



SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE PROPOSAL – Distance Education

Request to Deliver 50% or more of course offerings for
AA/AS Degree and Certificate Programs via
Distance Education

Submitted by

College of the Redwoods
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Submitted to

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Western Association of Schools and Colleges

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Description of Proposed Change

The CR district covers 10,000 square miles and is home to many people who are unable to come to a campus or site for instruction. In an effort to enhance educational access to all students, College of the Redwoods (CR) is proposing to offer online learning options for AA/AS degree and certificate programs. These options provide 50% or more of the program course work via distance learning modalities which may include both synchronous and asynchronous online and hybrid delivery methods. These methods will include web-based learning management systems, video, and web-conferencing systems (DE).

In response to student demand and attempts to provide needed access to all of the District's constituencies outside of the campus locations or site areas, College of the Redwoods (CR) has been developing an array of online courses that allow students to fulfill some of their AA/AS and transfer degree goals. In addition, as research around teaching and learning has moved toward more interactive modalities that engage the learner, and away from the primarily face-to-face lecture formatted instruction, our instructors are working to provide the most interactive experience possible in each of the distance delivery modalities. In some cases, we believe the best option may be a mix of the modalities instead of reliance on only one delivery methodology (hybrid).

This proposal will detail the need for substantive change approval, and how this need relates to the District's mission, Strategic Plan for 2012-2017, and Education Master Plan for 2012-2017. This proposal will also detail how the District plans to deliver quality programs via DE through subsequent organizational planning, resource allocation, course approval processes, instructor certification, and related assessment and evaluation.

Relationship to College Mission

All offerings at the College of the Redwoods, including Distance Education offerings, are aligned with its mission.

MISSION

College of the Redwoods puts student success first by providing outstanding developmental, career technical, and transfer education. The College partners with the community to contribute to the economic vitality and lifelong learning needs of its service area. We continually assess student learning and institutional performance and practices to improve upon the programs and services we offer.

The Distance Education Program at College of the Redwoods is dedicated to using the creative application of technology to extend student access to higher education. While maintaining the College's standards of quality, distance education creates successful learning environments and decreases barriers to student learning such as time constraints and long commutes to campus. The mission supports these priorities by “putting student success first” “partnering with the community” and providing “outstanding developmental, career and technical, and transfer education.”

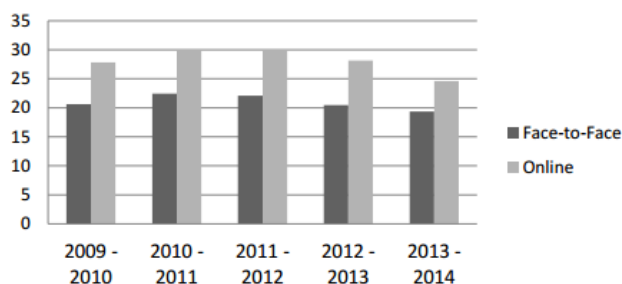
To date, there have been more than 20,000 enrollments in distance education courses at the college. When an online section of a course is offered, it often fills before its classroom-based section, indicating a strong demand for this option. Faculty who teach online courses have indicated that many of their online students include working adults, single parents, and students having physical disabilities that limit their mobility or hearing which makes it more convenient to interact through the Web. Although CR has long offered instruction using alternative delivery methods (e.g. telecourses, video-conferencing to other campuses and instructional sites) to meet the needs of our rural students, over the past ten years the College has added web-based, online instruction as this technology has become more widely available in the District. We will continue to offer a variety of distance delivery methodologies that best meet the needs of our large District service area.

Rationale for Proposed Change

Students located at the Del Norte campus and Klamath-Trinity site take advantage of online courses. Most online courses receive more enrollments than face-to-face, evidenced by a larger average class size in online courses at census compared to face-to-face courses (Figure 1).

Figure 1

Class Size: Face-to-Face vs. Online



A growing number of students (almost 10 %) now indicate an online campus as their primary home location (Table 1). Of all online courses taken between fall 2012 and spring 2014, over a quarter of students identified a primary campus location other than the main Eureka Campus.

Table 1

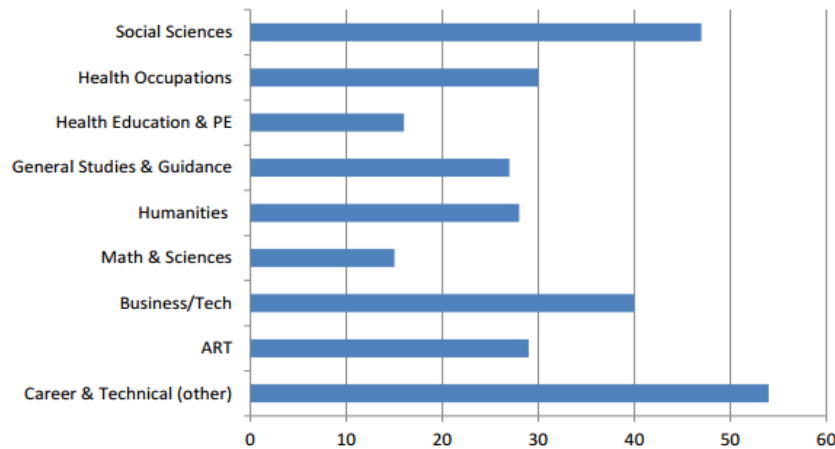
Distribution of Students taking Online Courses, by Primary Campus

Year	Eureka	Del Norte	Mendocino	Virtual Campus
2011-2012	74%	16%	6%	4%
2012-2013	74%	12%	6%	8%
2013-2014	74%	13%	4%	9%

Percentages correspond to unduplicated student headcount by home campus location.

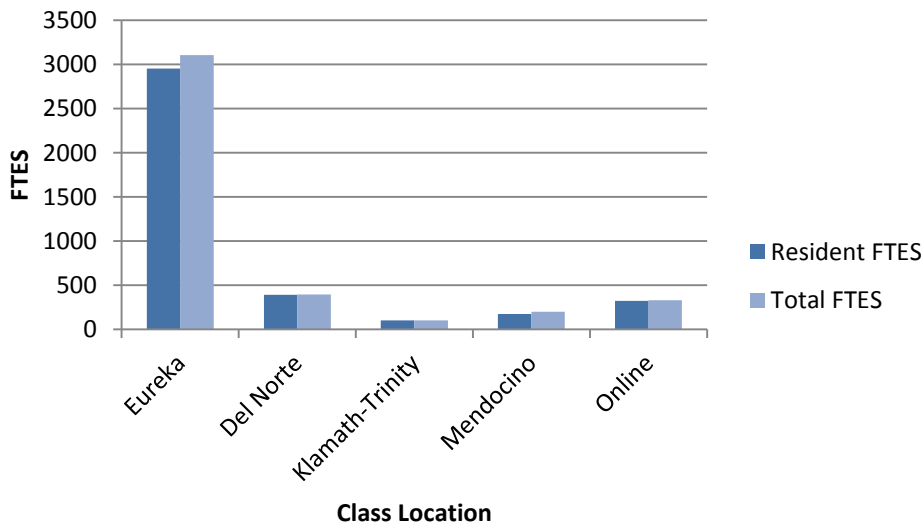
Online courses provide an efficient way of offering students at other CR campuses and sites a wider array of course options so that they can complete degrees and certificates. CR currently offers online courses in a range of sections including science, humanities, health occupations, and career and technical education (Figure 2). Board of Trustees members and local School District Superintendents have asked that the district provide access to the College’s full array of degrees for students not located in Eureka (i.e., Mendocino, Del Norte, and the Hoopa Valley Indian Reservation).

Figure 2
Distance Education Sections by Discipline
(Fall 2012 through Spring 2014)



Nearly all students taking online courses reside in California (Figure 3). Most CR students taking online courses live within CR’s service district, but take online courses because they better fit their work, home, and transportation schedules. The most effective and economical way the District can provide access is through distance learning. It is not fiscally sustainable to provide a full complement of degrees at every campus and instructional site. Furthermore, without broad distance learning options the rural communities within the District would be limited to only one or two degree options. It is important to provide access to a broad cross-section of educational options offered by the Redwoods Community College District. Consequently, as many courses as pedagogically appropriate within a degree program should be provided at a distance to allow for students not located in Eureka or who may have professional or personal restrictions to not only begin a degree, but to also complete it without having to attend a face-to-face class on the main campus.

Figure 3
Resident FTES by Class Location



Online courses also offer an alternative for students who may live near a campus or site, but who are limited to when they can take classes. The Student Satisfaction Inventory (SSI) administered in 2012 showed that approximately half of all students reported working full- or part-time off campus. A 2009 survey of entering students also showed 74% of respondents planned to work during the semester. More than 40% of entering students intended to work more than 20 hours/week, and 18% intended to work more than 30 hours/week. Desire for a flexible schedule provides another reason why students are motivated to take online courses and why CR should continue to expand and improve its distance education program.

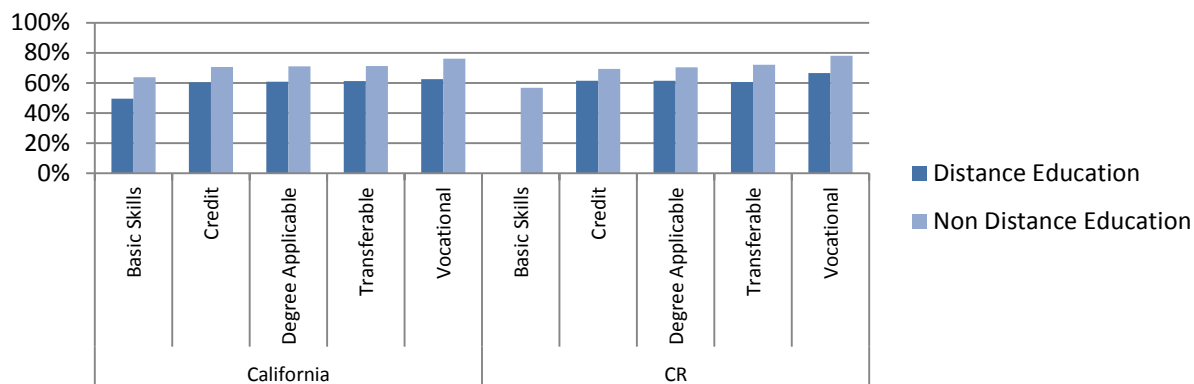
Institutional research indicates that online education is an effective way of offering quality education. A recent review of student achievement across the institution based on assessment reports from 2011-2012 and 2012-2013 showed that students achieved outcomes at a similar rate in distance education courses compared to face-to-face courses. Only two out of seven major academic areas resulted in somewhat lower outcome attainment ratings, and students in several disciplines demonstrated outcome attainment at a higher level in online than face-to-face courses (Table 2).

Table 2
Learning Outcome Attainment: 2011-2012 and 2012-2013 Assessment Activity

Distance Education Courses				Face-to-Face Courses			
	Below	Met	Above		Below	Met	Above
Humanities	7.8%	45.3%	46.9%	Humanities	7.7%	53.2%	39.1%
CTE	13.8%	40.1%	46.1%	CTE	13.5%	26.1%	60.3%
Math & Science	13.2%	52.9%	33.9%	Math & Science	18.6%	71.5%	9.9%
Guidance	6.4%	55.8%	37.9%	Guidance	13.2%	84.8%	2.0%
Health Education	0.0%	10.3%	89.7%	Health Education	12.3%	55.7%	32.0%
Health Occupations	12.4%	78.5%	9.2%	Health Occupations	10.9%	81.7%	7.4%
Social Sciences	27.0%	42.5%	30.5%	Social Sciences	18.8%	38.2%	43.0%
All DE	13.2%	49.5%	37.3%	All Face-to-Face	9.8%	41.7%	48.5%

Course success and retention of students in online courses is somewhat lower than in face-to-face courses, but the gap is no larger at CR than it is on average across the state (Figure 4). In fact, success in online courses is closer to that of face-to-face courses at CR than for many peer institutions. Refer to Appendix C for additional success and retention data in online vs. face-to-face classes.

Figure 4
Success in Online vs. Face-to-Face Classes (Fall 2013)



Description of the Change in Delivery Mode

In addition to degree and certificate programs previously approved to be offered via distance modalities, CR is requesting approval to offer more than 50% of the following 7 degree and 1 certificate programs in one or more distance modalities.

AA degrees with the following specializations:

- Fine Arts
- Mathematics
- Science
- Science Exploration

AS degrees with the following specializations:

- Office Professional

ADT degrees with the following specializations:

- English
- Physics

Certificate Programs:

- Word Processing

Planning Process

Relationship to Institutional Planning

Input into the ongoing planning for College of the Redwoods has been gathered from K-12 school districts, baccalaureate granting universities, employers and community partners. These groups advocated for distance education during the development of CR’s 2007-12 Strategic Plan, which identifies Goal 5: Ensure Student Access to “increase distance and online educational opportunities.”

