

# Distance Education Department

## Annual Section Plan for Academic Year 2016-2017

November 2015

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### Description Of Section

#### Mission/Connection to College Mission

The mission of the Distance Education Department is to support Cerro Coso Community College's mission by providing students with a flexible alternative avenue to academic success through quality distance learning courses using contemporary information technology.

The college strives to become a recognized leader in online education among California community colleges and beyond, by creating innovative and cost-effective solutions to overcome challenges in online learning. The Distance Education Department is dedicated to upholding the highest standard of professionalism and advancing the quality of distance education programs to meet or exceed student and faculty expectations.

To accomplish this, the department is committed to supporting the college in several ways:

- Providing quality, accredited online degree and credential programs that satisfy general education and meet the requirements for transferring to bachelor programs
- Helping faculty use distance learning technologies and pedagogies to deliver quality courses and programs
- Enabling local and remote students to fulfill degree, certificate, and transfer requirements in a timely manner with flexible classes
- Constantly assessing the effectiveness of distance education programs and improving their quality and productivity
- Ensuring that distance education programs are conducted in accordance with applicable rules, regulations, and policies stipulated by the college and the state and federal governments

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### Review And Planning

#### Performance and Equity Gaps Still to be Addressed

The college has grown increasingly concerned with the performance gap between traditional students and online students. In collaboration with faculty and staff, a number of solutions were implemented earlier this year to address this performance gap—in particular, by intervening in operational issues. The operational issues associated with online courses included a confusing online course environment, student and faculty frustration with poor department services, and students being unprepared for online course expectations, navigation of Moodle, and college online practices. One intervention the department implemented to address these issues was a series of short tutorial videos on Moodle functionality for faculty and students in each online course, to support faculty in their online teaching experience and to help students with navigation issues. In addition to the on-demand tutorial videos, the department has standardized online course themes and offered an online orientation to prepare students for courses.

These operational issues presented a reputational risk to the college and damaged student confidence in the college's ability to provide quality service and education in an online environment, hence impacting online student outcomes. After the implementation of these interventions, the student retention rate has improved by 3% in fall 2015 over fall 2014. It is expected that addressing more operational issues will continue to improve student outcomes. One initiative to address the performance gap that will be undertaken in academic year 2016-17 is the "Enhance Student Support Services to Online Students" initiative listed in this section plan.

The Distance Education Department recognizes that proper student engagement in the online environment can improve the online

student performance gap and is proactively addressing the issues this academic year, 2015-16. The department has implemented a faculty technology area where faculty members can use software applications and content development tools to make their course content more engaging to students. Also, for the academic year, with subject experts from the Learning Resource Center and Marketing Department as well as faculty chairs, the department has conducted assessments on proctoring, tutoring, and marketing segmentation to identify online education needs and determine possible solutions to problems impacting equity and performance gaps.

The marketing segmentation has already revealed a gender equity gap specific to online enrollment. Based on the gender gap identified in the Distance Education Marketing Plan, marketing strategies to increase male online enrollment are being prioritized, including the identification of the military as a strategic partner. In collaboration with the Admissions and Records Department and faculty chairs, the department has applied for the Air Force's GEM Program and SOC CTE membership in fall 2015. More targeted marketing is expected to help narrow the gender gap.

In addition to the gender gap data collected, the assessment on proctoring and tutoring assessments helped identify another initiative listed in this section plan, "Enhance Student Support Services to Online Students," which will address the online student performance gap.

## **Progress Made on Prior Year Initiatives**

### **To expand training opportunities for faculty, seek methods to enhance delivery of course materials and support student engagement and retention.**

The department:

- o Provided comprehensive training for faculty who needed more preparation for online teaching, with emphases on instructional technologies, media tools, and online learning pedagogies. Nineteen Moodle training sessions, three flex day sessions and four pedagogies webinars were offered to at least 103 faculty member registrants.
- o Launched a "Bi-monthly Tips and Resources" email to help a broader faculty body update their pedagogy and technology knowledge. The email has received positive feedback from faculty members.
- o Proactively collaborated with faculty, faculty chairs, committee members of PedTech and Professional Development, and staff on projects to support student retention, including developing a Student Moodle Orientation session, implementing prompt and effective communication processes with faculty and students, and standardizing online course themes. As a result of these projects' completion in summer 2015, online student retention rate for fall 2015 is 82.1%, higher than than the past three fall semesters.

