San Mateo County Community College District

Distance Education Vision Planning

Prepared by

DEAC Co-chairs

for

SMCCCD Distance Education Advisory Committee (DEAC)

December 2006

(Revised February 2007, March 2007, Approved March 16, 2007)

San Mateo County Community College District
Distance Education Vision Planning

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This document addresses the following:

- SMCCCD distance education vision, philosophy, and overarching goals

- Specific process goals and objectives of distance education committees

- Questions and Answers

San Mateo County Community College District
Distance Education Vision Planning

Preamble

For over a decade, faculty in our district have offered courses via television/cable and hybrid modes. A number of courses are offered completely online. State Chancellor's Office reports on distance education show that feedback from both faculty and students involved in distance learning has been very positive and most want to teach or take more distance learning courses. Our own research shows that every year hundreds of students in our district take online courses exclusively. Granted, not all courses are appropriate for distance learning and not all students are self-disciplined distance learners. The state Chancellor's Office report on distance education found a gap in course completion between traditional courses and distance education courses, but the gap has been narrowing to about a 7% difference. The 3 colleges in our district are at different levels of distance education engagement and various planning activities are underway on all three college campuses.

> **"When you're finished changing, you're finished."**
> *~ Benjamin Franklin*

Broadening access to postsecondary educational opportunities for our county's residents and beyond is one of the district's mission goals. As more and more faculty and students become comfortable with distance education, it is natural for us to consider examining and expanding our existing distance learning courses. To better coordinate these efforts, the Chancellor and the Presidents of the 3 colleges are proposing the formation of a special district wide committee co-chaired by a faculty member and the Vice Chancellor of Educational Services and Planning. The key purposes of this committee will be to evaluate the district's technology needs in assisting student learning and to enhance the efforts in the assessment and expansion of distance/online based instructional modalities.

In his fall 2006 Opening Day speech, Chancellor Ron Galatolo envisioned greater access to learning for our community and beyond through technology assisted instruction and learning. He charged the faculty and administration to respond creatively to the demand for innovative ap-

proaches to teaching and learning, while preserving the quality of instruction and the academic freedom of our faculty. To ensure the success of this effort, the three colleges must work together in course development, resource allocation, tools and platforms selection and knowledge and best practices exchanges.

The SMCCCD Distance Education Vision Planning aims to develop a plan of action to systemically assess, improve and enhance distance education offerings in the entire district. It will provide recommendations, guidelines and solutions as soon as they emerge.

Vision
SMCCCD supports the offering of a combination of hybrid and fully online courses and will continue offering tele-courses to meet the changing needs of our students. As the demand for distance education further develops, SMCCCD envisions the expansion of online course offerings to include complete programs for certificates and degrees. SMCCCD aims to raise the success of distance education courses to be the same or higher than traditional courses and, in so doing, provides the environment and support for faculty and staff to develop and offer the best quality of distance education to our students.

Our Philosophy
Distance education provides another opportunity for student access. It is an extension of traditional face-to-face classroom teaching. Through a mode made possible by technology, it will supplement, not supplant, the existing delivery of teaching and learning. We believe that education will remain in the hands of the faculty and distance education is subject to the very same standards of instruction as any other courses on campuses. Development of online courses, certificate and degree programs will go through the review process by curriculum committees of all 3 colleges. Faculty and staff concerns will be carefully heard and processed. Distance education planning activities will reflect a clear understanding of what constitutes quality teaching and learning as well as what an educated person is. For faculty and staff, the distance education development process will be inclusive and for the students the results will be seamless.
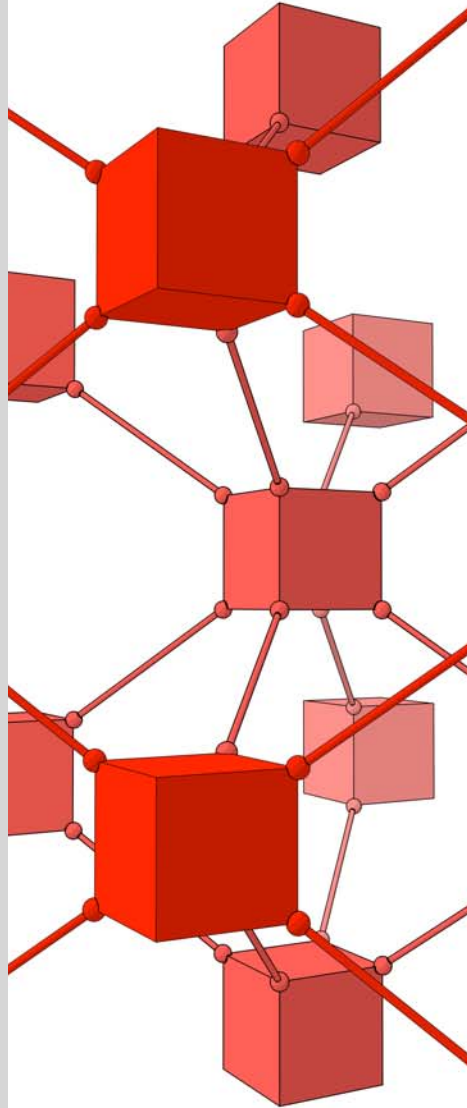
Overarching Goals