Recognizing that distance education was critical to both the Strategic Plan and the Education Master Plan, in 2008 the President/Superintendent hired consultant Andy Howard to work with administration and faculty to develop a Distance Education Action Plan. This plan called for expanding online course offerings and developing a system that ensures that the District had a cadre of qualified online instructors available to support the distance education curriculum. Efforts to reach these goals resulted in growth in online course offerings and enrollment. At that same time a cross-constituent committee of faculty, staff, and administrators was formed to make recommendations around distance education organizational structure, goals, and needs.

The Distance Education Action Plan also recommended developing administrative policies and procedures to support distance education growth. This recommendation is satisfied by including DE in ongoing Education Master Planning efforts. The 2012-2017 Education Master Plan contains goals related to enhancing distance education and technology in teaching (Appendix A). These goals are evaluated on a cycle as part of the integrated planning process through the use of an indicator database which the Office of Institutional Research updates annually (Figure 5).

**Figure 5
Planning Indicator Database**

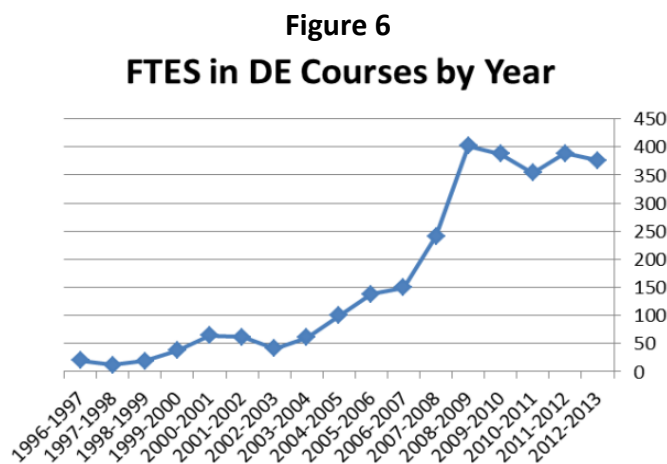
The screenshot shows a web interface for the Planning Indicator Database. At the top left is the College of the Redwoods logo. Below it is a header 'Planning Indicators'. A section titled 'Generate a listing by selecting from any of the four filters' contains four dropdown menus: 'Select a Strategic Plan Objective' (All objectives), 'Select an Ed Master Plan Objective' (All objectives), 'Select an Indicator' (All indicators), and 'Select a Keyword' (Distance Education). Below the filters is a table with columns: Strategic Plan, Ed Master Plan, Indicator, Year, Success, Retention, and Definition.

Strategic Plan	Ed Master Plan	Indicator	Year	Success	Retention	Definition
	4.3 Enhance Distance Education	Success and retention in online courses	2011-2012	Success: 63%	Retention: 85%	Success is percentage of students enrolled at census who complete with successful grade. Retention is the percentage of students enrolled at census who remain and receive grade other than W.
			2010-2011	Success: 65%	Retention: 84%	
	4.4 Technology in Teaching	FTES in online courses	2011-2012	9.2%		Percent of overall FTES generated in online courses.
			2010-2011	7.8%		
			2009-2010	8.4%		
1.1 Academic Pathways	4.4 Technology in Teaching	Orientation to distance education	2011-2012	164		Number of students completing DE-101, an orientation to learning online.
			2010-2011	195		

Institutional planning has motivated the District to develop and implement curricula that respond to student learning needs, provide broader access to our rural populations without access to a training site, and respond to economic realities and identified workplace “targets of opportunity.” Distance education helps the District address this important planning initiative.

Assessment of Needs and Resources

The College purchased a learning management system in 2003, and began offering online courses on an experimental and voluntary basis. As student demand increased, and as more faculty volunteered to try this delivery modality, the number of course sections and enrollments increased dramatically (Figure 6).



Investment of distance education resources was reduced as the District went onto Show Cause accreditation sanction, although enough resources were consistently invested to sustain current course offerings and maintain the DE platform while the college addressed financial stability issues. In addition, following the recent removal of accreditation sanctions and the development of a balanced financial plan, the District has devoted more resources to DE.

The administration has reallocated funds to hire a full-time faculty DE director, a half-time faculty DE coordinator, and a full-time instructional technologist to support distance education. Additionally, the administration has developed a new Innovation and Training Center that will ensure that appropriate professional development opportunities exist to support distance education (i.e. online faculty evaluation, video conferencing, online course development, online course delivery training, student engagement, etc.) Clearly, establishing a strong Distance Education Program represents a substantial investment in personnel to support faculty and students and is a testament to the District’s recognition that distance education is a critical component in improving access to the curriculum. With this high level coordination and support effort, the District feels confident that it will be able to address DE related issues as they arise and, more importantly, anticipate future needs so they can be identified in the annual DE program review process.

The District also reallocated funds to pilot a new Learning Management System (LMS) last fall. A task force of faculty and staff worked during spring 2014 to demo and gather feedback for several

LMS competitors because of a lack of satisfaction with our current LMS. The task force recommended Instructure's Canvas™ platform, and twenty-five faculty volunteered to pilot Canvas in fall 2014. The task force believed that students' top priority of wanting an intuitive LMS will be met with Canvas, and should relieve some burden on technology and other service areas to support students.

The Board of Trustees approved a five year Canvas Learning Management System contract at their November 2014 meeting. With this contract, CR began transitioning from Sakai to Canvas. The DE director, DE coordinator and instructional technologist are providing training for the new system, and IT is working with this group to assist with the transfer of instructional materials from Sakai to Canvas. CR was also pleased to learn that the California Community Colleges Online Education Initiative has announced its intent to award Instructure's Canvas™ platform the contract to provide services to community colleges statewide.

Information Technology Services will continue to support the distance education mission, as they have in the past, by operating the LMS. This support includes integration of student information services and the learning management system, coordination with the Distance Education Department to provide appropriate web page links to services, and technical support to both students and faculty regarding access issues and general computer questions for using distance education software.

As distance education continues to expand, it represents an increasing portion of the College's overall FTES. As evidenced by recent faculty surveys, 66% of full time faculty and 72% of part time faculty support an increase in online education offerings. Online course offerings have wide appeal to CR students, and they have options as to where they can take these courses. Approximately 45% of students surveyed in fall 2013 reported that they were likely to take online courses from another college if CR doesn't offer the program they want. These results indicate a clear desire for students to receive online education to complete their programs.

Anticipated Effects and Benefits

College of the Redwoods anticipates significant positive effects from its work to deliver more than 50% of a program online. CR anticipates:

- Increasing district wide collaboration on degree, certificate and course development
- Increasing student interest in completing course and program work
- Increasing availability of courses needed for program completion
- Increasing access to coursework for students in remote areas of our district
- Increasing access for students with physical limitations and other disabilities
- Increasing availability of student support services through the college website
- Increasing access for students from communities outside our district
- Increasing interest among faculty to engage in and adopt new course delivery technology
- Increasing degree and certificate completion due to an expansion of sequential course availability

Planning Process for the Change

The District created a DE Advisory body in 2010, which has evolved into the Distance Education Planning Committee. The charge of the committee is:

“The Distance Education Department at College of the Redwoods is committed to serving students, and supporting faculty teaching, with high-quality, electronically-mediated, educational experiences using online, hybrid, TelePresence, and technology mediated classrooms.”

The planning committee met with representatives from key areas of the college ten times during the 2013-14 academic year to provide leadership to the institution regarding issues such as faculty certification of online instruction, instructional support and technology support. The planning committee also formed an LMS task force which led to the recommendation to pilot Canvas in the fall 2014. The committee continues to advise the leadership of distance education planning for the District, meeting twice monthly throughout the 2014-15 academic year.

Evidence of Analysis and Provision of Institutional Resources

Adequate and Accessible Student Support Services

CR has implemented practices to ensure that the same level of services and support are available for online and on-campus students. All students can access the following services through the CR website: Application for Admission; Class Schedule; College Catalog; Financial Aid Services including the online application for the Board of Governors Grant (e-BOGW); and the online course registration system.

CR’s Student Success and Support Program (SSSP) plan, which will be submitted to the Chancellor’s Office this fall 2014, outlines the College’s ongoing delivery of online orientation. This orientation delivers the same outcomes as face-to-face orientation, and includes the outcome that students demonstrate proficiency with CR technology tools including student email and online registration system, and the District’s online learning management system. The SSSP also provides various counseling, advising, and other educational planning services online, in person, individually and in group settings.

Other services available online to help students progress to their education goals include: career exploration and job search resources, transfer resources, articulation agreements, library resources and research assistance, and program evaluation or degree audit. Assistance from counselors and advisors is available for all aspects of the enrollment process via distance (phone and/or email). Special programs including EOPS, DSPS, CalWORKs, Veterans, and TRiO provide services delivered through group sessions, individual appointments, as well as online resources.

Due to fiscal limitations, the District no longer has a full-time advisor assigned to Distance Education; however, all counseling and advising staff have taken an integrated service approach to serving students more holistically. In addition, advisors are available by phone for those who are new to technology and/or need extra assistance to learn the technology to access services.

CR has an online application, registration and payment system used by all students. It also has an online book ordering and payment system through the campus bookstore. Students are provided online tutoring resources such as Khan Academy, OpenStudy, and Tutor.com.

Listed below are student services programs and a brief description of how they support the mission of distance education.

Admissions and Records: Prospective students can apply to the College using the online services available on the College's website. Students can also register and pay for classes using WebAdvisor accessible from the College's website. Admissions and Records, Counseling & Advising, and Special Programs also provide phone and email support for student inquiries regarding distance education courses.

Counseling and Advising Services: Students can get online information about the Counseling Center, Transfer Center, CalWorks, articulation, staff contact information and degree and transfer requirements. The complete college catalog is available online.

Career Development and Student Employment: Information is available online to assist students in their career planning. In addition, resources available at the Eureka campus are described. The Employment Center advertises District and regional job announcements.

Financial Aid: Website information is available regarding scholarship programs and services including downloadable forms and links. Staff contact information includes a financial aid services email address.

Health Services Center: Information about health services available on the Eureka campus are posted online.

Bookstore: The District contracts with Follett Higher Education Group to deliver bookstore services. A student can have their books shipped to a campus and/or site with no handling or mailing fees or shipped to their home. Book orders can be placed online or in person at the Eureka campus.

Disabled Students Programs and Services (DSPS): The DSPS website offers a description of its services, related publications, and web links to relevant information and a DSPS Student Online Orientation. DSPS staff inform DE instructors of students requiring accommodations and provide assistance and support to students and faculty alike. DSPS staff also consult with faculty to provide accessible courses in compliance with Federal, State, and Board of Trustees regulations. For example, specific instructions how to create accessible online documents and web pages are available to faculty online.

Library: The Library, located on the main Eureka campus, provides reference and instruction services by faculty reference librarians. A rich range of electronic, audio-visual, and print resources is available to support both on-site and distance curricula. Library resources are selected specifically to meet course and program needs. Computers are available in the Library for those DE students who use the Eureka campus or branch libraries at the Del Norte Education Center. All electronic or online library

resources are accessible from on- or off-campus, and most are mobile compatible and meet standards of accessibility for persons with disabilities. Online resources accessible from the library include: Britannica Online, CountryWatch, CQ Researcher, EBSCO Databases, NetLibrary E-Books Collection, NoodleTools, Science, and the Library Catalog. Information about these databases is available at (<http://www.redwoods.edu/eureka/library/onlinepbs.asp>), and there is a web page set up for integration with the Sakai and Canvas Learning Management Systems. Instructional and informational handouts are posted on the library web page providing guidelines to research, information competency skills, finding and using research resources, assessing the value of sources, and the correct use and formatting of citations in MLA and APA styles.

Academic Support Center: The Academic Support Center (ASC), located in the Learning Resource Center, provides proctored testing services for distance education courses. The Eureka campus ASC is equipped with group and individual testing rooms. In addition, there are computers dedicated for testing purposes. Similar services are available at the Del Norte, and Klamath/Trinity locations.

Online Classes Website: With a link to the CR homepage, the “online classes” website provides an introduction to online education. In addition there is a link for students to assess their online readiness. A schedule of online classes is available, which includes links to specific course information created by instructors. This website is managed by the DE Faculty Coordinator.

Ongoing Technology Assessment and Upgrades: The College began using Blackboard in 2003 and consistently committed funds both for licenses and training for faculty, as well as IT support of a single server installation. Based on the need for funding sustainability, the College changed to an open source Learning Managing System (LMS) named Sakai. Sakai was implemented in summer 2009 in a dual-server hosted environment. Due to subsequent problems with technical support and faculty dissatisfaction, as evidenced by surveys and direct faculty interaction, Sakai will be discontinued at the end of summer 2015. The College began offering Canvas in January 2015 for all sections (with instructors able to choose whether to use Sakai or Canvas), and will offer Canvas as the sole LMS for all sections beginning fall 2015.

