



# DISTANCE EDUCATION STRATEGIC PLAN 2016-2020



Prepared by the Distance Education Advisory  
Committee

# Signatures and Approvals Page

Date: May 5, 2016

The Fullerton College Distance Education Strategic Plan is submitted for the purpose of providing a framework for planning, decision-making, and budgeting related to the delivery of distance education and technology-enhanced education at Fullerton college. We certify that there was broad participation by constituents involved in Distance Education, and we believe the DE Strategic Plan accurately reflects their goals.

Signed:

---

Angela E. Henderson, Professor, Reading; Chair, DEAC (Co-Author)

---

Marcus Wilson, Professor, Business & CIS (Co-Author)

---

Laura Melella, Professor, Business & CIS (Co-Author)

---

Anupama Mande, Professor, History (Co-Author)

---

Pete Snyder, President, Faculty Senate

---

Thor Roe, President, Associated Students

---

Dr. Greg Schultz, President, Fullerton College

Approved by Distance Education Advisory Committee on May 3, 2016

Approved by Faculty Senate on

Approved by President's Advisory Council on

# The Distance Education Advisory

Committee members, 2015-2016

Angela Henderson, Chair

Scott Lee: Counseling

Matt Taylor: Tech. Committee

Eddie Rapp: Physical Education

Sergio Banda: Social Sciences

Dale Craig: At Large

Roger Perez: At Large

Darnell Kemp: Humanities

Nancy Ikeda: Math & Computer Science

Anu Mande: At Large

Laura Melella: Business/CIS

Marcus Wilson: Business

Monique Delatte Starkey: Library

The committee would like to thank the following resource members for their contributions:

Terry Gleason

Lisa Montagne

Kathy Bakhit

# Table of Contents

Executive Summary 4

Introduction 5

Status and trends 6

Strategic Goals 7

Action Plan 8

Appendix 9

# Executive Summary

The Fullerton College Distance Education Strategic Plan (DESP) defines a common vision for distance education and instructional technology at the college. It establishes comprehensive strategic goals, and it charts the steps to success for the coordinated implementation of distance learning and instructional technology across the campus. Most importantly, it integrates Distance Education *planning, budgeting, training, and improvement* into regular college planning and procedures for the future.

The DESP positions the college to improve and to promote effective technology-enhanced instruction while responding to the rapidly changing fields of online learning, instructional technology, and the need for students to achieve digital literacy at the college level. The DESP also fulfills the accreditation requirements to support student learning, to increase access to student services, to improve institutional effectiveness, and to integrate technology planning and budgeting with institutional planning and budgeting.

The purpose of this plan is to establish a collaborative and comprehensive strategic plan that supports the effectiveness and the quality of instructional technology at Fullerton College. The DESP positions the college to evaluate the DE program for quality and consistency to improve student success and access in the rapidly growing field of instructional technology.

A comprehensive strategic plan considers the roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders, and serves as a mechanism to guide the college in implementing the plan. In review of the 2010-2015 Strategic Plan and previous Distance Education Program Review reports, the college has fallen short of meeting these goals. Although the Distance Education Advisory Committee (DEAC) recognizes that few of the strategic goals for 2010-2015 were met, **we are confident that Fullerton College has renewed its focus and dedication to meeting the strategic goals for 2016-2020.** The DESP establishes three integrated strategic goals for improving Distance Education at Fullerton College.

Strategic Goal 1: Develop a training plan for faculty in online pedagogies, emerging technologies and tools, and the Learning Management System

Strategic Goal 2: Expand access to support services for enrolled distance education students

Strategic Goal 3: Ensure all DE courses meet Section 508c accessibility standards

In order to meet the above goals, it is essential that Fullerton College prioritize the needs of the Distance Education Program.

# Introduction

Distance Education began at Fullerton College in 1981 with telecourses offered via cable television. The first distanced education (online) course was offered in 1998. In 2008-2009, we had approximately 289 course sections using distance education methodologies. In spring 2016, we had approximately 122 online courses and 67 hybrid sections. In addition we estimate that 300 courses are web enhanced by using Blackboard, the current learning management system (LMS).

The DEAC was formed in 2000 as a campus-level committee to advise the College Planning and consultative Council (PCC). In 2008-2009, DEAC reporting changed from reporting to President's Advisory Council (PAC), formerly PCC, to the Faculty Senate. In 2012 DEAC's responsibilities were absorbed into the Technology committee until November 2015 when DEAC was reconstituted by the Senate with its current mission.