The Overarching SMCCCD Distance Education Goals are to:

- Develop a mechanism for enhancing student success in distance education;

- Develop a process for expanding access to distance education and identify district goals;

- Select a platform for delivery of distance education; and

- Sustain an environment conducive to teaching and learning online.

Process

In order to make the planning and execution of various goals and objectives highly effective and efficient, a series of actions must occur in a specific order. These steps are:

- Identifying issues and collecting data
- Forming committees
- Framing goals
- Assessing needs and resources
- Identifying alternatives
- Establishing a plan of action
- Monitoring outcomes

First, SMCCCD Distance Education Vision Planning needs to address a host of issues - collected from faculty and staff as well as documents and knowledge bases and to provide recommendations as well as solutions to these issues. This process will rely on shared governance that manifests in committees staffed with key constituent groups and process and outcomes reflecting input and participation of a broad spectrum of views from the members on the distance education committee.

Although distance education is not new and the district has had over a decade of experience in offering tele-courses, there has never been a systemic process for examining the work in this area and for developing plans to improve, review, and/or expand distance education efforts. Given the size of the district, and the scope of the task, SMCCCD Distance Education Vision Planning has identified three sets of unique issues. They are:

Course Offering – The issues surrounding this topic include curriculum alignment, standards for developing distance education courses, course evaluation, intellectual property, and student success in online courses, among others.

Resources – The issues surrounding this topic include student registration, online counseling, technical assistance, scholarship and professional development, faculty/staff compensation, costs associated with offering distance education, student services, facilities impacts, among others.

Technology – The issues surrounding this topic include platform selection, use of technology for distance education in general, standards in online course development, among others.

There may be a certain amount of overlapping among these issues. For example, developing hybrid and/or fully online courses cannot be done successfully without a good understanding of the resources. Also, in order to provide the best record keeping, technology will play an essential role.

A full distance education advisory committee has been established. The co-chairs of the full committee have been identified. Their key responsibilities are to inform the public about the work in progress, keep the process transparent, provide guidance and leadership, draft a vision and review and develop plans for distance education.

In order to address the 3 sets of issues, three (3) subcommittees have been established with co-chairs identified. The subcommittees are responsible for solving specific issues and accomplishing the objectives identified in the Section titled "Subcommittee Operations". The co-chairs of the subcommittee will meet with the DEAC co-chairs on a regular basis to conduct business.

DEAC will conduct its business in a collegial and consultative manner. All meetings are open to the public and every attempt will be made to keep the processes transparent. The DEAC co-chairs will keep the colleges informed by providing updates both online and in person.

Courtesy of ITS, a sharepoint site handles tentative agenda, unapproved minutes and drafts. This site requires password access. All committee approved documents will be posted online for public consumption at:
http://www.smccd.edu/accounts/smccd/departments/educationservices/deac/default.shtml
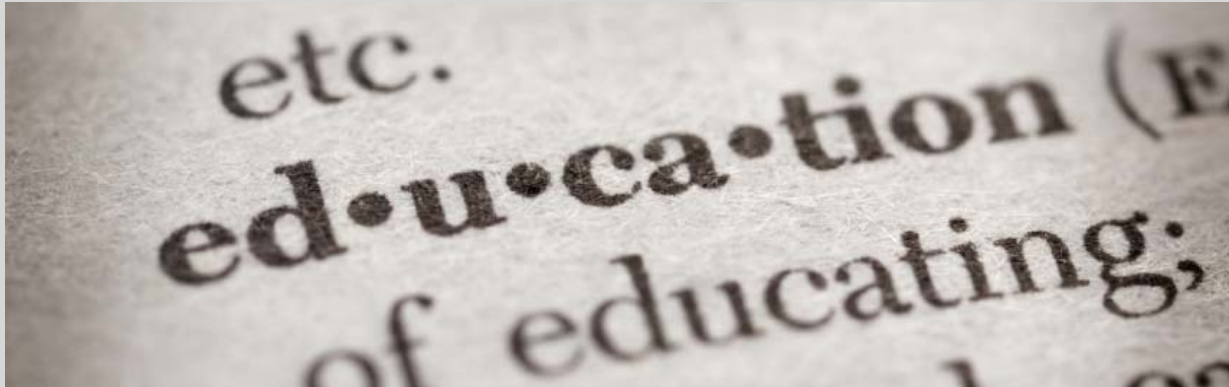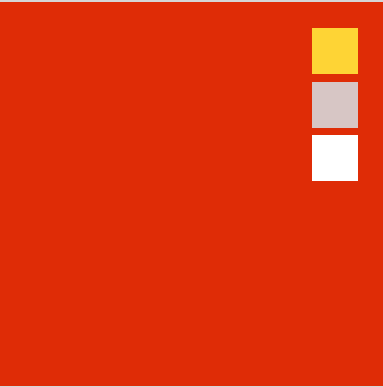
Organizational Leadership