Captioning Services: Federal, State, and Board of Trustees’ regulations require the captioning of all DE courses. These mandated services were made possible by continuous grants from the Distance Education Captioning and Transcription Grant administered by College of the Canyons.

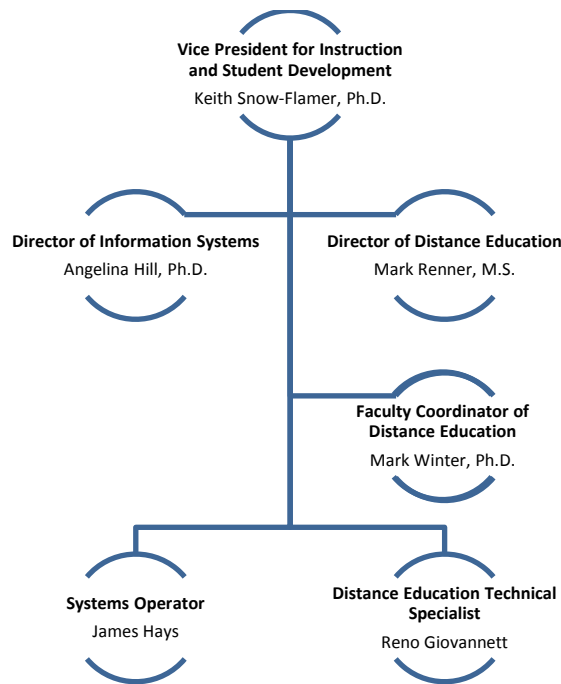
Sufficient and Qualified Faculty, Management, and Support Staff

Oversight of the DE program has been assigned to a full-time Director of Distance Education. This position co-chairs the DE Planning Committee along with a DE faculty coordinator. The DE Planning Committee is made up of a cross representation of District employees: the DE Director (co-chair), the DE Faculty Coordinator (co-chair), three faculty members, a student, the Instructional Technologist, an Information Systems Technologist, and the Director of Enrollment and Financial Aid Services. This group informs the other functional planning groups, as well as administration and the Academic Senate, of the resources and actions that need to take place to meet accreditation standards. The District committed additional resources to the Distance Education Program by hiring an Instructional Technologist to enhance course delivery and provide training resources to faculty and staff. This staffing structure will ensure that the required faculty selection and training process are effective and

well institutionalized. Each academic administrator has been provided a tutorial providing them necessary DE training. The academic administrators are responsible for enforcing the requirement that all faculty assigned to teach online courses are trained and certified to do so.

In addition to the personnel in the DE department, the Information Technology department provides technical support staff to administer the learning management system, provide integration between student information systems (Datatel) and the learning management system, and provide level one support for faculty and students with access and basic computer integration questions (Figure 7).

Figure 7
Distance Education & Information Systems Organization Chart



Physical Resources

In 2002 College of the Redwoods opened the 39,000-square-foot Learning Resource Center (LRC) which combines a traditional and electronic library with 140 general-use computers, a distance education classroom currently being updated to conduct interactive distance classes over the internet using Cisco TelePresence/SpeakerTrack to other College of the Redwoods campuses, an Academic Support Center, and a Writing Center. This facility provides a wide variety of tutorial and instructional support activities and media services to College of the Redwoods students and the surrounding communities. The LRC was conceived and designed to be a focal point of teaching and learning. This modern, integrated learning center enables the college to significantly enhance the learning opportunities it is committed to providing for the citizens of the North Coast. The Del Norte campus also has a Learning Resource Center with similar capabilities, though not as large as the Learning Resource Center on the Eureka campus. Their connection to the Eureka campus provides access to all resources.

In addition, each district instructional site contains at least one computer lab for site-based access to the Internet and an equipment loan program, managed by administrative staff at each location, for faculty and staff that can be used for training, workshop development, and conference attendance or presentations. This equipment includes check out of laptops, projectors, digital recorders, and digital cameras.

Technology Resources

All campuses and instructional sites have wide area network access to the College's central network and the College's Internet gateway. Students have web-based access to course registration, advising, and tutorials at each instructional site and anywhere they can access the Internet (e.g., home, local libraries, smart phones, Internet cafes, etc).

The Sakai/Canvas learning management systems are hosted remotely. These learning management systems provide secure and scalable hosting environments. Using the College's course delivery systems (Sakai/Canvas), faculty and students access courses anywhere there is internet access. Faculty and students can get assistance from a "help desk" staffed by IT personnel. IT personnel also staff and support Sakai/Canvas functions. IT hours are limited to Monday through Friday during normal business hours, although they provide emergency "on call" services for the College's web services including Sakai/Canvas.

The District recently implemented a voice over internet protocol (VOIP) using Cisco technology. This new technology has allowed CR to purchase and start installation on a number of Cisco Webex-Enabled Telepresence systems. Hardware for this system has been purchased for each campus location, and full implementation is scheduled to occur in time for fall 2015.

Administration and Governance

The Distance Education Program has administrative oversight and management. A Director of Distance Education oversees general operations, including contracts, budgeting, personnel, and maintenance of all related support structures. The Director reports to and coordinates extensively with the Vice President of Instruction and Student Development. The Director interfaces regularly with the Academic Senate and its committees. All technology matters are handled jointly by the Office of Instruction and Student Development and the Information Systems Department which is directed by the Director of Institutional Effectiveness under the supervision of the President. Both the Director of Distance Education and Distance Education Faculty Coordinator have a variety of participatory roles in distance education governance matters pertaining to the District, the Board of Trustees, the DE Planning Committee, and various faculty governance committees.

Personnel Resources

College of the Redwoods has made a serious institutional commitment to distance education as demonstrated through the organizational structure that supports administration, training and technical support. Distance education is under the authority of the Vice President of Instruction and Student Development. A total of 2.5 full time equivalent staff have been permanently assigned to the Distance Education Office. This includes 1.0 FTE DE Director, 0.5 FTE faculty DE Coordinator, and a 1.0 FTE Instructional Technologist. This comprehensive staffing structure ensures that the required faculty selection and training process are effective and well institutionalized. Each Division Dean has been provided a tutorial providing them necessary DE training. . The Division Deans will be responsible for enforcing the requirement that all faculty assigned to teach online courses be trained and certified to do so.

Hiring of Quality Faculty

The College maintains the same employment requirements when hiring faculty teaching distance education courses as for faculty teaching face-to-face at on-campus sites. All full-time faculty hires are approved by the Board of Trustees. Associate faculty must meet the minimum qualifications in their respective disciplines. Associate faculty hiring decisions are made by the Division Deans in accordance with HR hiring policies, and following faculty contract guidelines. Faculty office hours can be on-site or online using information technology tools such as real-time chat or web conferencing tools like CCCConfer and Cisco WebEx.

All online instructors are expected to meet minimum standards for teaching online (see Appendix B). Faculty certification for online instruction will be monitored by the appropriate Division Dean with the assistance of the DE Director and Faculty Coordinator.

The student evaluation form is the same for online classes as for face-to-face classes. AP 4105, Distance Education, requires that instructors teaching online classes shall be systematically evaluated using criteria applied to all classes, in addition to criteria specific to online instruction. Through the District contract negotiation process, an online version of the student evaluation tool for instructors was developed and members of the evaluation committee are given access to online classes to conduct peer evaluations.

Feedback on the effectiveness of online instruction is communicated to Division Deans. In rare cases where there are technology limitations or issues with instructor communication or feedback, students are asked to inform their instructor. Issues that are not resolved at the department level are brought to the attention of the Division Dean. Deans work with the instructor and support staff, if necessary, to resolve student concerns. If the student concerns are still not resolved, there is a formal grievance process that moves from the Dean to the Vice President of Instruction and Student Development. This process is identical for problems encountered in on-campus classes.

Professional Development for Faculty and Staff

Faculty training for online delivery is an integrated part of the Innovation and Development Center. Faculty development in appropriate pedagogy and technology use is available through the @ONE Chancellor's Office project which provides online and hands-on training in distance education pedagogy. Technical development and assistance has been provided through College of the Redwoods IT department.

Faculty development has been substantially enhanced to include these previous methods along with additional on campus training, online training and tutorials focused on best-practices and the College's DE policies and procedures, ongoing micro-training opportunities around specific topics of best practices and new technology options, as well as one-on-one training opportunities during course design and development. Faculty at district campuses and sites outside of Eureka also have access to all these same opportunities through online courses, interactive video training via Cisco Telepresence, and WebEx-enabled web-conferencing.

For self-paced learning, both faculty and staff have access to video and web-conference recorded trainings, web-based tutorials, frequently asked questions, and text-based help files. These are generated and/or updated every semester as new needs are identified or changes in the learning management system are implemented.

Sustainable fiscal resources

An operational budget was first established for CR's DE program in 2009-2010. The budget is currently defined to meet anticipated expenses in each subsequent year through 2015-2016 as part of our long term institutional financial planning. Included in the DE Program budget are the costs of Sakai hosting, Canvas hosting, DE Program staff salary, salaries of faculty reassigned to support the Distance Education Program, Administrative cost to oversee the DE Program, local professional development expenses for faculty and staff, office expenses, DE computer and software additions and upgrades. A small portion of the faculty development budget was established for small scale software and hardware purchases that will enhance their ability to develop and deliver quality online courses.

Personnel costs associated with benefits and overhead of DE Staff, salaries and overhead of Information Technology Division support, student services support and Library support for the distance delivery all fall within the institutional budget for salaries and equipment related to general district-wide program administration.

Budget analysis

Recent investment in online delivery will allow College of the Redwoods to expand degree offerings and transfer degree capabilities to a larger market throughout the region. The DE program will help provide revenue for increasing the number of quality courses, student services, and degrees and certificates available to students in the district and region. This increase in offerings and availability of offerings will significantly bolster enrollment allow the district to more consistently meet current enrollment targets and apportionment generated funding levels.

Responsiveness to current and potential industry is essential in meeting the educational needs of the community. College of the Redwoods has analyzed economic data for the North Coast and participated in surveys and committees which identified key targets of opportunity for employment both now and in the future. The ability to meet the needs of the community will require extensive development of online delivery options. This delivery methodology not only provides access to a significantly wider population, but it also provides important skill building in the use of technology and how to be a life-long learner in our knowledge economy that is critical to the types of positions that are most likely to provide family wage jobs and longer term stability in the North Coast region.

Upgrade of equipment and software is a part of the regular budgeting process. This includes the ability to keep current with computer technology and to have an environment which tests new technologies and, based on faculty and staff input, provides for appropriate distribution of development software to take advantage of those technologies for the enhancement of quality in course development and delivery. Decisions and ongoing budgeting for upgrades are part of the Integrated Planning Process which includes program review requests from instruction, long term technology planning from the Technology Planning Committee, prioritization of technology requests from the Technology Planning Committee, budget prioritization and allocation from the Budget Planning Committee, and approval or rejection by the Board of Trustees in the final budget approval process.

Plan for Monitoring Achievement of Outcomes

The District currently evaluates student learning outcomes across all instructional modalities. Student learning outcomes (SLOs) in all courses are formally assessed within a two year assessment cycle. The assessment report contains a mechanism for faculty to indicate the specific mode of instruction for the assessment results reported. Instructors indicate the extent to which students exceed, meet, or fail to meet expectations for each outcome. These results are stored in a database from which reports are generated comparing student achievement of outcomes across learning modalities. A recent review of student achievement showed that students were achieving the outcomes at a similar rate in distance education courses compared to face-to-face courses.

The institution holds assessment dialogue sessions each year so that faculty can review achievement of learning outcomes and devise plans for improving performance in the future. The assessment committee held a dialogue session during spring 2014 to collectively review performance in DE compared to other modalities.

Success and retention rates were reviewed last year in several discussion venues. A comparison of achievement in DE courses vs. non-DE courses was reviewed by the Enrollment Management

Committee, and presented to the District as part of an institutional planning discussion at convocation (Appendix C). Just as it is state-wide, success and retention is lower in DE courses at CR compared to face-to-face courses at CR. Many of the initiatives to develop a Distance Education Program in support of students taking DE courses will address this trend seen across the state.

Outcomes achievement in DE courses is also evaluated as part of the program review process. The program review dataset developed for each instructional area contains achievement data (success and retention by equity group) that is disaggregated by location (Appendix D). The virtual campus is included as a location and consists of performance in all distance education courses, which can be compared to performance in face-to-face courses at the various physical campus locations.