In November 2000, a Distance Education Ad-Hoc Committee, initiated under the leadership of former Fullerton College President Michael Viera, prepared the first Strategic Plan. The plan clearly set forth a vision to increase access to student support services to meet the diverse needs of distance education students. This remains a high need of the program to date. Likewise, the same issues that were addressed in the 2009 Distance Education Program Review still remain unaddressed by our campus today in 2016. These issues referenced in the 2009 Program Review as "still pending since 2002" include:

- Funding for a full-time Manager for Distance Education (not temporary or funded on an annual basis)
- Funding for a full-time instructional designer/trainer
- Training for distance education faculty
- Providing support for online educators
- Implementing campus-wide testing options for distance education

This year, in an effort to address the above needs, the DEAC made two key determinations to move the Fullerton College campus forward:

- 1) The DEAC voted to adopt the Online Education Initiative's Course Design Rubric as a "working model" for the Distance Education Program to determine if we are meeting integral faculty needs such as: design goals, accessibility standards and
- 2) The DEAC has reviewed the new LMS, Canvas and developed a plan to present Canvas to the Faculty Senate for consideration in the fall 2016.

The recommendations that DEAC sets forth in this strategic plan need to be embraced across campus to begin the process to meet these goals. The Distance Education Program continues to function at the same level as in 2002 with a temporary manager, funded on an annual basis, minimal training for distance education faculty, and limited technical support.

# Status and Trends

With the new construction on the Fullerton College campus and the combined efforts to maintain current enrollment numbers, there continues to be a high demand on the distance education program. The campus benefits by offering online course: by maintaining enrollment or by allowing growth without the impact on facilities . Despite the lack of support for the DE program, the faculty have historically taken it upon themselves to ensure online students are being served. It is time for the campus to step up and share the burden of ensuring equal access to student support services.

Through the campus curriculum process, faculty members can request to add an online and/or hybrid component to new and revised courses. We have seen an increase in these requests. Furthermore, in 2015, Blackboard shells were made available to all courses on campus to offer technology-enhanced instruction. The entire campus is moving forward towards this technology-enhanced instruction.

While the campus expands in these areas, the commitment to the management and support of the Distance Education Program has been sporadic and weak. Since 2002, the position for Special Projects Manager for DE continues to be temporarily funded year to year. Requests for hiring an instructional designer have not been fulfilled. With the pending accreditation evaluation, the need to address accessibility issues in distance education is paramount. The campus does not currently provide accessibility specialists to assist DE faculty in meeting Section 508c compliance. The last time there was reassigned time for technology and online coordinators was fall 2007 when faculty from Divisions participated in Blackboard Product Specialist training that was paid for. Once trained, faculty were responsible for assisting others in the transition from WebCT to Blackboard.

Currently, there is not release time for faculty coordinators. Furthermore, technical support staff for online students is provided on a limited basis by student workers paid hourly.

Since ACCJC established standards for online education, and our methodology could be open to scrutiny by outside agencies, such as ACCJC, the college's commitment to providing staff development for online instructors is integral to meeting standards. In 2015, training of faculty in new and emerging online pedagogies was provided by the temporary DE manager. Plans have been developed in conjunction with Staff Development for an Online Teaching Certificate (OTC) with workshops to be offered in fall 2016. We encourage division deans *to recognize* the faculty that have received training through @One or other institutions in online teaching.

The DEAC will work towards a plan for best practices in assigning online courses to instructors who have training, who have been "grandfathered in," or who have completed the OTC. It is our vision that Fullerton College adopt a policy in the future that assigns online courses to faculty who have met the training requirements adopted by Faculty Senate.

As online education becomes more integral to campus programs, it is important to establish standards for our program. The DEAC has recommended adopting the Online Educational Initiative's (OEI) Course Design Rubric as a working model to begin a dialogue across campus about the evaluation process of distance education courses at Fullerton College. The OEI Course Design Rubric has been endorsed by the California Chancellor's Office and the California State Academic Senate. The DEAC has also endorsed a statement of Faculty Supremacy as it relates to using the OEI Rubric for online courses (Appendix A).

The Distance Education Advisory Committee is committed to working towards increased consistency and quality in the distance education program to ensure high-quality instruction and to provide access for DE students to support services. In 2016-2020, the DEAC will seek support and input from various constituents across campus to develop a comprehensive approach to meeting our strategic goals.

## Strategic Goals

The DEAC identified three overarching strategic goals. Each strategic goal includes a measurable outcome. Each goal relies on the support of the other, and as such, represents a comprehensive plan for maintaining and improving the quality of Distance Education at Fullerton College.

**Strategic Goal 1: Develop a training plan for faculty in online pedagogies, emerging technologies and tools, and the LMS.**

Measurable Outcome: Creation and offering of a program that leads to an Online Teaching Certificate (OTC) - Appendix B - Draft of OTC

**Strategic Goal 2: Expand access to Support Services for enrolled DE students**

Measurable Outcome: Student satisfaction survey will show comparable levels of satisfaction in access to Support Services

**Strategic Goal 3: Ensure all DE courses meet accessibility standards**

Measurable Outcome: With the support of an accessibility specialist, 70% of DE courses will meet Section 508c standards by 2020.



Additionally, the DEAC developed an Action Plan that delineates more specifically the needs to meet the above strategic goals, and the processes that may facilitate meeting these goals. In 2016-2020, it is the intention of the DEAC to develop a handbook of best practices and recommendations for Distance Education at Fullerton College.