To adequately address the three sets of unique issues, SMCCCD Distance Education Vision Planning established the district's first Distance Education Advisory Committee (DEAC) in October 2006. The composition of the committee incorporates the broadest representation from the entire district with strong reliance on faculty participation. The overall charge of the committee is to evaluate the district's needs in distance education and to provide overall guidelines to further enhance the distance education efforts in the district. DEAC will function as an advisory to the Chancellor.

The members on the committee have agreed upon the following objectives:

- Establish vision for the district's course offerings in technology assisted modalities of instruction.

- Develop and recommend a set of strategies for technology assisted course offerings that include identification of resource needs and quality assurance measures.

- Recommend a district supported platform for offering hybrid and online courses

- Provide information to the colleges for marketing that supports a coordinated strategy for marketing online instruction.

- Work with college faculty senates and related subcommittees to gain curriculum approval, accreditation and related communication matters.

The organizational structure of DEAC is as follows:

- The Committee will receive general direction from the Chancellor's Cabinet concerning strategic policies, resources, and priorities.

- The Committee will be co-chaired by a faculty member and the Vice Chancellor of Educational Services and Planning.

- The Committee will report to the Chancellor's Cabinet through the co-Chairs.

■ DEAC members and their affiliations:

1. College Academic Senate Presidents or his/her designee (3)
2. One additional faculty member from each college (3)
3. 1 VP from each college (3)
4. 1 dean from each college (3)
5. 1 classified staff representative from each college (3)
6. Student representative (1)
7. ITS representative (1)
8. Chair of CTL (1)
9. District CBO (1)
10. AFT (1)
11. Vice Chancellor, Educational Services and Planning (co-chair)

Last Name	First Name	Phone (650)	Affiliation	Representation
Ball	Jeremy	574-6638	CSM Faculty Senate President	Faculty Senate
Bennett	Diana	358-6769	Instructor, CSM	Faculty
Blackwood	Kathy	358-6869	CFO	District
Castillo	Dani	306-3407	Instructor, Cañada	Faculty
Cervantes	Alma	738-4368	Instructor, Skyline	Faculty
Brown	Ron	574-6691	Instructor, CSM	Faculty
Dilko	Patty	306-3115	Faculty Senate President, Cañada	Faculty Senate
Fajardo	Arlene	574-6576	Assistant Registrar, Cañada	Staff
Fleming	Betty	524-6933	Telecourse Coordinator, CSM	Staff/Ex-officio
Gianoli	Virginia	738-4145	Instructional Aide, Skyline	Staff
Kapp	Nick	738-4415	District Faculty Senate President, Skyline	Faculty Senate
Lawrence	Marilyn	524-6905	KCSM General Manager, CSM	Admin
Luan	Jing	358-6880	Vice Chancellor	District
McBride	Marilyn	306-3298	Vice President, Cañada	Admin
Meadows	Margery	738-4362	Dean, Business Division, Skyline	Admin
Petromilli	Jim	674-6208	Faculty & Director of CTL	ITS
Raznick	Eric	358-6703	Manager, District Office	ITS
Sohrabi	Soraya	306-3493	Program Supervisor, Cañada	Staff
Sonner	Grace	574-6636	Vice President, CSM	Admin
Stroud	Regina	738-4321	Vice President, Skyline	Admin
Townsend-Merino	Katie	306-3350	Dean, Cañada	Admin
Vasquez	Jonathan	N/a	Student	Student Government