Evaluation, Assessment, and Plans to Increase Student Success, Retention, and Completion

Distance education planning, including assessments of needs and resources, rises from two areas in the current structure: 1) from faculty who see a need and have a desire to offer more distance education options in their discipline; and 2) from the Distance Education Department which tries to identify programs and certificate programs that seem to be popular and are most frequently requested by students to be fully online.

Planning related to distance education is also within the purview of several participatory governance committees, and is analyzed annually through the program review process. The Distance Education Planning Committee is responsible for identifying program and support needs for students, faculty and staff. The Instructional Council is primarily responsible for determining program level needs and identifying the numbers of sections offered in which disciplines, locations, and modalities across the District. The Technology Planning Committee (TPC) is responsible for updating the three-year Technology Plan, providing the technology infrastructure for the College in support of instruction and student services. The TPC has been involved in planning College of the Redwoods' distance education technology, equipment, and infrastructure needs, including development of and improvements to the College's website and District faculty and student resources. Finally, college resource allocation is overseen by the Budget Planning Committee. This participatory governance committee coordinates planning and budget allocation for the College, and is tasked with allocating resources in support of distance education.

Internal and External Approvals

College of the Redwoods adheres to all required internal and external regulations, and approval processes as required by the College's Board of Trustees, shared governance bodies of the College, Title 5, Ed Code and ACCJC. This includes State and Federal laws and policies, CR Board policies and administrative procedures related to course and programs development and delivery.

College of the Redwoods adheres to internal policies and procedures for all instructional delivery regardless of delivery method.

Approval Processes and Compliance with Policies and Regulations

To be approved for delivery, all course curriculum, including all DE course curriculum, must be

reviewed through the 5-year curriculum review process pursuant to Title 5, section 55201. After courses are approved by the department/division, the College Curriculum Committee reviews each proposed and existing course offered through DE separately in accordance with the provision of Title 5, sections 55002, 55200, 55202, 55204, and 55206.

Per Administrative Procedure 4105 Distance Education (Appendix E), each section of a course delivered through distance education shall include regular effective contact between instructor and student. The College requires that the instructor responsible for course development and Curriculum Committee approval define “regular effective contact” through the DE Addendum; Title 5, Section 55206 requires that each proposed or existing course, if delivered by DE, shall be separately reviewed and approved according to a District’s course approval process. The College has a local policy for regular effective contact (Appendix F).

Documentation of Contact Hours in Distance Education Courses

The Redwoods Community College District has codified the guidelines on contact hours and credit awarded in the College’s operational procedures. An amount of work represented in the intended learning outcomes and verified by evidence of student achievement that reasonably approximates not less than one hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction and a minimum of two hours of out-of-class student work each week for approximately fifteen weeks for one semester hour of credit, or the equivalent amount of work over a different amount of time.

For asynchronous online courses, where no classroom instruction takes place per se, the assignment of credit hour is based on the equivalent amount of work as represented by the definition above. An existing face-to-face course may be taught in an online format for the same credit hours provided the amount of work expected remains the same per Title 5 section 58003.1(b). For asynchronous online courses, contact hours are defined as the credit units awarded for the course, as stated in Title 5 section 58003.1(f)(1).

Instructors are asked when they develop an online course outline approval form, to describe what students in the course may do in a typical week, what the nature and frequency of instructor to student interaction will be and the nature and frequency of student-to-student interactions. The online course approval form asks specifically how the course design will ensure regular effective contact by means of activities such as discussion forums, weekly announcements, and instructor-prepared materials.

Student Authentication

Administrative Procedure 4105 states that the Chief Instruction Officer (CIO) shall authorize one or more methods to authenticate or verify the student’s identity approved by Federal regulation. For the Redwoods Community College District (RCCD), authentication uses secure credentialing/login and password within applicable course management systems, which is specifically referenced in the federal regulation as an appropriate and accepted procedure for verifying a student’s identity. The importance of authentication is stressed throughout faculty professional development training programs. Technical strategies for authentication is an area that the Distance Education Committee has been reviewing by examining tools offered by a number of vendors to determine their feasibility and potential for verifying student identity in distance education. Another strategy, explicitly described in Administrative Procedure 4105, is proctoring; the DE Planning Committee has

operationalized a systematic proctoring methodology aimed at providing both positive authentication as well as avoidance of student cheating.

All students who are enrolled in distance education courses at College of the Redwoods are issued a username and password for secure access to Sakai/Canvas. The username and password are generated from the student information system registration rosters and are unique to each student. Access to the user database for assisting students with login issues is restricted to several key staff members of the distance education department and to the Information Technology Helpdesk personnel.

Until a tested and proven secure authentication system beyond username and password is identified, the Distance Education Department promulgates practices that discourage academic dishonesty such as plagiarism, unpermitted collaboration, unauthorized help, impersonation and cheating among online students. At present, the District is confident that AP 4105, DE Course Proposal Form, Substantive Change Proposal Form for Degrees and Certificates with 50% or more of the courses as DE, Regular Effective Contact Policy, and Proctoring Policy will mitigate student authentication issues.

Evidence of Meeting June 2014 Eligibility Requirements

1. Authority

College of the Redwoods' authority to operate as a degree granting institution is the accreditation by the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges, an institutional accreditation body recognized by the Commission on Recognition of Postsecondary Accreditation and the United States Department of Education. This authority is noted in the College Catalog and on the college website.

2. Operational Status

The College is in full and continuous operation. Students are actively pursuing the degree programs offered by the institution. Courses have been offered using the online modality on a continuous basis since 2006. Students are enrolled in a variety of courses that lead to two-year degrees, certificates of proficiency, specializations, skills certificates, transfer degrees, and community education courses.

3. Degrees

The majority of College of the Redwoods' offerings are in programs that lead to degrees as described in the College of the Redwoods' Catalog. All degree opportunities, certificate programs, transfer courses, and community education programs are clearly identified in the college catalog and reiterated in the schedule of classes each term.

4. Chief Executive Officer

Kathryn G. Smith is the President/Superintendent of the Redwoods Community College District, and the College's chief executive officer. Her primary responsibility is to the institution. She is very committed to the long term commitment to increasing student access through online course delivery.

5. Financial Accountability

The College is audited on an annual basis by an independent audit firm. The firm is selected by evaluating the scope of their experience, the size of the firm and their ability to provide backup personnel and a wide range of expertise. References are carefully evaluated. The audit firms employ *Audits of Colleges and Universities*, published by the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants. The Board of Trustees reviews the audit findings, exceptions, letter to management, and any recommendations made by the contracted audit firm.

6. Mission

The mission statement of College of the Redwoods was evaluated and revised by a task force consisting of faculty, administrators, and representatives from external stakeholders during the 2008 accreditation process and approved by the Board of Trustees. The mission statement may be found on the College of the Redwoods website, in the college catalog, in the Strategic Plan, and is one of the elements in the Education Master Plan. The mission statement is reviewed every five years as part of the integrated planning process. The Distance Education Program is well aligned with the College's mission.

7. Governing Board

College of the Redwoods is governed by the Board of Trustees, which consists of eight area representatives. The area representatives are divided into geographical districts which encompass 10,000 square miles, including all of Del Norte and Humboldt counties, and the residents of coastal Mendocino. In addition the Board has one non-voting student trustee member who is seated with the Board and recognized as a full member of the Board at meetings. The student member is entitled to participate in discussion of issues and receive all materials presented to members of the Board (except for closed session).

Trustees are elected to the Governing Board by qualifying voters in their area. They are elected for four-year terms commencing on the first Friday in December following the election (BP 2100). The terms of trustees are staggered so that, as nearly as practical, one half of the trustees shall be elected at each trustee election. The student trustee serves a term of one year (BP 2105) and is elected by a plurality vote of those voting in a regular election of the student body (AP 2105).

The Governing Board holds monthly meetings open to the public with notices and agendas widely posted in advance. The agenda contains an oral comments section for community comment. The College Administration, Academic Senate, Faculty and Classified Unions, and Management Council provide reports to the Board on a regular basis.

8. Administrative Capacity

College of the Redwoods is staffed by a sufficient number of administrators to provide the services necessary to support the College's mission and purposes. Administrators are selected competitively and all possess the appropriate preparation, qualifications, and experience to fulfill their roles. In addition, this distance education proposal is supported by administrative and support staff under the Vice President of Instruction and Student Development, as well as the President/Superintendent of the College.

9. Educational Programs

College of the Redwoods' educational programs are consistent with its mission, are based on recognized fields of study, are of sufficient content and length and maintain appropriate levels of quality and rigor for the degrees and programs offered. Basic skills programs in reading, writing and math help students develop the proficiencies necessary to advance to college-level curricula or to qualify for entry-level employment. Those with limited English proficiency may enroll in ESL courses. All programs are developed based on needs assessments and recommendations from discipline experts and input from industry advisory committees and transfer institutions. Students are required to show evidence of identified achievement outcomes to complete degrees and certificates. The College's degree programs are a minimum of 60 units and are two years in length. The availability of programs via distance education modalities will greatly enhance educational opportunities for CR students.

College of the Redwoods has 28 academic programs, run through 43 departments that lead to degrees and certificates. These departments offer seven AA degrees, 32 AS degrees, and ADT degrees. In addition, 56 certificate programs are offered including both certificates of achievement and certificates of completion. Data for the number of degrees and certificates awarded over the past five years is available at the College of the Redwoods Institutional Research web site:

<http://redwoods.edu/District/IR/Reports.asp> .

10. Academic Credit

Academic credit is based on Title 5 – 55002.5 of the California Administrative Code.

11. Student Learning and Student Achievement

College of the Redwoods defines and publishes course learning outcomes in the course outline of record, in the course syllabus, in the college catalog, in occupational brochures, and in instructional planning documents that are reviewed and updated annually. The college catalog, available both online and in printed form through the bookstore, defines expected student learning and achievement outcomes. The catalog includes course and program prerequisites, course numbers, names, and units, as well as descriptive course and program information.

Student achievement data is tracked and published on the District's Institutional Research website. Program Review includes an assessment of students' achievement of outcomes. Student learning and achievement are developed and assessed using the same criteria for online and on-campus classes.

12. General Education

General education courses have the required breadth to promote intellectual inquiry. These courses include demonstrated competence in writing and computational skills and serve as an introduction to major areas of knowledge (Title 5 – 55806). The quality and rigor of these courses is consistent with the academic standards appropriate to higher education. The general education component of programs is consistent with statewide standards.

College of the Redwoods has defined consistent learning outcomes for students who complete general education courses that are consistent with levels of quality and rigor appropriate to higher education. Expectations for quality and rigor are consistent regardless of delivery modality.

13. Academic Freedom

The College’s Board of Trustees has adopted Board Policy (BP) 4030 Academic Freedom that is included in the faculty handbook and states in conclusion:

“It is the responsibility of the Redwoods Community College District to provide an institutional environment that encourages academic freedom and instills respect and commitment to the obligations required to maintain these freedoms.”

A philosophy statement of the District’s commitment to academic freedom is also included in the college catalog with includes language declaring:

“We will continuously seek and support a dedicated, highly qualified staff that is diverse in terms of cultural background, ethnicity, and intellectual perspective and that is committed to fostering a climate of academic freedom and collegiality. We will encourage and reward professional development for all staff and will all share in the responsibility for student outcomes.”

14. Faculty

College of the Redwoods has 76 full-time faculty and approximately 250 adjunct instructors. The names, degrees, and years of employment of full-time faculty are listed in the college catalog. The faculty serves approximately 9,000 students by providing them with quality programs in transfer and occupational education and in the mastery of basic skills and English as a second language. Faculty responsibilities are stated in the College of the Redwoods Faculty Handbook and in the contract between the Redwoods Community College District and the College of the Redwoods Faculty Organization (CRFO).

15. Student Support Services

College of the Redwoods provides appropriate services to students and develops programs that meet the educational support needs of its diverse student population. The College provides services in the following areas: Academic Support Center, Admissions and Records, child care services, counseling and advising, course articulation, Financial Aid, Transcripts, Graduation Evaluation, Student Health Center and Services, Learning Resource Center, Scholarship Office, orientation, and Campus Security. Special Programs include: CalWorks, California Student Opportunities and Access Programs (Cal SOAP), Cooperative Agencies Resources for Education (CARE), Disabled Students Programs and Services (DSPS), Extended Opportunities Programs and Services (EOPS), Honors Program, International Students Information, the Transfer Center, and the Veterans Program.

16. Admissions

The College’s admissions policies are consistent with its mission and conform to parameters outlined in State law and college regulations. They are published in the college catalog, the schedule of classes, and on the College of the Redwoods website. To enroll at College of the Redwoods, a student must satisfy the published requirements.

17. Information and Learning Support Services

College of the Redwoods provides specific long-term access to information and learning resources and services to support its educational mission. These resources and services are provided for and delivered by many different divisions, departments, and centers, but in general they primarily are the responsibility of the Library and Learning Resource Center as identified earlier in this proposal.

