

# Distance Education Department

## ASP for Academic Year 2022-2023

November 2021

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## Description Of Section

### 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

Due to replacing the alternative media specialist position with the web developer position, the department can now extract Canvas data for analysis and connect it with the college's student equity, success, and retention data. For example, retrieving the browser history and types of devices used by students and merging it with student equity data has helped us understand the technology needs of online students and inform them of the need to update their browsers. The department also reported the technology needs of specific students to administrators. In addition, we shared our data analysis with faculty and managers to implement targeted strategies to help close the digital equity gap. For the future, the department anticipates performing more Canvas data analysis integrated with student equity, success, and retention data to understand the exact needs of online students and provide targeted services to them.

### Last Year's Initiatives

#### Increase POQR Approved Online Courses - Continuation

The Distance Education department continues to promote the POQR process and recruit faculty to submit their courses. The college currently has 19 POQR-certified courses, and 25 more courses are expected to go through POQR by the end of 2021-22. In addition, when the college goes live in the Course Exchange, the department anticipates that more faculty will review their courses and be POQR-certified.

## **Improve Accessibility of College Online Courses - Continuation**

The Distance Education department continues to encourage faculty to make their Canvas course content accessible. Faculty members have been informed that they should have course accessibility issues resolved by the end of Fall 2021, the deadline established in the Senate-approved Distance Education Accessibility Plan. Currently, the college has 27 courses that are fully compliant with accessibility laws. In addition, at least 28 faculty members have reached out to help fix their course accessibility, but have not completed the accessibility self-evaluation form or had their courses POOCR-certified. Also, at least 18 faculty members have accessed the newly created Canvas course on accessibility resources and tools. The department anticipates that by the end of Fall 2021, more faculty will have reached out for help fixing their accessibility issues, gone through the POOCR process, or submitted completed accessibility self-evaluation forms.

To support faculty in this effort, the department has made self-audit accessibility tools available (UDOIT, Poptech, and Blackboard Ally) that enable them to identify and fix accessibility issues directly in Canvas. In addition to providing these tools, the Distance Education department works with the DSPS department to audit digital textbooks (e.g., Portales from Vista Higher Learning, Cengage, OpenStax, and MyMathLab from Pearson) for compliance. Moreover, we assist the academic departments in fixing accessibility issues unrelated to course pedagogy in shared course materials to minimize the chance of inaccessible content being copied to the next course section in Canvas. Although the college cannot guarantee complete accessibility for online course content, these accessibility initiatives have become part of the Distance Education department's operations. It has also become a known expectation that faculty will create accessible content, and the department will evaluate learning tools and write scripts with accessibility as a criterion.

## **Improve Equity in Online Education - Continuation**

Narrowing the equity gap in online education continues to be a goal of the Distance Education department. In 2019-20 and 2020-21, the department promoted equity training to faculty and initiated discussions with the Pedagogy and Technology Committee to understand the challenges of implementing equity strategies in an online environment. Moreover, to help guide implementation of equity initiatives, the department began analyzing online success and retention data for students as determined by ethnicity, disability, veteran status, economic disadvantage, and first-generation status. We shared this success and retention data with the Pedagogy and Technology Committee, the SSSP Committee, and various student services areas. As a result, it was concluded to be more logical to develop a distance education equity plan, which will include initiatives such as the possible development of an equity course rubric for the online environment.

## **Increase Faculty Sharing of Online Teaching Strategies - Continuation**

The third issue of the *InsideOnline* newsletter was published in February 2021 with an article written by Sharlene Paxton, librarian, faculty FLEX coordinator, and Professional Development Committee chair, "Equity-Minded Spring FLEX," which received 19 views. The issue also featured recordings of the Spring 2021 FLEX presentations for faculty to view at their convenience. The department anticipates that the fourth issue of the *InsideOnline* newsletter will come out in Spring 2022.