DEAC Leadership
Co-chairs of DEAC

Dani Castillo, Faculty from Cañada, and Jing Luan

Role of DEAC Co-chairs
The co-chairs will provide overall guidance to the work produced by the full advisory committee as well as the subcommittees. The co-chairs will focus on the overarching goals of distance education in the district while providing support and coordination in subcommittees' work in accomplishing process goals and objectives. The co-chairs will be responsible for setting the full advisory committee agenda. They will work closely with the subcommittee co-chairs and be available at various college and departmental meetings to provide updates and explanation concerning the work related to district's distance education. The co-chairs will produce reports on a regular basis to the general public. Directly or through designees, the co-chairs will work with other committees established at the district and college levels that share common interest of and focus on distance education, technology, and educational policies.

The DEAC co-chairs will encourage creativity among the members and promote collegiality. The co-chairs will adhere to the mission of the district and colleges and emphasize student centered teaching and learning.

The DEAC co-chairs will work with the researchers and other entities to conduct enrollment projections, manage policy discussions and forward policy recommendations.

Future Full DEAC Meeting Dates
For spring 2007, the DEAC will meet on the last Friday of the month in the district office unless otherwise noticed.

Subcommittee Leadership and Operations
The subcommittees work both independently and in collaboration with each other as well as the DEAC co-chairs. The issues and tasks tackled by the subcommittees are both unique as well as interlinked. For example, the task of developing standards for distance education courses is assigned primarily to the Course Offering Subcommittee, but it also relates to the use of technology (Technology Subcommittee) and use of resources (Resources Subcommittee). Another example is the issue with online counseling. It is assigned to the Resources Subcommittee, but it is also reliant upon the use of technology and articulation standards and practices that are not immediately within the purview of the Resources Subcommittee.

The subcommittees may at their discretion invite new members and work with other departments or personnel.

Course Offering Subcommittee

Members:

- Marilyn McBride (co-chair)
- Nick Kapp (co-chair)
- Alma Cervantes
- Betty Fleming
- Patty Dilko
- Virginia Gianoli
- Jonathan Vasquez

Objectives

- recommending standards for developing distance education courses,
- analyzing existing practices of faculty and course evaluation approaches and making recommendations
- incorporating SLOs, student learning centered best practices, Title V, and special Accreditation guidelines
- examining curriculum availability of offering certificate and degree programs
- developing guidelines for managing intellectual property
- recommending approaches to hybrid and fully online courses
- examining the balance between program driven and faculty interest driven distance education course development and offerings

Timelines

Standards, guidelines should be finalized by the end of spring 2007.

Other tasks may take additional time due to research requirements or depending on the level of progress of other entities.

Meetings

The subcommittee will meet as needed.

Resources Subcommittee

Members

- Marilyn Lawrence (co-chair)
- Ron Brown (co-chair)
- Diana Bennett
- Kathy Blackwood
- Arlene Fajardo
- Grace Sonner
- Katie Townsend-Merino

Objectives

- evaluating student registration processes, researching student success and retention behaviors
- determining faculty and staff training needs
- identifying potential funding mechanisms
- providing guidelines for faculty load and compensation in developing and teaching online courses
- evaluating and recommending solutions to tutoring
- develop student records keeping approaches

Timelines

Standards, guidelines should be finalized by the end of spring 2007.

Other tasks may take additional time due to research requirements or depending on the level of progress of other entities.

Meetings

The subcommittee will meet as needed.

Technology Subcommittee

Members

- Regina Stroud (co-chair)
- Margery Meadows (co-chair)
- Dani Castillo
- Marilyn Lawrence
- Eric Raznick

Objectives

- overseeing guidelines in testing and selecting vendor platforms
- evaluating and recommending a district supported Course Management System (CMS)
- recommending standards for technology assisted course development
- exploring platform independent course development protocol and modeling
- evaluating all facets of technology use concerning distance education

Timelines

Selection of platform should be finalized as soon as possible.

Other tasks may take additional time due to research requirements or depending on the level of progress of other entities.

Meetings

The subcommittee will meet as needed.