The financial resources of College of the Redwoods are sufficient to support student learning programs and services and to improve institutional effectiveness. Fiscal planning takes place at the College and is evaluated and modified as appropriate. Financial resources support the mission and provide financial stability. Financial resources dedicated to online learning have been allocated to meet the needs of students who elect to learn through distance education throughout the 10,000 square mile rural district.

18. Financial Resources

Most of the financial resources of the College come from the State of California. Additional funding is obtained from Federal, State, and private grant sources. All funds coming to the College are carefully tracked and documented. The College maintains adequate reserve levels for contingencies. The College maintains conservative financial management policies and practices that ensure continued fiscal stability for the foreseeable future.

19. Institutional Planning and Evaluation

The 2012-2017 Strategic Plan and the Education Master Plan demonstrate the wide-ranging basic planning for the development of the College, as does the recently approved 2014-2015 DE Annual Plan. The results of goals, strategies and outcomes of the Education Master Plan are reviewed on an annual basis. The Education Master Plan is considered a living document that provides a foundation for decision-making, new program development, and may change to accommodate new information, stakeholder needs, and technology access.

College of the Redwoods' integrated process of planning, program review, assessment, budget development and resource allocation consists of:

- Regular review of the philosophy, mission statement, and institutional priorities.
- Creation and evaluation of the institution's annual plan
- Regular review of the criteria for faculty and classified staff hiring.
- Prioritizing requests for instructional equipment over \$500.
- Prioritizing requests for facilities improvement, infrastructure, and maintenance.
- Annual review of student learning outcomes as part of department program review and planning processes.
- Participating in the development of a district strategic plan and incorporating it into College of the Redwoods' planning process.
- Recommending spending and hiring priorities for all departments in instruction, all departments in student services, and all departments in administrative services.
- Completing the budget development process.
- Self-evaluating the planning, program review, assessment, and resource allocation process.

A variety of data sources are used to inform this process. The College of the Redwoods' Institutional Research Office provides useful information related to program review and planning, including survey results; comprehensive reports of student demographics and academic progress; data relating to access such as course availability and prerequisite eligibility; and data relating to success such as student

retention, persistence, graduation, and transfer rates. The College also generates its own data through the program review and student learning outcome assessment cycles, in which programs, including student services and administrative services programs, are regularly assessed.

Budget data is provided by the College's Administrative Services Division, and includes an annual review of the College's current and expected budget, grants and contracts, and prospective funding sources. College of the Redwoods' institutional effectiveness is regularly evaluated through a series of satisfaction surveys which solicit student, faculty, and staff feedback and through the collection and analysis of data on student demographics, success, persistence, degrees, certificates, and transfer. The data is incorporated into the College's planning processes, including program review. The institutional effectiveness data and longitudinal student outcomes data is published on the district research website and is accessible to the public.

In addition to following the same evaluation requirements of all programs, the Distance Education Department will collect ongoing data on degrees and certificates that can be obtained in an online format including:

- Number of degrees earned annually.
- Number of courses online annually.
- A full review of enrollment and student achievement data for DE courses.
- Review and assessment of baseline data versus percentage increase each year.
- Access numbers and time on task while using a variety of student assistance resources, such as help pages, orientation resources, and tutoring services.

20. Integrity in Communication with the Public

The mission statement of the College is clearly articulated in the College of the Redwoods catalog, on the website, and in both the Strategic Plan and Education Master Plan. The college catalog, the district schedule of classes, and the distance education web site within the College web site provides the public with current information on degrees and curricular offerings, student fees, financial aid, refund policies, admissions policies, transfer requirements, hours of operation and appropriate contact information such as phone numbers and specific web pages where needed. The College also provides information and reminders about various activities, such as school performances, or important deadlines such as late registration and financial aid, by mail and email. The College works with the local media to ensure publication of important dates and activities of interest in various community and media calendars. The names and academic preparation of the faculty and administration are listed in the back of the college catalog. The names of the Board of Trustees members are also listed in the catalog. An effort to provide faculty and staff webpages with public information as to responsibilities and preparation is underway.

21. Integrity in Relations with the Accrediting Commission

The Board of Trustees of College of the Redwoods provides assurance that the College adheres to the eligibility requirements and accreditation standards and policies of the Commission in its policies and actions and in its validation of the Self-Study.

Evidence of meeting June 2014 Accreditation Standards

The college will hold all programs, courses, and all operations related to distance education to the same standards and requirements as those for on-campus face-to-face classes.

Standard I: Mission, Academic Quality and Institutional Effectiveness, and Integrity

A. Mission:

The Board approved mission statement, which guides College of the Redwoods, will equally apply to the Distance Education Program and all DE students. The College has established a distance education program aligned with the broad based purpose of the mission in meeting the needs of our students. The Distance Education Program aligns with the college mission by further emphasizing the commitment of putting students first and providing outstanding developmental, career and technical, and transfer education that is specific to the needs of the greater student population.

B. Assuring Academic Quality and Institutional Effectiveness

In the conscious effort to support student learning, College of the Redwoods has established and maintains a comprehensive institutional planning model that supports annual assessment and dialogue at the course, program, division, and institutional levels. This process allows a comprehensive look annually at those areas related to planning, program delivery and student achievement that are in need of improvement. The Distance Education Program will be integrated into this planning and assessment process to ensure an accurate review of program function and effectiveness.

The Distance Education Program will vastly improve our institutional effectiveness by providing enhanced course, program, and student service access to students unable to physically be on our campuses. The comprehensive planning and development of our Distance Education Programs is consistent with and addresses our goals related to assuring academic quality and institutional effectiveness.

C. Institutional Integrity

Complying with all of the Eligibility Requirements as set forth by the accreditor, College of the Redwoods provides clear, accurate, precise and consistent information to the public about the College's mission, learning outcomes, educational programs and student services in its college catalog and on the college's website. The College of the Redwoods catalog and website describe the degrees and certificates in terms of the expected learning outcomes, purpose, content and course requirements. The College adheres to the accreditor's requirements for public disclosure, institutional reporting and prior approval of substantive changes.

Standard II: Student Learning Programs and Support Services

All programs proposed to be offered through the distance education mode are already offered through the traditional on-campus mode of instruction. There are no differences in the general education, major, or graduation requirements between the distance education and on-campus versions of the programs. This Substantial Change Proposal is intended to address the mode of delivery of already existing instructional programs. In addition, CR has procedures in place to ensure that the rigor, breadth, objectives, learning outcomes, and academic quality of courses and programs offered in the distance education mode meet the same standards of those offered in the traditional on-campus mode.

Specifically, in accordance with California Code of Regulations (Title 5), the CR Curriculum Committee separately reviews and approves each course proposed for delivery via the distance education mode to ensure the following criteria are met (See Appendix E and F).

- Regular effective contact (regular and substantive interactions) is maintained between the instructor and students through online or in person group or individual meetings, orientation and review sessions, study sessions, threaded discussions, live chats, web conferencing, telephone contact, email, or other activities.
- Effective pedagogical techniques appropriate to the distance education mode are used to ensure the quality and rigor of instruction mirrors that of the on-campus version of the course.
- Appropriate technology is used to achieve the Student Learning Outcomes/objectives of the course.
- Multiple measures are used to achieve and assess student learning, including reading, writing, and critical thinking assignments along with objective testing.
- All delivery methods used are accessible to individuals with disabilities in accordance with state and federal law.

A. Instructional Programs

College of the Redwoods offers high quality instructional programs, student services, and access to learning resources that meet the needs of our student population regardless of delivery modality of course location. The College will continue to offer high-quality instructional courses and programs via distance education with the primary purpose of leading to AA/As degrees, transfer degrees, or to improve access to occupational courses. Courses will adhere to the established course approval process specific to DE courses, and adhere to the course outlines for use throughout the District, with imbedded student learning outcomes that mirror those in the curriculum taught in campus-based courses. All courses will be taught with the most appropriate pedagogy for the respective curriculum of each course and with the use of state-of-the-art instructional technology. All sections will adhere to the appropriate depth and rigor of those taught throughout the district and will be scheduled in timeframes appropriate to the subject matter. The assessment of SLOs and PLOs for courses that are delivered via DE will be included in the established assessment reporting and dialogue process currently employed district wide.

Online faculty also follow additional measures to ensure high-quality instruction:

- All faculty include a statement about academic integrity in their course syllabi.
- Student assignments are checked for plagiarism and for cheating through the TurnItIn tool integrated within the learning management systems.
- All faculty require some type of written work from the student (e.g., papers, online discussions, exam essay questions).

- The majority of faculty use a variety of assessments (e.g., quizzes, projects, portfolios, group work).
- Information (such as specific instruction on how to cite sources) is included in most courses requiring written papers so as to help students avoid academic dishonesty (e.g. plagiarism).
- High stakes exams (i.e., midterms and finals) can have a time limit set. In addition, faculty may choose to randomize the quiz or exam questions so that no two students receive the same set of questions.
- Some instructors choose to administer proctored exams at an instructional site or an arranged exam site (e.g., military facility, church, K-12 school) to ensure positive student authentication. The Distance Ed Planning Committee developed a systematic proctoring methodology, and the Distance Education staff help online faculty establish proctoring for such exams.
- Many instructors require multi-part projects or progressive submissions of in-process work. This allows the instructor to recognize student’s work through trends and writing styles.
- Some instructors engage their class in peer reviews of essays, including asking students to explain their work in the online class discussions.

These strategies for promoting academic integrity and student verification reflect those reported in “Best Practice Strategies to Promote Academic Integrity in Online Education, Version 2.0, June 2009, <http://www.wiche.edu/pub/13441>

In accordance with California Code of Regulations (Title 5), all courses and programs, regardless of delivery method, are approved by the College of the Redwoods Curriculum Committee prior to submission to the Board of Trustees and the California Community Colleges Chancellor’s Office. These bodies ensure that all courses and programs are appropriate to the mission of College of the Redwoods; serve a demonstrable student need; meet quality standards, are feasible to offer with the College’s resources; and are compliant with all applicable laws and regulations. The Curriculum Review Committee process is faculty driven in that each course must be sponsored by faculty and approved by Division Deans and a faculty DE expert appointed by the Curriculum Committee. The Division Dean must approve all requests for courses to be delivered in a distance modality before going before the Curriculum Committee for review. Members of the community are also welcome to attend and comment on pending curricular decisions at all meetings.

The Curriculum Committee is also responsible for separately approving each course proposed for delivery via the distance education mode. This approval is contingent on the demonstration of high quality standards for each distance education course, as described in Section B above. Documentation of approval for each course, program, and distance education delivery method is available upon request.

The maintenance of quality for courses is the responsibility of the faculty, whether delivered on-campus or via distance education. Courses and programs are reviewed for currency and updated by faculty on a regular basis (at least every two years for career technical courses and programs and six years for other courses and programs). Courses and programs are also assessed by faculty as part of

the Student Learning Outcome Assessment Cycle and Program Review. Quality standards for courses offered through distance education are further scrutinized by the Curriculum Review Committee to ensure that course standards are met in the areas of accessibility, regular effective interaction between the instructor and students, multiple measures of evaluation, appropriate use of technology, and sound pedagogy. Finally, the faculty evaluation process provides for student and peer evaluation of faculty performance for all courses regardless of delivery method.

The College provides sufficient security to protect student online accounts and personally identifiable information. The technology used is state-of-the-art and the College maintains the hardware and software in support of high quality instruction. The technology infrastructure is sound and will be maintained through systematic review and upgrades as necessary.

B. Library and Learning Support Services

The College makes a strong commitment to providing all students adequate and equal access to learning resources. We employ a full time Faculty Librarian / Library Director, and five part-time professional reference librarians. All of the departments within the Learning Resource Center, including library, testing, tutoring and others, participate in assessment of student learning outcomes and the annual program review process, as well as other college-wide planning initiatives and activities.

C. Student Support Services

The student support services for DE students provides students access to the College, guidance in the admissions and registration process, financial aid advice and assistance, orientation to the College, and individual academic counseling, including the development of an individual educational plan, and access to the student complaint process. The students will access online library resources via the Internet. Student Support Services participates in the annual program review process to further ensure that student needs are being met and adequate resources are allocated to support student needs regardless of location,

Standard III: Resources

Human Resources

As described previously, the College has 2.5 full-time personnel dedicated to administration and support of the Distance Education mission: a Director of Distance Education, a Faculty DE Coordinator, and an IT multimedia support person. This team coordinates the DE technology facilities, interfaces with academic and administrative departments, liaisons with Academic Senate and its committees, provides faculty and staff development through online and classroom-based trainings, develops and maintains online tutorials and help systems, and provides the technical support for creation and uploading of complex learning objects to enhance courses and student engagement. One classified staff member will provide clerical and organizational support to both DE and adjunct instructors Monday through Friday, 8 hours per day.