### **Assist Faculty to develop faculty websites and improve the CC Online presence**

The department has launched new website content that improves the usability and visibility of CC Online; website users can now more easily navigate through the online program information. While the initiative to develop faculty websites may be benefiting students and individual faculty members, no faculty members have yet expressed interest in developing their own websites.

### **To increase the number of faculty using media / video / audio in their online courses**

The department developed 129 videos and supported more than 16 faculty and staff in their media production. In addition, DECT grant funding enabled the department to add closed captions for more than 2,083 minutes of videos for the academic year. More importantly, after the department's effort to promote awareness of 508 regulations, ADA compliance, and copyright rules, faculty members have widely accepted addressing these issues as a necessary step in producing future media content.

## Initiatives for Next Academic Year

### Develop Multimedia and Interactive Contents for College Website

#### Action Plan:

1. Collaborate with Manager of Public Relations, Marketing & Development, Director of SSSP, Director of Admissions & Records, Financial Aid, and Veterans' Affairs on types of multimedia and interactive content needed for their department website sections and the overall college website.
2. Develop a project plan with deadlines and deliverables for Educational Media Specialist to implement.
3. Develop multimedia and interactive content.
4. Present deliverables to Manager of Public Relations, Marketing & Development, Director of SSSP, Director of Admissions & Records, Financial Aid, and Veterans' Affairs for approval.
5. Incorporate multimedia and interactive content into college website.

#### Measure of Success:

Produce at least 20 media and/or interactive media contents.

#### Person Responsible:

Distance Education Director, Educational Media Specialist, Manager of Public Relations, Marketing & Development, Director of SSSP, Director of Admissions & Records, Financial Aid, and Veterans' Affairs

#### It directly addresses a college Strategic Goal or Objective

Goal: Maximize Student Success

Objective: Increase Student Engagement

### Develop College Copyright & Fair Use Guidelines

#### Action Plan:

1. Collaborate with Library Director to assess types of copyright and fair use issues for faculty and student.
2. Determine scope of the guideline.
3. Research copyright and fair use laws to include in guideline.
4. Write guidelines in a handbook format.
5. Gain approval of stakeholders for implementation.
6. Incorporate handbook to "Faculty 411"

#### Measure of Success:

A handbook of copyright and fair use guidelines.

**Person Responsible:**

Director of Distance Education and Library Director

**It directly addresses a college Strategic Goal or Objective**

Goal: Strengthen Organizational Effectiveness

**Enhance Student Support Services to Online Students****Action Plan:**

1. Collaborate with Director of SSSP to promote Counseling, Orientation, Assessment, and Educational Plan to online students.
2. Collaborate with Learning Assistance Center Coordinator to offer online tutoring, which is based on the concept of study groups and tutoring in course midterm topics prior to midterm day. Develop media and interactive content for tutoring service.
3. Collaborate with Learning Assistance Center Coordinator to offer online proctoring service to online students. Develop media content for proctoring service.
4. Collaborate with Library Director to develop interactive content on student plagiarism and copyright.
5. Collaborate with Director of Outreach and Student Life to offer an educational activity to foster community for online students.
6. Incorporate student support services in all online courses.
7. Promote student support services to online students.

**Measure of Success:**

- Increase Online Student Retention by at Least 3%.
- Increase Number of Online Students Completing Counseling Orientation, Assessment and Educational Plan by at Least 2% per area.
- Increase Number of Students Using Online Tutoring by 10 Students.
- Offer One Student Educational Activity to Online Students.
- Develop Interactive Media Content on Student Plagiarism and Copyright.
- Develop at Least Two Media Content for Tutoring and Proctoring Services.