Action Plan: **Comprehensive Items**

- Establish funding for a permanent Distance Education Director in collaboration with instructional design and accessibility specialist personnel, and technical support staff. (G1. G2. G3)
- Establish a cycle of sustainable, continuous quality improvement through survey instruments, data collection, program review, and other institutional effectiveness practices (G1. G2. G3)
- Acquire reassigned time for division personnel to provide online support training (G1. G3)
- Create procedures for meeting Section 508c standards and accessibility (G1. G3)

**Develop a Training Plan for faculty in online pedagogies, emerging technologies and tools and the current LMS.**

- Establish best practices for student and faculty interaction online (regular effective contact in compliance with Education Code) (G1)
- Create resource materials of practices for effective interaction and collaboration among students and faculty in distance education courses. (G1)
- Develop a plan to document regular and effective contact in compliance with Ed. Code (G1)
- Develop methods to organize content in LMS using various effective instructional strategies (G1)
- Create resource materials of various online activities to meet the needs of a wide range of learners within an online course (G1)
- Create resource materials with collaboration activities that are designed to build a sense of community among learners (G1)
- Implement assessment activities designed to measure progress towards learning outcomes while providing feedback to student and instructor (G1)
- Establish a comprehensive instructional technology and online education evaluation model

**Expand Access to Support Services for enrolled DE students**

- Create a distance education orientation that is required for new online students (G2)
- Establish a resource link for distance education students on the DE homepage (G2)
- Develop syllabus guidelines for DE courses that include instructional resources and institutional services (G2)
- Update tutorial material for how to navigate the LMS (G2)

**Ensure all DE courses meet accessibility standards**

- Develop a process to assess Section 508 and WCAG 2.0 accessibility compliance of online courses (G3)

- Coordinate with DSS to provide a plan for accommodation to ensure accessible learning activities or instructional media (G3)

## APPENDIX A

### **Faculty Supremacy with OEI Course Design Rubric** **for Online Courses**

Maintaining faculty supremacy and authority in all matters of instruction for online courses is important to assure faculty support for the Distance Education Strategic Plan. Accordingly, the following principles are adopted as part of the Distance Education Strategic Plan.

- 1) Each online course should be as similar as possible to the same course taught on campus. This includes the course material, grading standards, student learning outcomes, and student evaluation.
- 2) Each department's full-time faculty shall determine any rubric definitions, standards, measurements, and interpretations used to evaluate its online courses.
- 3) Each department's full-time faculty shall determine the appropriate level of student-to-student, student-to-faculty, and faculty-to-student contact following Education Code for its online courses to be consistent with its corresponding on-campus courses.
- 4) All faculty scheduled or assigned to any online course shall be hired and selected by the department's usual faculty selection process.
- 5) No course will be scheduled or taught online without the approval of that department's full-time faculty and as part of the regular curriculum process.
- 6) Fullerton College will not participate in the statewide exchange to offer online classes.
- 7) Faculty's rights of academic freedom, guaranteed by our UF contract and state law, shall apply when faculty teach online.

## APPENDIX B

### Online Teaching Certificate (OTC) Proposal

#### Rationale:

1. Having an Online Teaching Certificate is a way of laying a foundation for campus-wide online teaching standards and best practices.
2. It is one concrete way of showing accreditation examiners that DE quality is being addressed on campus.
3. Making it official would benefit faculty in several ways, including: salary advancement, meeting the demand for instructional technology training on campus, and acknowledgement that faculty have received specific training in online teaching. \*Some adjuncts can use this certificate at other institutions where this is required.
4. It enhances the offerings of the Staff Development program.
5. It is not just for online instructors; all faculty need training in instructional technology

I. Core Workshops – required for all participants (the sessions are 2 hours each, which would be a total of 16 hours, depending on the finalization of the offerings)

A. Communication in an online environment: student-student and faculty to student, including regular effective contact

B. Accessibility – 2 parts

1. Documents [and the LMS]

2. Video [captioning]

C. Pedagogy (includes online learning theory, best practices, rationale for instructional technology)

D. Collaboration (student-to-student interaction) – Group Work online

E. LMS – 2 parts (Beginning and Intermediate)

F. Apply OEI Rubric to your class (final workshop)

II. Optional – sessions are 1 to 2 hours - (must take 4 hours total)

A. Digital Literacy

B. Tips and Tools

C. Making Videos

D. Creating Rubrics

E. HTML Code Training

F. Division/department specific trainings

VISION: The workshops would be designed with a hands-on approach, so faculty would have time to work on their course or course materials during the workshop.

Faculty Presenters: Gary Graves, Angela Henderson, Darnell Kemp, Laura Melella, Lisa Montagne, Deborah Paige, Roger Perez

4/14/16 submitted to the Staff Development Committee by Angela Henderson, Darnell Kemp, Lisa Montagne and Cory Thomas