In addition to the personnel in the DE department, the Information Technology department provides technical support staff to administer the learning management system, provide integration between

student information systems (Datatel) and the learning management system, and provide level one support for faculty and students with access and basic computer integration questions.

Physical Resources

In 2002 College of the Redwoods opened the 39,000-square-foot Learning Resource Center (LRC) which combines a traditional and electronic library with 140 general-use computers, an Academic Support Center, and a Writing Center for students served by the College's Disabled Students Programs and Services. This facility provides a wide variety of tutorial and instructional support activities and media services to College of the Redwoods students and the surrounding communities. The LRC was conceived and designed to be a focal point of teaching and learning. This modern, integrated learning center enables the College to significantly enhance the learning opportunities it is committed to providing for the citizens of the North Coast. The Del Norte satellite campus also has Learning Resource Centers with similar capabilities, though not as large. Their connection to the main campus provides access to all resources.

In addition, each district instructional site contains at least one computer lab for site-based access to the Internet and an equipment loan program, managed by administrative staff at each location, for faculty and staff that can be used for training, workshop development, and conference attendance or presentations. This equipment includes check out of laptops, projectors, digital recorders, and digital cameras.

Technology Resources

All campuses and instructional sites have wide area network access to the College's central network and the College's Internet gateway. Students have web-based access to course registration, advising, and tutorials at each instructional site and anywhere they can access the Internet (e.g., home, local libraries, smart phones, Internet cafes, etc.)

The Sakai and Canvas learning management systems are hosted remotely. These agreements provide reliable, secure, and scalable hosting environments.

Online course delivery is relatively decentralized with support from a faculty Distance Education Coordinator. Using the College's course delivery systems (Sakai/Canvas), faculty and students can be located anywhere there is internet access. Faculty and students can get assistance from a "help desk" staffed by ITS personnel. ITS personnel also staff and support Sakai functions. ITS hours are limited to Monday through Friday during normal business hours, although they provide emergency "on call" services for the College's web services including Sakai.

Financial Resources

An operational budget was first established for CR's DE program in 2009-2010. The budget is currently defined to meet anticipated expenses in each subsequent year through 2015-2016 as part of our long term institutional financial planning. Included in the DE program budget are the costs of Sakai hosting, Canvas Pilot hosting, DE Program staff salary, salaries of faculty reassigned to support the Distance Education Program, Administrative cost to oversee the DE Program, local professional development expenses for faculty and staff, office expenses, DE computer and software additions and upgrades. A small portion of the faculty development budget was established for small scale software and hardware purchases that will enhance their ability to develop and deliver quality online courses.

Personnel costs associated with benefits and overhead of DE Staff, salaries and overhead of Information Technology Division support, student services support and Library support for the distance delivery all fall within the institutional budget for salaries and equipment related to general district-wide program administration.

Recent investment in online delivery will allow College of the Redwoods to expand degree offerings and transfer degree capabilities to a larger market throughout the region. The DE program will help provide revenue for increasing the number of quality courses, student services, and degrees and certificates available to students in the district and region. This increase in offerings and availability of offerings will significantly bolster enrollment allow the district to more consistently meet current enrollment targets and apportionment generated funding levels.

Upgrade of equipment and software is a part of the regular budgeting process. This includes the ability to keep current with computer technology and to have an environment which tests new technologies and, based on faculty and staff input, provides for appropriate distribution of development software to take advantage of those technologies for the enhancement of quality in course development and delivery. Decisions and ongoing budgeting for upgrades are part of the Integrated Planning Process which includes program review requests from instruction, long term technology planning from the Technology Planning Committee, prioritization of technology requests from the Technology Planning Committee, budget prioritization and allocation from the Budget Planning Committee, and approval or rejection by the Board of Trustees in the final budget approval process.

Standard IV: Leadership and Governance

A. Decision-Making Roles and Processes

The Distance Education Program is part of the responsibility of the Vice President of Instruction and Student Development and has adequate staffing and oversight during to operate at an effective level to meet student needs. The College has identified the Director of Distance Education to oversee general operations, including contracts, budgeting, personnel, and maintenance of all related support structures. The Director reports to and coordinates extensively with the Vice President of Instruction and Student Development. The Director of Distance Education and the DE Planning Committee interface regularly with the Academic Senate and its committees. All technology matters are handled jointly by the Office of Instruction and Student Development, the Distance Education Director, and the Information Technology Department which is directed by the Vice President of Administrative Services. Both the Director and Coordinator have a variety of participatory roles in distance education governance matters pertaining to the District, the Board of Trustees, the DE Planning Committee, and various faculty governance committees.

All of College of the Redwoods' distance education courses and services – culminating with this proposal – have been initiated, planned, developed, and implemented through cross-constituent support using a variety of committees and planning processes described above and through the Integrated Planning model. This process includes the development and approval of courses and programs that are ultimately approved by the board of trustees

B. Chief Executive Officer

The full implementation of CR’s Distance Education Program will not affect the administrative structure of the College or the reporting expectations of the President/ Superintendent. All courses offered via a distance modality and programs being proposed to be offered at greater than 50% DE are approved by the Board of Trustees as well as all board policies and administrative procedures that relate to the DE modality.

C. Governing Board

The full implementation of our Distance Education Program will not affect the College Board of Trustees or their reporting expectations of the President/Superintendent. All courses offered via a distance modality and programs being proposed to be offered at greater than 50% DE are approved by the Board of Trustees as well as all board policies and administrative procedures that relate to the DE modality.

Appendices

Appendix A – Education Master Plan



EDUCATION MASTER PLAN

GOALS & OBJECTIVES 2012-17

The Education Master Plan identifies educational program and service goals and measurable objectives in support of the college’s mission and strategic plan.

-
- Goal 1** **Ensure Student Success** | College of the Redwoods will employ programs, services, and organizational structures to meet the needs of learners and ensure student success.
- Objectives
- 1.1 Provide structured academic pathways
 - 1.2 Improve support for students
 - 1.3 Improve effectiveness of basic skills education
 - 1.4 Increase transfers and degree and certificate completions
 - 1.5 Professional development programs will be focused on improvement of educational effectiveness
 - 1.6 Improve success among underrepresented populations
-
- Goal 2** **Develop Programs and Services to Meet Community Needs** | College of the Redwoods will provide, in partnership with the community, training and education to contribute to the economic vitality and lifelong learning needs of the community.
- Objectives
- 2.1 Enhance community education program
 - 2.2 Enhance incumbent worker and contract training
 - 2.3 Develop not-for-credit programs
 - 2.4 CTE programs respond to community training needs
 - 2.5 Develop non-credit programs
-
- Goal 3** **Practice Continuous Quality Improvement** | College of the Redwoods will continually assess student learning and institutional performance and practices to improve upon the programs and services we offer.
- Objectives
- 3.1 Improve tools for assessment reporting
 - 3.2 Student learning will be a visible priority in all practices and structures.
 - 3.3 Student learning outcomes and assessment are ongoing, systematic, and used for continuous quality improvement.
 - 3.4 Systematically use data to inform decision making.
 - 3.5 Provide continual and inclusive training opportunities regarding assessment.
 - 3.6 Increase the number of institutional employees who have accreditation experience.
-
- Goal 4** **Maintain Technological Relevance** | College of the Redwoods will support the learning environment through appropriate technology and facilities.
- Objectives
- 4.1 Provide lab equipment and technology to effectively support instructional needs
 - 4.2 Update the comprehensive technology replacement plan
 - 4.3 Enhance distance education or eLearning
 - 4.4 Effectively utilize technology in teaching
-
- Goal 5** **Increase Student Participation in Campus Activities** | College of the Redwoods will support student success by engaging students in the college environment.
- Objectives
- 5.1 Improve student engagement among all students.
 - 5.2 Develop a vibrant student center.
 - 5.3 Increase student engagement in the community.
 - 5.4 Faculty and staff will model positive engagement in the college community

Appendix B – Memorandum of Understanding

2013-16-7

Memorandum of Understanding
Redwoods Community College District (District)
College of the Redwoods Faculty Organization (C.R.F.O.)

Instructor Preparation and Professional Development

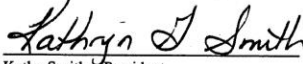
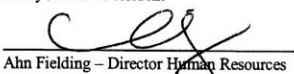
Faculty shall meet **any** of the following three criteria prior to teaching an online course for College of the Redwoods:


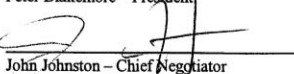
1. **Complete College of the Redwoods Online Teaching and Learning Training** sponsored by the DE Committee in consultation with the Academic Senate.
2. **Certificate of Completion in Online Teaching** from an accredited college or university, such as UCLA online Teaching Program, Cerro Coso Online Educators Certificate Program, or @One Teaching Certification Program.
3. **Demonstrate prior successful experience** in teaching online course(s) with a copy of a Faculty Evaluation Report (A-5/AF-5) or equivalent that includes one or more online sections.

As Faculty Evaluation Reports for online instructors may not be available for current online faculty, all current and past online College of the Redwoods faculty shall be provisionally certified to teach online until their next regularly scheduled evaluation. Full certification would occur after meeting [one of] the above criteria.

The district shall provide ongoing training and professional development in support of distance education.

The District and CRFO further agree that this MOU will expire on June 30, 2016 unless mutually agreed to by the District and CRFO.

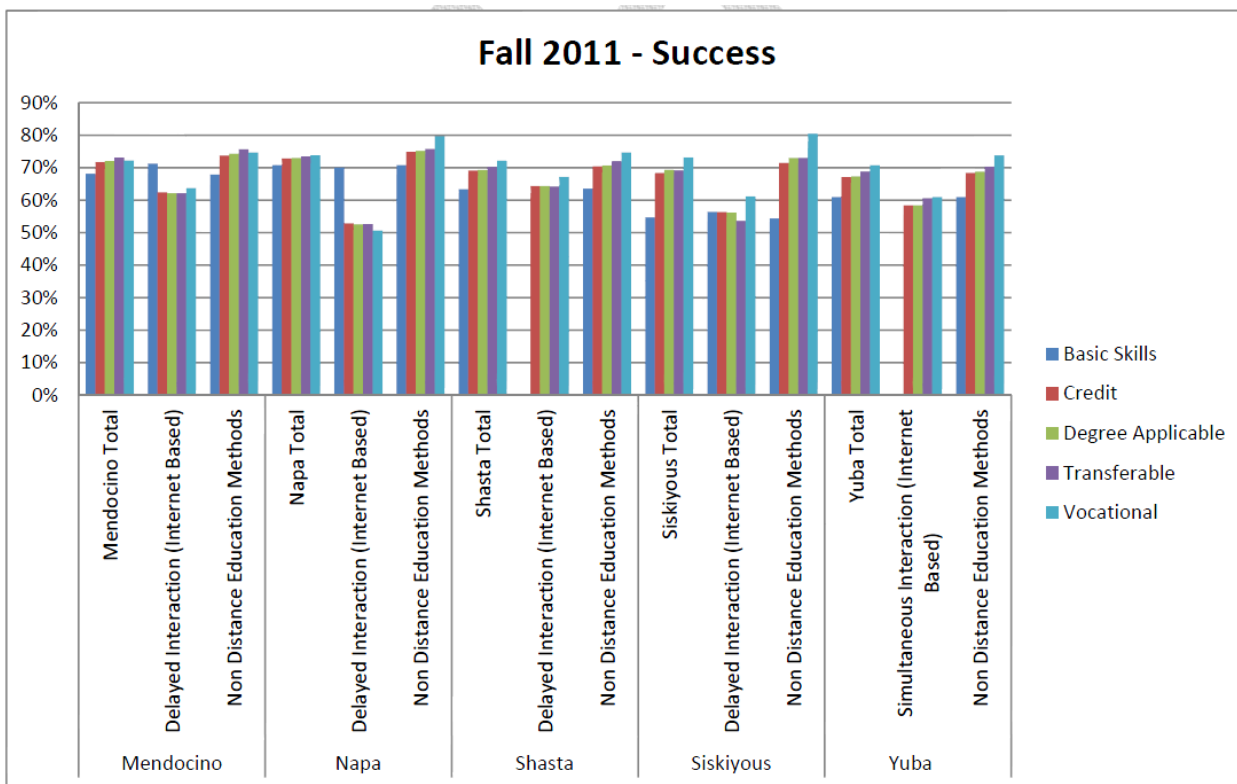
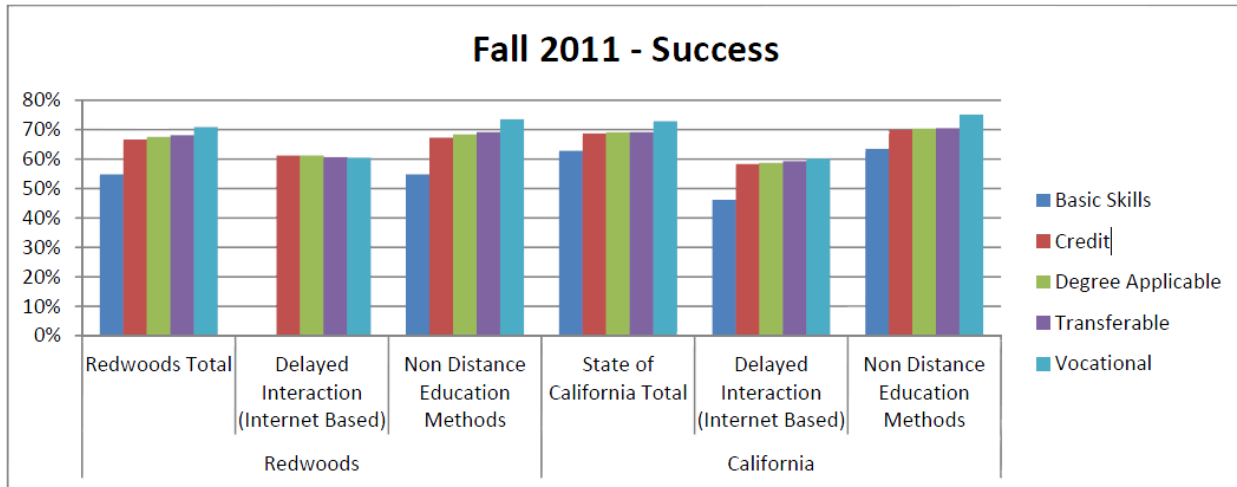
For the District

Kathy Smith – President

Ahn Fielding – Director Human Resources
8-30-14
Date

For C.R.F.O.