**Person Responsible:**

Director of Distance Education, Educational Media Specialist, Director of SSSP, Learning Assistance Center Coordinator, Library Director, Director of Outreach and Student Life

**It directly addresses a college Strategic Goal or Objective**

Goal: Maximize Student Success

Objective: Increase Student Engagement and Increase Completion

**Implement Canvas Learning Management System****Action Plan:**

1. Train Educational Media Specialist in Canvas.

2. Develop and implement a backup strategy for past Moodle courses.
3. Collaborate on the development of an organizational structure for Canvas.
4. Design college course template.
5. Collaborate with Bakersfield and Porterville on shared template.
6. Incorporate Moodle scripts to Canvas.
7. Integrate student support services into Canvas organizational structure.
8. Develop Canvas best practices for storing media and interactive content.
9. Offer Canvas training to faculty.
10. Develop a tutorial video for faculty on how to restore Moodle courses into Canvas.
11. Collaborate with faculty to develop a new faculty training certificate in consideration of OEI course design rubric, copyright and fair use laws, technologies, and various pedagogy strategies.
12. Develop video tutorial library for online course template.

**Measure of Success:**

Offer College Online Courses in Canvas.

**Person Responsible:**

Distance Education Director, Educational Media Specialist

**Other**

Implement a New Learning Management System, Canvas

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## Resource Needs

### Facilities

N/A

### Information Technology

The department is requesting one copy of Articulate Studio software, one copy of Camtasia software, one set of headphone, and one laptop. They will be used to help faculty create multimedia-rich course content, which can be defined as course materials that include a combination of text, audio, still images, animation, video, and/or interactivity. The laptop will be located on the KRV campus and can be checked out by faculty of KRV campus.

In addition, the department is requesting for one copy of Camtasia software, video card, more memory, larger hard drive and two large monitors to be purchased and implemented if the new Educational Media Design Specialist position is granted.

### Marketing

A Distance Education Marketing Plan is being developed in collaboration with faculty chairs and Manager of Public Relations,

Marketing & Development. Based on the current development of the plan, several marketing strategies to be adopted in academic year 2016-17 will need to include purchases of email databases for eblast promotions, an email marketing service to help manage the growing email database, and Google advertisements, all of which is to increase online course enrollment.

## Professional Development

The department would like to present at a distance education conference. The budget request is for the travel and attendance of two presenters. For staff professional development, training in Canvas will be provided through OEI.

Additionally, the department would like to request funds for Instructional Tech Council (ITC) memberships. This professional organization provides webinars that would benefit faculty in online course development. The topics of the webinars include copyright, ADA compliance, instructional technologies, assessment, and online pedagogies.

The department would also like to request an annual budget to support summer training for faculty teaching their first online courses, which was recommended by the PTEC committee and approved by the Academic Senate.

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## Staffing Requests Not Already Listed In Unit Plans

### 1000 Category - Certificated Positions

### 2000 Category - Classified Staff

#### Educational Media Design Specialist

**Location:**

College-wide

**Salary Grade:**

49

**Number of Months:**

12

**Number of Hours per Week:**

40

**Salary Amount:**

\$61,694.88

**Justification:**

The Distance Education Department is requesting an Educational Media Design Specialist to handle the increased demand for media and interactive content development at the college. This position will allow the college to more effectively meet the needs of current and prospective students through the development of more media and interactive content for student support services. Currently, requests to create media content from the student services departments are being fulfilled by the current Educational Media Specialist; however, it is not done in a timely manner due to an overload of work. If a new Educational Media Specialist is hired, the current specialist will be able to spend more time on the Moodle challenges faced by faculty and online students, as well as assessing the critical issues that may come with a new learning management system implementation, Canvas. If the position is not filled, the department will have to reprioritize and delay some critical projects and new initiatives planned to improve student outcomes.