In addition to *InsideOnline*, the Faculty Lounge series continues to be an avenue for sharing online teaching strategies. Scott Cameron, professor of Physical Science, facilitated a Faculty Lounge session called "Discovering and Addressing the Technological Barriers that Impede the Success of Online Students." Tyson Huffman, Learning Assistance Center coordinator and professor, facilitated a session called "Assessment Without Formal Proctoring." Demetria Gianopoulos, an adjunct faculty member in the Mathematics department, also contributed on the topic "Increasing Student Engagement in the Synchronous Online Classroom." A total of 17 faculty members participated in at least one of the Faculty Lounge sessions. The department plans to continue offering the sessions.

## **Initiatives for Next Academic Year**

### **Redesign CCOOnline Webpage Contents**

**Is this part of a multiyear initiative?**

No

**Specific Action Steps to be Taken:**

1. Clarify the main goals to be achieved by CCOOnline webpages re-design and determine the priority level of each goal.
2. Understand the target audience of the CCOOnline webpages.
3. Review current CCOOnline webpages.

4. Collaborate with marketing department.
5. Analyze the current CCOOnline webpage metrics.
6. Do keyword research.
7. Write CCOOnline webpage contents.
8. Re-design CCOOnline webpages with new content.
9. Develop webpages with consideration for UX and mobile experience.
10. Do user test.
11. Launch.

**Early Observational Data, or "Lead" Measure(s):**

The metrics and keyword research of the CCOOnline webpages will provide an insight into which webpage to retain or redesign, and how much time is required to complete the project.

**Does the department request help developing these instruments?**

Yes

**Institutional Performance Data, or "Lag" Measure(s):**

Completion of CCOOnline website re-design.

**Person Responsible:**

Director of Distance Education, Web Developer and Director of Marketing

**Unit gap or institutional goals addressed:**

It addresses a Strategic Plan goal or objective

**Develop a Canvas Mobile Template**

**Is this part of a multiyear initiative?**

No

**Specific Action Steps to be Taken:**

1. Clarify the main goals to achieve in the development of the Canvas mobile template and determine the priority level of each goal.
2. Understand the target audiences of the Student Canvas app, Parent Canvas app, and Teacher Canvas app.
3. Review current Canvas mobile apps.
4. Analyze the current Canvas mobile metrics.
5. Collaborate with the Pedtech Committee and Outreach department.
6. Develop mobile templates with consideration for UX.
7. Do user test.
8. Launch.

**Early Observational Data, or "Lead" Measure(s):**

Discussions with the Pedtech Committee and the Outreach department will help us understand the desired features currently unavailable in the Canvas mobile apps. The Canvas mobile metrics will provide data on how students and faculty navigate through the apps.

**Does the department request help developing these instruments?**

No

**Institutional Performance Data, or "Lag" Measure(s):**

Completion of Canvas templates for the Student Canvas app, the Parent Canvas app, and/or the Teacher Canvas app.

**Person Responsible:**

Director of Distance Education and Web Developer

**Unit gap or institutional goals addressed:**

It addresses a gap in student equity, It addresses a Strategic Plan goal or objective, It addresses a Student Equity and Achievement Plan goal

**Implement Distance Education Equity Plan**

**Is this part of a multiyear initiative?**

Yes

**Specific Action Steps to be Taken:**

1. Collaborate with the Pedtech Committee, SSSP Committee, and Student Services areas.
2. Review the approved Distance Education Equity Plan to affirm that the intervention strategy design still matches the current goals of the college.
3. Determine the priority level of each intervention and its measurements.
4. Implement the initiatives in the approved Distance Education Equity Plan.
5. Keep constituents informed and engaged in the change process.
6. Collect data and analyze the initiatives to determine their effectiveness.
7. Evaluate and continue to audit the plan for next academic year implementation.

**Early Observational Data, or "Lead" Measure(s):**

Establishing a priority level for each intervention and its measurements will help us determine how many initiatives within the Distance Education Equity Plan can be achieved in the 2022-23 academic year.