Peter Blakemore – President

John Johnston – Chief Negotiator
8/27/14
Date

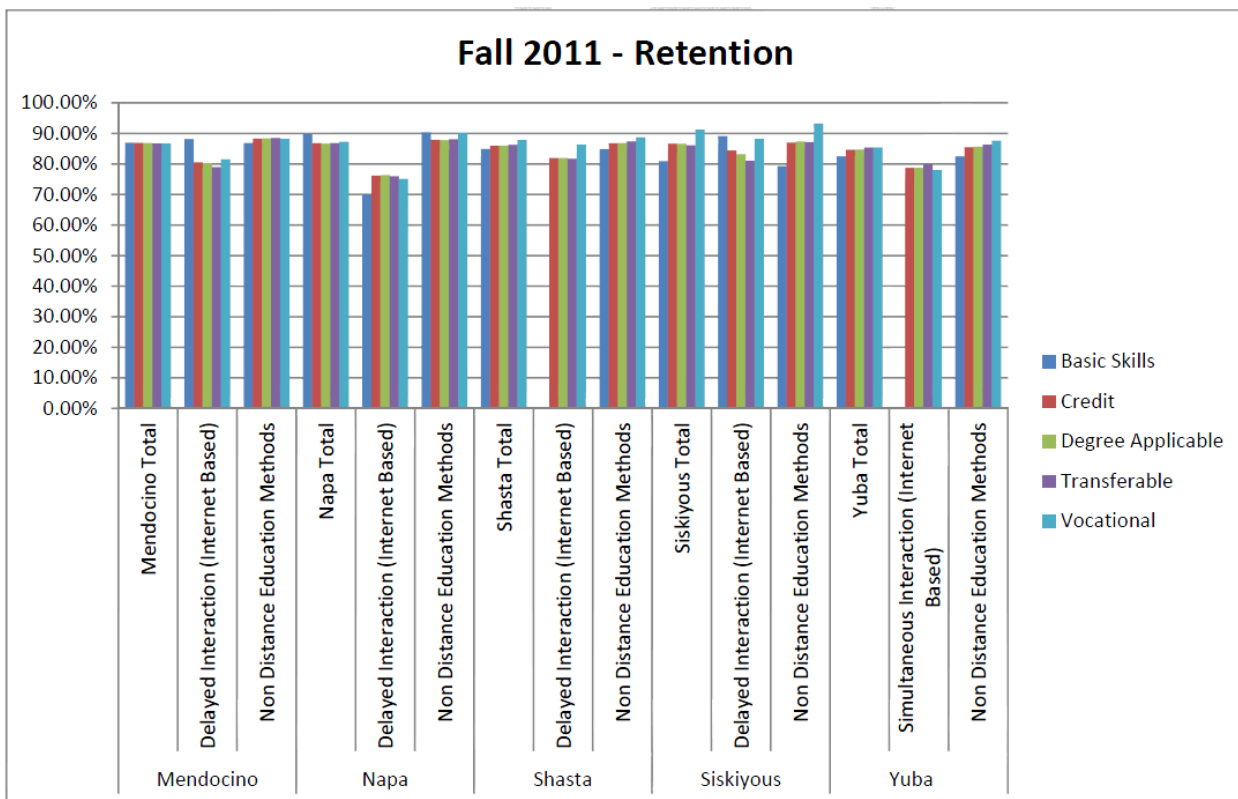
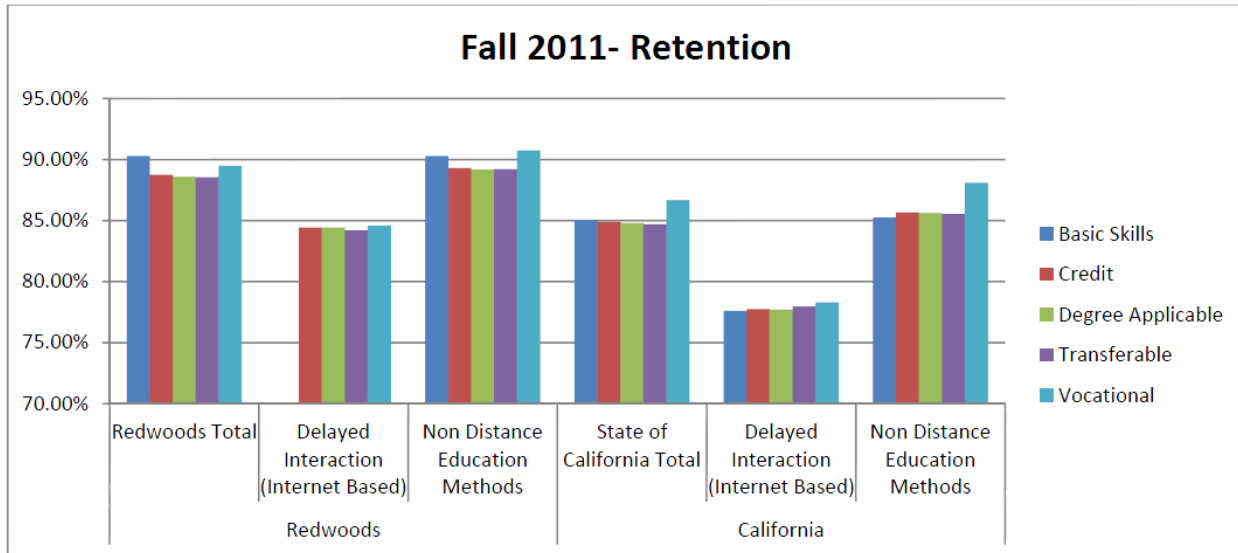
Appendix C – Success and Retention in Online vs. Face-to-Face Courses

Success & Retention in Online (Internet Based) vs. Face-to-Face (Non Distance Based) Classes – IR, 10/1/2012

Success in online vs. face-to-face classes at CR is similar to the state, with performance about 10% lower in online courses. Vocational course success at CR, however, is about 13% lower in online courses than face-to-face. Vocational online subject offerings: AJ, BT, BUS, CIS, DM, ECON, HO, HRC, LVN, MA, WAT. About 2.6% of Basic Skills courses across the state are offered online, compared to zero at CR.

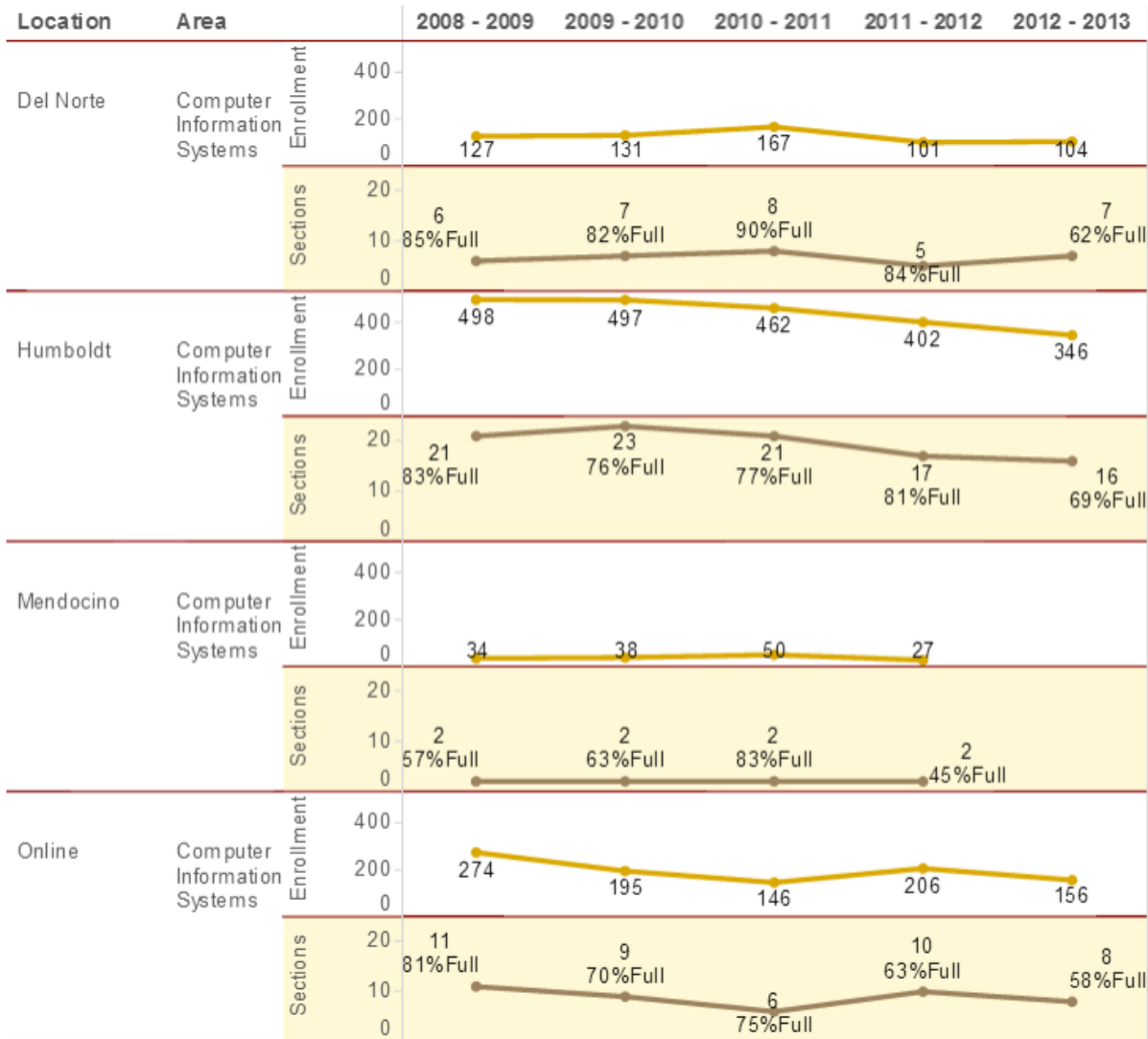


State-wide retention in online courses is about 8% lower in online than in face-to-face courses. Retention at CR is only about 4.5% lower in online than in face-to-face courses, except for vocational courses, where it is just over 6% lower. Overall retention at CR is higher than for the state.