Q & A Section
More will be added as the Vision Plan evolves

What is the definition for distance education and what are the laws that govern it?
Distance education as defined in the California Community Colleges Distance Education Regulations and Guidelines states "Section 55202: Distance education means instruction in which the instructor and student are separated by distance and interact through the assistance of communication technology." (Page 5). This document further states that when "[…] 51% or more of the time to deliver instruction during the course term and where the student and instructor care separated by distance. Our accrediting commission, ACCJC also concurred with these definitions and has issued specific policies that require "all learning opportunities provided […] have the same quality, accountability […]. This means that "Section 55207: The same standards of course quality shall be applied to distance education as are applied to traditional classroom courses […]" as authorized by Sections 70901 and 66700 of the Ed Code (California Community Colleges Distance Education Regulations and Guidelines, Page 5).

Guidelines and regulations have and will continue to be adhered by SMCCCD.

Why is my college pushing for distance learning classes?
Distance education courses have been in existence at our district since early 90s. As tele-courses, faulty would tape their course and KCSM would use the television/cable to transmit the course to students. This mode of operation, although still a reliable way of teaching, is in need of change as the internet has proven to be an effective way of reaching more people and giving them the choice of studying the course materials at the times and locations of their choice.

Further, with over 75% households in our immediate service area having broadband internet access and the working adults who maintain a lifestyle that makes distance learning more attractive to them, the colleges are considering reaching these people beyond regular 100% face to face instruction.

I think online classes don't have the same quality as face-to-face instruction. How do you go about guaranteeing quality?

Research in this area is mixed. Quality as defined by success in classes, research showed that it is similar between a traditional class and a distance education class, particularly when the distance education is a hybrid class. The retention rates in distance education courses are lower because the usual larger number of students withdrawing than traditional classes. Also, just as is the case with traditional classes, not all distance education classes are the same and not all students are ready for distance education. As surveys after surveys conducted by the state Chancellor's Office among the faculty and students, those who have taken distance education courses gave high ratings to the courses and 95% of the students said they would like to take additional courses.

In our district, we need to identify best practices that provide us with the models we can quickly borrow. We need to establish screening methods so that students who are naïve to distance education can have a chance to prepare themselves. The same goes for faculty who are developing and/or teaching a distance education course for the first time. These faculty ought to be trained and oriented in the way the district operates around distance education.

How should faculty be trained?

Training is very crucial to the success of distanced learning, particularly when we realize that most of the instructors have been taught using traditional classroom instruction and technology evolves at a much faster rate than we care to admit. Every faculty member, contract of adjunct will be provided with a series of training sessions before they convert their courses to distance education. Those faculty who are in the process of developing distance education courses will be provided with 24/7 technical support, access to knowledgebase, and when possible, peer support. Funds will be made available for conference attendance.

How do I go about offering a hybrid or online class?

You should contact your college's Vice President for Instruction to inform them of your interest or CTL?

Q & A

Is every class going to be offered in hybrid or online mode?
No.

What's district strategic plan for online learning?
The district has formed a Distance Education Advisory Committee (DEAC) whose sole purpose is to develop visions and plans of actions to assess, improve and enhance distance education. Please visit the DEAC website for further updates.

What are the feedback from faculty and students at the state level?
The district is playing an active role in coordinating efforts in assessing, improving and enhancing distance education. Matters that clearly belong at the district level of coordination include setting standards, selecting a CMS platform and resource allocation, among others. Course approval, curriculum alignment, workload assignment, and other issues belong to the colleges and/or shared governance entities.

What's the role the district is playing in expanding hybrid and online learning?
DEAC is responsible for issues common across the colleges. Meanwhile, there are many issues that are unique to the college and need to be handled by an entity on the campus. DEAC will work with these committees on issues of common interest, so as to keep all well informed, activities well coordinated, and to reduce unnecessary duplication of labor.

What software application has the district chosen to run all the online courses?

The district as a whole has not chosen a software application, A.K.A. course management system or platform, but the need is increasingly urgent to make a choice. Current, testing is underway with Moodle, an open source software. Testing is being arranged for eCollege's software.

Q & A

Q & A

If I have further questions, whom do I call?

- For questions relating to offering courses, please contact your college's Office of the Vice President, Instruction.

- For questions relating to technology and training, please contact CTL.

- For questions relating to district coordination of distance education, please contact the following:

    General Inquiries:
    Dani Castillo or Jing Luan (co-chairs of DEAC)

    Curriculum Questions:
    - Co-chairs of the Course Offering Subcommittee

    - College Curriculum Committee Chairs

        Or

    - College Faculty Senate Presidents

    Resource Inquiries:
    - Co-chairs of the Resources Subcommittee

        Or

    - College Faculty Senate Presidents

    Technology Questions:
    - Co-chairs of the Technology Subcommitte

        Or

    - CTL (Center for Teaching & Learning)