions aimed at enhancing the quality and efficacy of distance education practices within our institution, as well as adherence to laws directly pertaining to distance education that are dictated by federal Title 34 Education policy, Title 5 (§55200, 55202, 55204, and 55208), sections 504 and 508 of The Rehabilitation Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act, and standards set forth by the ACCJC, our accrediting agency. It does not contain or constitute policy, nor does it constitute contractual language. It is in no way tied to faculty evaluations, and contains only recommendations for improving distance education at COS. A vote in support of this work does not turn the contents of this proposal into binding practice.

The recommendations in this proposal are the result of extensive research into laws regulating distance education, best practices in distance education, and the practices of other institutions in our system who have gone through accreditation and what changes they have been advised to make and have adopted. The research was drawn from legal documents, experiences and opinions of professionals in the areas of instructional design, faculty development, and distance education. With this document, DECOS aims to *provide a framework that can guide the development and refinement of distance education training programs tailored to the unique needs and contexts of our college*. This work is the purview of the Distance Education committee as dictated in the District Governance Manual and of the Academic Senate as a 10+1 issue.

Furthermore, we acknowledge that the negotiation of specific terms related to this proposal, including but not limited to compensation, will involve the two faculty unions. As such, while this proposal offers recommendations and suggestions, the finalization of any policies or agreements will be subject to negotiation between the administration and our union representatives.

As we look toward enhancing distance education at our institution, we invite all members of the academic senate to engage in ongoing constructive discussion about the ideas presented here, offering insights, feedback, and suggestions. By working together, we can ensure that COS moves decisively toward its equity goals by providing students with enriching and legally-compliant learning experiences regardless of their physical location or ability to access ours.

The landscape of higher education is rapidly evolving, and our approaches to distance education must evolve as well. This proposal represents a starting point—a foundation upon which we can build and adapt in response to emerging technologies, pedagogical advancements, new legal regulations, and shifting student needs.

## DECOS DE Certification and Maintenance Program

*Proposal – approved 2/6/2024*

I. **Initial Certification:** A COS-custom adaptation of @ONE's Online Teaching and Design ("COSx@ONE," approx. 40 hours). *This course assumes basic knowledge of Canvas. If a faculty member has never used Canvas before, they are strongly encouraged to take @ONE's self-paced asynchronous Introduction to Teaching with Canvas course.*

- A. Required of new faculty before being assigned an online course.
- B. If a program requires faculty to teach online before certification can be completed, they must certify concurrently with teaching their online course.
- C. Content:
  - 1. Course design
  - 2. Interaction
  - 3. Assessment
  - 4. Accessibility

### II. If already certified:

- A. Online faculty must certify in ONE of the following ways within 4 years. If not completed by the 4-year deadline, faculty can only teach online if concurrently certifying. Faculty will be given notice at 1 year prior to deadline.
  - 1. Complete the COSx@ONE Online Teaching and Design course.
    - a) If faculty have completed @ONE's OTD within the past 4 years, provide certificate for approval.
  - 2. Submit an online course from the last 4 years for a local peer review using the CVC-OEI Rubric.
    - a) If the course does not pass this review, completion of @ONE modules pertaining to the missing content will be required.
    - b) Possible module assignments include:
      - (1) Course design
      - (2) Interaction
      - (3) Assessment
      - (4) Accessibility
  - 3. Present evidence of certification from an outside institution or vendor within the past 4 years to be checked for comparability to COSx@ONE's certification program upon hire.
    - a) Missing pieces will result in the expectation that those pieces will be completed within the COSx@ONE course:
      - (1) Course design missing: take Intro to Course Design module
      - (2) Interaction missing: take 10-10-10: Communication that Matters module
      - (3) Assessment missing: take Assessment in Digital Learning module
      - (4) Accessibility missing: take Creating Accessible Course Content module

### III. Maintenance of Certification:

- A. 4-year cycle, given notice at 1 year of expiration.
- B. Required maintenance includes BOTH of the following requirements:
  - 1. Complete Distance Ed PD: 2 hrs./year or 8 hrs./cycle
    - a. COS local DE workshops
    - b. @ONE/CVC-OEI courses
    - c. Other pre-approved trainings
  - 2. Submit a self-review of one online course taught within the four-year cycle.

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#### *Goals of this program update:*

- 1. Ensure COS faculty are current on regulations and mandates pertaining to distance education.
  - 2. Establish requirements for continuous training/engagement.
  - 3. Establish a process for quality review of online courses.
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## Proposal FAQs

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### Q: Why 40 hours?

**A:** The CCCCO-endorsed full DE certification is from the CVC-OEI (California Virtual College-Online Education Initiative) @ONE training catalog, and consists of 4 modules at 30hrs a piece, totaling 12 weeks and *120 hours to earn a certification*. DECOS determined that we could make a COS-custom and condensed version of this training and trim it down to 10 hours per module for a total of 40 hours.

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### Q: Why @ONE?

**A:** The Online Network of Educators (@ONE) provides professional development for California Community College faculty, staff, and administrators. @ONE courses are designed to prepare faculty to meet legal requirements, success goals, and serve a diverse student population. The full-length @ONE course is used by many CCCs to certify faculty, while many others have created a customized version.

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### Q: Why do we need this?

**A1:** There is a correlation between faculty training and student success in online courses, and success rates in distance ed courses lag at COS. COS sees an 8.4% average success gap between face-to-face and online courses, while the statewide average success gap is 3.8%. COS requires 8-12 hours of training to earn an online certification, while the average statewide training requirement is 50 hours. COS sit thirds from the bottom in training requirements for faculty. A training refresher might work to close that gap on the faculty side a bit.

**A2:** COSTA 8.2.10.1 and COSAFA 4.2.9.1 have both been “sunshined” by the District as areas of our contracts that they seek to re-negotiate. Changes are coming to qualifications to teach online in the coming year, and we’d like them to be driven by faculty, and agreeable to faculty, which is why we are pre-emptively drafting this proposal.

**A3:** Accreditation is less than a year away, and many CCCs are getting “dinged” on distance ed. Committing to refresh our online training on a scheduled basis represents a visible and faculty-driven effort to address the success gaps and provide high quality instruction that hits all the marks they’re looking for.

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### Q: Can everyone that is already certified be “grandfathered” in?

**A:** DECOS discussed this at length and decided that refreshing online training will be important for us to ensure online course quality in the years ahead. The benchmark for digital literacy changes from year to year as new technologies, strategies, laws and standards are introduced, and as the needs of students change. Regular “refreshers” will help ensure that COS faculty are kept up to date, thereby maintaining the quality and credibility of our online offerings. As we launch this new training program, all online faculty should expect to participate.

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### Q: Who will be reviewing my course if I choose that option rather than re-training?

**A:** The details are yet-to-be determined since we have not yet approved this proposal. However, it is likely that a team of our colleagues will be trained through a program like @ONE’s POCR (Peer Online Course Review, pronounced “poker”), similar to the RSI Team we have now. If you are interested in being a member of this POCR team, please email Elise Baker. This course review process has another benefit – courses that meet the standards of the POCR rubric will be “quality badged” through the CVC Exchange\*, increasing their ranking in search results within the CVC Exchange. This may mean greater enrollments in online courses.

\*[The CVC Exchange](#) is a statewide virtual campus available to all California Community College students. It allows students from COS to take online courses at any other CCC (space permitting), and allows COS to welcome students from other CCCs into our own online courses if seats are available after our own students have registered. When students search for classes in the Exchange, courses that are POCR-certified appear first in the search results with a badge indicating quality, leading to greater enrollments for COS as a home college.

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