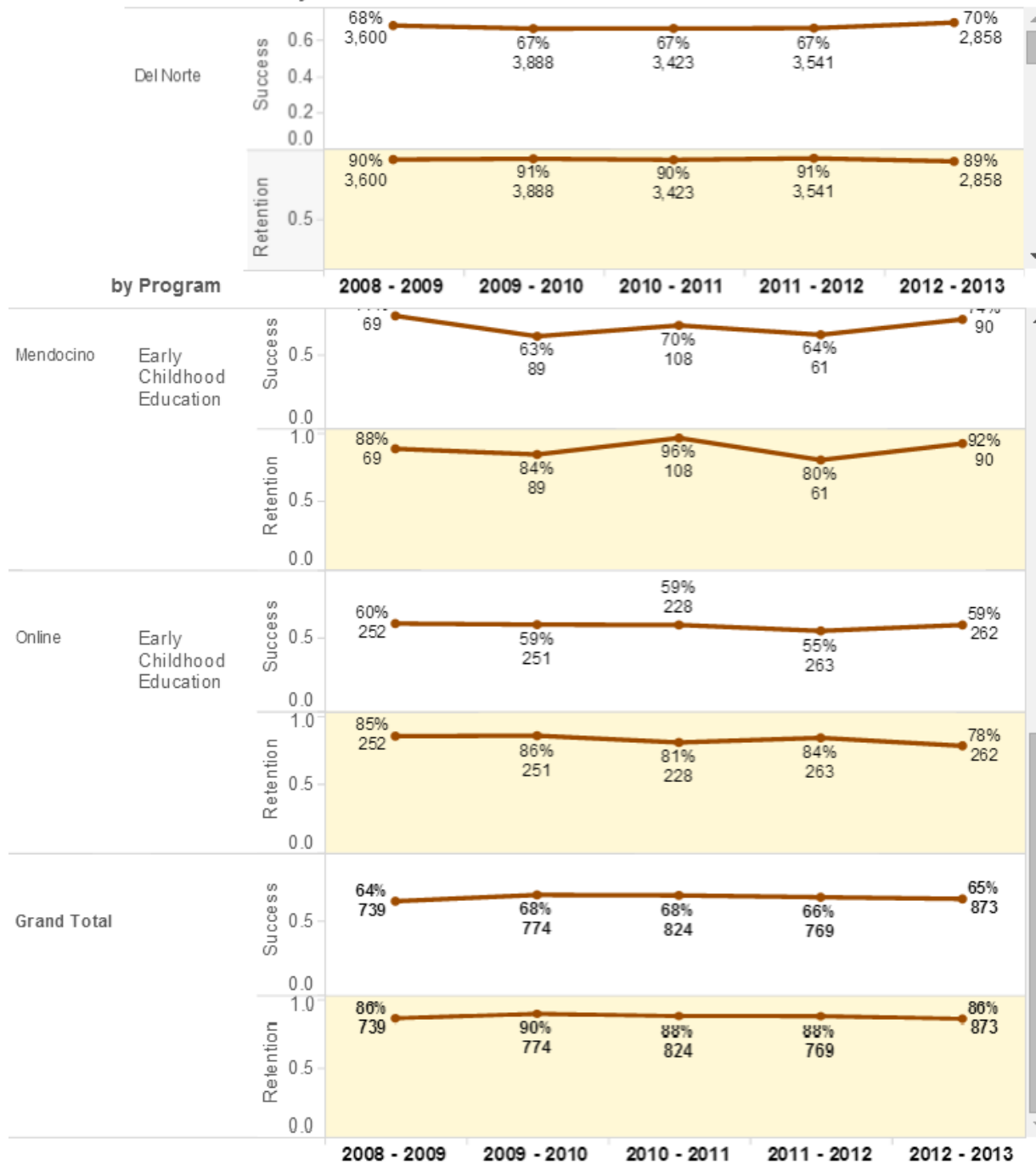


Appendix D – Program Review Datasets with disaggregated online enrollments

2013-2014 Program Review Dataset | Enrollments by Location



District-Wide by Location



Appendix E – AP 4105 Distance Education

REDWOODS COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT AP 4105 Administrative Procedure

DISTANCE EDUCATION

“Distance education is defined...as a formal interaction which uses one or more technologies to deliver instruction to students who are separated from the instructor and which supports regular and substantive interaction between the students and instructor, either synchronously or asynchronously” (ACCJC, 2013).

Course Quality Standards

The same standards of course quality shall be applied to distance education as are applied to traditional classroom courses. Refer to the Curriculum Handbook.

Separate Course Approval

Each proposed or existing course offered by distance education shall be reviewed and approved separately. Separate approval is mandatory if any portion of the instruction in a course or a course section is designed to be provided through distance education.

The review and approval of new and existing distance education courses shall follow the curriculum approval procedures outlined in Administrative Procedure 4020 Program and Curriculum Development and the Curriculum Handbook.

Instructor Contact

Each section of the course that is delivered through distance education shall include regular effective contact between instructor and students. Instructor contact guidelines can be found on the Curriculum Committee website.

Student Authentication Process

Consistent with federal regulations pertaining to federal financial aid eligibility, the District shall authenticate or verify that the student who registers in a distance education or correspondence education course is the same student who participates in and completes the course or program and receives the academic credit.

The Chief Instruction Officer (CIO) shall authorize one or more methods to authenticate or verify the student’s identity approved by federal regulation. For the Redwoods Community College District (RCCD), authentication uses secure credentialing/login and password within applicable course management systems, which is specifically referenced in the federal regulation as an appropriate and accepted procedure for verifying a student’s identity.

Online Course Proctoring

Instructors of online classes are encouraged to have important exams proctored. For enrolled students, proctoring is available at any College location.

Students distant from a College location may use a proctor not affiliated with the College who meets any of the following criteria: librarian, testing coordinator, administrator, or teacher at an elementary or secondary school, community college, or university. In addition, military chaplains, testing administrators, education services officers, or prison officials are acceptable. These or other alternatives must be approved by the instructor and supervising administrator. It is the student's responsibility to make arrangements with the proctor using the College "Student/Proctor Agreement Form" and to pay all costs for proctoring.

Privacy

The District shall provide to each student at the time of registration a statement of the process in place to protect student privacy and estimated additional student charges associated with verification of student identity, if any.

ADA Compliance

All distance education is subject to the requirements of Title 5 as well as the requirements imposed by the Americans with Disabilities Act (42 U.S. Code Sections 12100 et seq.) and Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended (29 U.S. Code Section 794d). Also, see Administrative Procedure 3412 Access to Programs and Facilities.

Instructor Preparation and Professional Development

Faculty shall meet qualification criteria as outlined in the Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA).

Evaluation of Instructors

Instructors teaching online classes shall be systematically evaluated using criteria applied to all classes, in addition to criteria specific to online instruction.

Student Grievances

The CIO or designee will maintain a file of all student grievances related to distance education and their resolutions. This file will not be used for the purpose of evaluating faculty.

REFERENCES:

"Guide to Evaluating Distance Education and Correspondence Education" ACCJC publication, July 2013;

Title 5 Sections 55200 et seq.;

U.S. Department of Education regulations on the Integrity of Federal Student Financial Aid Programs under Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended;

Title 34 Code of Federal Regulations - Section 602.17.

Certification Standards for Online Teaching

Developed by Academic Standards and Policies 2/28/14

Revised by ASPC as per Academic Senate direction 3/28/14

Approved by Board of Trustees *New Procedure*

Appendix F – Regular Effective Contact Policy

College of the Redwoods

Distance Education

Regular Effective Contact

Endorsed by the Curriculum Committee-03/22/13

Approved by the Academic Senate-04/05/13

Ensuring **Regular Effective Instructor/Student Contact** guarantees that the student in an online or hybrid course receives the benefit of the instructor's presence in the learning environment both as a provider of instructional information and as a facilitator of student learning. In a face to face course the instructor is present at each class meeting and interacts with class announcements, lectures, activities and discussions. The instructor also serves as a content advisor when he or she answers questions both as they come up in class and as they arise in individual situations. These types of questions are dealt with via the telephone, email, or face to face office visits.

Title 5 regulations do not make a distinction between regular and distance education (DE) courses beyond the need to have a separate curriculum approval process and the need to ensure regular effective contact. Title 5 and the Distance Education Guidelines for the California Community Colleges require each community college to have a policy regarding regular effective contact between instructor and student including "the type and frequency of interaction appropriate to each DE course/section or session."

College of the Redwoods Policy:

All DE courses at CR, whether hybrid or fully online, will include regular effective contact as described below:

- **Initiated interaction:** Instructors will regularly initiate interaction with students and determine that they are accessing and comprehending course material and participating regularly in the activities in the course. Providing students with an open ended question forum, although appropriate, does not constitute the entirety of effective instructor initiated interaction.
- **Frequency:** DE courses are considered the equivalent to face to face courses. Therefore, the frequency of the contact will be at least the same as would be established in a regular, face to face course. At the very least, the number of instructor contact hours per week that would be available for face to face students will also be available, in asynchronous and/or synchronous mode, for DE students. Contact shall be distributed in a manner that will ensure that regular contact is maintained, given the nature of asynchronous instructional methodologies, over the course of a week and should occur as often as is appropriate for the course.
- **Establishing expectations and managing unexpected instructor absence:** An instructor- and/or department-established policy describing the frequency and timeliness of instructor initiated contact and instructor feedback, will be posted in the syllabus and/or other course documents that are made available for students when the course

officially opens each semester. If the instructor must be out of contact briefly for an unexpected reason (such as illness or a family emergency that takes the instructor offline), notification to students will be made in the announcements area of the course that includes when the students can expect regular effective contact to resume. If the offline time results in a lengthy absence (i.e. more than three or four days) a substitute instructor should be sought who can assist students while the instructor is unavailable.

Minimum Contact: Regarding the type of contact that will exist in all CR DE courses, instructors will, at a minimum, use the following resources to initiate contact with students:

- Threaded discussion forums (or equivalent) with appropriate instructor participation.
- General email/messages.
- Weekly announcements in the Learning Management System.
- Timely feedback for student work.
- Instructor-prepared materials (text-based, audio files, and/or video files), in addition to any publisher created materials (written, recorded, broadcast, etc.) that, combined with other course materials, creates the “virtual equivalent” of the face to face class.

Other Types of Contact: Instructors may also choose to use other forms of communication, as mentioned in Section 55204 of Title 5. (“...*through group or individual meetings, orientation and review sessions, supplemental seminar or study sessions, field trips, library workshops, telephone contact, correspondence, voice mail, e-mail, or other activities.*”) and/or CCCConfer, video conference, pod cast, or other synchronous technologies may also be included. CCCConfer is a web conferencing tool that is free to the California Community College System.

It is suggested that instructors should have a threaded discussion that is set aside for general questions about the course and may wish to have weekly or other timely, question and answer sessions available to students. This may also be accomplished through virtual office hours.

Regulations: Title 5/Distance Education Guidelines for the California Community Colleges state:

55202. Course Quality Standards.

The same standards of course quality shall be applied to any portion of a course conducted through distance education as are applied to traditional classroom courses, in regard to the course quality judgment made pursuant to the requirements of section 55002, and in regard to any local course quality determination or review process. Determinations and judgments about the quality of distance education under the course quality standards shall be made with the full involvement of faculty in accordance with the provisions of subchapter 2 (commencing with section 53200) of chapter 2. **NOTE:** Authority cited: Section 66700 and 70901, Education Code. References: Sections 70901 and 70902, Education Code.

Guideline for Section 55202

This section emphasizes the extent to which course quality depends upon the full involvement of faculty in the design and application of DE courses. It discusses course quality standards for distance education and combines language formerly found in sections 55207 and 55209 which it

replaces. Language is added to clarify that normal course quality standards apply to any portion of a course conducted through distance education.

55204. Instructor Contact.

In addition to the requirements of section 55002 and any locally established requirements applicable to all courses, district-governing boards shall ensure that: (a) All approved courses offered as distance education include **regular effective contact** between instructor and students, through group or individual meetings, orientation and review sessions, supplemental seminar or study sessions, field trips, library workshops, telephone contact, correspondence, voice mail, e-mail, or other activities. (b) All distance education courses are delivered consistent with guidelines issued by the Chancellor pursuant to section 409 of the Procedures and Standing Orders of the Board of Governors. **Regular effective contact** is an academic and professional matter pursuant to title 5, section 53200. **Note:** Authority cited: Sections 70901 and 66700, Education Code. Reference: Sections 70901 and 70902, Education Code.

Guideline for Section 55204.

This section defines what contact must be maintained between instructor and student:

Subsection (a) stresses **the responsibility of the instructor in a DE course to initiate regular contact with enrolled students to verify their participation and performance status.** The use of the term “regular effective contact” in this context suggests that students should have frequent opportunities to ask questions and receive answers from the instructor of record. Subsection (b) establishes the principle that for DE courses, there are a number of acceptable interactions between instructor and student, not all of which may require in-person contact. Thus, districts will need to define “effective contact, **“including how often, and in what manner instructor-student interaction is achieved.”** It is important that districts document how regular effective contact is achieved. Since regular effective contact was declared an academic and professional matter, this documentation must include demonstration of collegial consultation with the academic senate, for example through its delegation to the local curriculum committee. A natural place for this to occur is during the separate course approval process. Documentation should consist of the inclusion of information in applicable outlines of record on the type and frequency of interaction appropriate to each DE course/section or session. Local policies should establish and monitor minimum standards of regular effective contact.

Resources:

College of the Desert, Distance Education Regular Effective Content Policy.

Mt. San Jacinto College, Regular Effective Contact Policy.

Mendocino College, Distance Education Procedures Regular Effective Contact