**Does the department request help developing these instruments?**

Yes

**Institutional Performance Data, or "Lag" Measure(s):**

Completion of several of the initiatives in the Distance Education Equity Plan and an update to the Distance Education Equity Plan for next academic year.

**Person Responsible:**

Director of Distance Education

**Unit gap or institutional goals addressed:**

It addresses a gap in student equity, It addresses a Strategic Plan goal or objective, It addresses a Student Equity and Achievement Plan goal

## Develop Cerro Coso-Grown LTIs

### Is this part of a multiyear initiative?

Yes

### Specific Action Steps to be Taken:

1. Review current needs of Canvas faculty and the Student Services areas.
2. Collaborate with the Pedtech Committee, SSSP Committee, and Student Services areas.
3. Clarify the main goals to be achieved by Cerro Coso-grown LTIs and determine the priority level of each goal.
4. Understand the target audience of the Cerro Coso-grown LTIs.
5. Analyze features of Canvas and current LTIs available in the Cerro Coso Canvas sub-account.
6. Develop Cerro Coso-grown LTIs with consideration for UX and mobile experience.
7. Do user test.
8. Launch.

### Early Observational Data, or "Lead" Measure(s):

Discussion with the Pedtech Committee, the SSSP Committee, and the Student Services areas will help us understand the desired features currently unavailable in Canvas. The Canvas API metrics will provide data on how students and faculty navigate through Canvas.

### Does the department request help developing these instruments?

No

### Institutional Performance Data, or "Lag" Measure(s):

Completion of at least three Cerro Coso-grown LTIs.

### Person Responsible:

Director of Distance Education

### Unit gap or institutional goals addressed:

It addresses a gap in student equity, It addresses a Strategic Plan goal or objective, It addresses a Student Equity and Achievement Plan goal

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## Resource Needs

### Facilities

N/A

### Information Technology

The department is requesting the following purchases, in order of priority:

1. Blackboard Ally (\$5,400), an accessibility checker that gives faculty insight into the overall accessibility of their Canvas content and suggests solutions to resolve accessibility issues in their Canvas pages, Microsoft documents, and PDFs. Additionally, the tool acts as a screen reader and generates an alternative format for the disabled.
2. Labster (\$6,000), a virtual lab and science simulation tool. The department is requesting this tool if science faculty recommends the purchase.

3. VisibleBody (\$4,000), a virtual anatomy educational tool. The department is requesting this tool if science faculty recommends the purchase.
4. Pronto, an instant messaging tool to help faculty and students connect informally or formally via chat and video. The messaging tool is accessible by mobile or desktop, making it convenient for student engagement and interaction with faculty and classmates.
5. Respondus (\$2,200), a lockdown browser tool that is used in proctoring online exams. The department is requesting this tool if faculty recommends the purchase of an online proctoring tool after the feasibility study.
6. Perusall (\$5,000), a tool that allows students and faculty to annotate assigned readings and engage the reading material in a style akin to social media posting. The department is requesting this tool if faculty recommends its purchase after the English department has piloted it for a semester.

## Marketing

N/A

## Professional Development

The department would like to request for travel budget for two people to either the Online Teacher Conference or CanvasCon.

Also, the department would like to continue to request an annual budget to support the summer training for faculty teaching their first online courses, a training now required by Title 5, and recommended by the Pedtech Committee and approved by the Academic Senate.

## Other Needs

The department would like to request an annual budget to support the POQR review of ten liberal arts course sections and ten CTE course sections.

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## Staffing Requests Not Already Listed In Unit Plans

### 1000 Category - Certificated Positions

N/A

**Location:**

**Justification:**

### 2000 Category - Classified Staff

N/A

**Location:**

**Salary Grade:**

**Number of Months:**

**Number of Hours per Week:**

**Salary Amount:**

**Justification:**