

Distance Learning Plan

Distance Learning Implementation Oversight Task Force Members 2012-2013

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Introduction

Distance Learning (DL) at Long Beach City College provides students with alternative avenues to access their program of study while also giving students practical experience in the growing demand for web-based skill sets. These avenues include courses offered entirely online, hybrid courses that offer students some web-based instruction in addition to on-campus meetings, and web-enhanced courses that on-campus instructors can use to bring web-based technologies into the brick and mortar classroom. LBCC's high-quality course offerings and rigorous curriculum approval process assure that online instruction remains equivalent to on-campus courses.

Distance Learning supports the integration of web-based technologies into on-campus courses. The instructor remains as the content expert and facilitator in the instructional development and delivery process of all web-based or web-enhanced courses while ongoing training and support is offered by DL to promote student success in online learning environments.

Aligned with the college's mission and vision, the goal of Distance Learning is:

- (1) to provide access and support to LBCC programs and course offerings,
- (2) to give students who cannot attend on-campus courses an opportunity to accomplish their educational goals, and
- (3) to accommodate the varying learning needs of individual students.

Distance Learning is committed to providing institutional support through a network of resources to address the changing demographics and needs of modern community college students while keeping abreast of changes in educational methodologies and delivery.

Mission

Distance Learning at LBCC is aligned with the college mission in that it "promotes equitable student learning and achievement, academic excellence, and workforce development by delivering high quality educational programs and support services to our diverse communities." DL strives to meet the needs of all students while maintaining support for instructors using web-based or web-enhanced classes.

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Vision

Distance Learning offers students preparation for success in the modern world of technology and global accessibility. It serves as an expression of the college's commitment to embracing student diversity while providing students with the best in educational and technological advancements to help them succeed.

Student Access

Providing students will reliable and consistent access to their online course materials is a priority. Course content will be accessible to all students. The college will move toward designing for mobile devices.

Strategic Goals

- Maintain a learning management system that is cost-effective, scalable, accessible, and a reliable e-learning environment
- Create a single sign-in entry point for students to enter into all college online services including registration, learning management system, library, etc.
- Evaluate course offerings to meet students' needs.
- Provide online services for all student service areas on campus including admissions, registration, counseling, tutoring, library reference services and 24/7 access to electronic library resources.
- Ensure all courses meet Section 508 accessibility standards.
- All courses designed, tested and supported on mobile devices.
- Provide a website that maintains an up to date list of the programs and GE courses that can be completed online.

Measurable Outcomes

- Students report positive experiences with learning management system, login process, online student services, access to library electronic resources, and ease of use.
- Routinely review courses for Section 508 accessibility standards.

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Student Support

Our Distance Learning students have access to the same services and support that are offered to on-campus students. Providing a variety of support resources through an orientation, tutorials, FAQ's, help desk support, and proper training of on-campus staff will ensure that our Distance Learning students are setup for success.

Strategic Goals

- Provide student support through the Help Desk via phone, email, and chat.
- Extend online help pages and frequently asked questions to help students find a solution before needed to contact the Help Desk.
- Create a library information literacy tutorial and embed into learning management system.
- Offer support instruction to all Learning Center and Computer Lab staff so they can properly assist our online students who may be using the computer resources on campus.
- Require all DL students participate in our dynamic online orientation system to provide feedback on whether they are fully prepared for online learning.

Measurable Outcomes

- Survey students regularly regarding their online learning experience and use the results of these surveys to continue to improve course quality, access, support and course offerings.
- Measure success rate of students who participated in our online orientation system prior to completing an online course.

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Courses

Course offerings greatly impact the success of a distance learning program in a community college environment. It is through providing high quality courses that meet the academic needs of our students and enhance the quality of our distance learning program that we will grow our program and see students successfully complete their educational goals.

Strategic Goals

- Schedule a periodic review of online course offerings to ensure students are able to fulfill their educational goals.
- Identify programs that would be suitable for a fully online certificate or degree program and encourage the program to develop online offerings for courses that are not already taught online.
- Identify transfer level courses that would be suitable for development as an online course.
- Work with Academic Services to obtain data and monitor need, growth, and effectiveness of DL courses.
- Use a variety of meaningful evaluative measures based on recommendations from the Office of Institutional Effectiveness.

Measurable Outcomes

- DL students successfully complete transfer level courses.
- DL students successfully complete courses within their degree or certificate program.
- New courses are created in an online format and offered for transfer and certificate/degree programs.

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Faculty Development and Training

Faculty training addresses instructional methodologies and best practices, assessment methods, administrative procedures used in the DL environment, accessibility and other compliance matters, student preparation and orientation, interactive communication methodologies, resources and support services available for students

Strategic Goals

- Design and offer faculty training on the class-level aspects of enrollment management and census reporting in DL courses
- Design and offer faculty training on administrative, communication, and instructional methodologies that promote increased retention and success in DL courses

Measurable Outcomes

- DL faculty are formally trained in the technology and instructional design necessary to develop and facilitate an instructional eLearning environment.
- DL faculty training opportunities for implementing teaching and learning methodologies are offered via FLEX sessions, ITDC workshops, LBCC professional development activities, and CCCC training opportunities.

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Faculty Consultative Group and Faculty Mentors

The Distance Learning Faculty Consultative Group (FCG) works in collaboration with the Distance Learning Task Force and the Faculty Professional Development Center and is instrumental in coordinating the DL Mentoring program at LBCC. Membership includes departmental & inter-departmental representatives, and instructional consultants (e.g. instructional designer, DL Director).

Strategic Goals

- The FCG develops and maintains course standards required for all DL courses offered at LBCC to promote best practices to ensure course effectiveness and student success in all courses.
- The FCG will be available to new and existing DL faculty to provide consultation during the development of online courses in an effort to facilitate the implementation of the LBCC course quality, delivery and compliance standards. The group will suggest enhancements or modifications that would contribute to student performance, engagement, and success.
- The FCG will establish and coordinate the Distance Learning Faculty Mentoring program through which new DL faculty will be assigned a mentor to help through their first semester of teaching online at LBCC. The DL Faculty Mentoring program will be available to all new DL faculty and to all other LBCC DL faculty on a voluntary basis.

Measurable Outcomes

- Instructional design sessions facilitated by the FCG will be offered to all new and existing DL instructors.
- Peer-led faculty roundtable sessions will be conducted on an on-going basis on campus.

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Governance and Institutionalization

In order to oversee and promote the vision for Distance Learning at LBCC a structure needs to be in place that allows for participation in goal setting, monitoring progress, reporting, as well as support. The Distance Learning Task Force is envisioned as that forum. Chartered by the College Planning Council and populated with faculty, staff, and administration, the Distance Learning Task Force is charged with:

- Monitoring that the stated DL Plan goals and objectives for the five areas (Courses, Students, Faculty Development & Training, Governance & Institutionalization, and Marketing) are being met.
- Monitoring that the DL Plan outcomes are being accomplished.
- Monitoring that resources allocated are in accord with the DL Plan.

The Distance Learning Task Force will assist in integrating Distance Learning into the overall college practices by providing direction and planning recommendations regarding Distance Learning.

Strategic Goals

- Organize the DL program in a way that promotes direct communication and effective collaboration with all related college constituents and integration into the college planning process.
- Provide a DL path to attaining certificates, programs, and degrees where applicable.
- Provide a stable software platform that allows faculty to teach online and establish class web sites for face to face classes.
- LBCC policy and regulations affecting or affected by DL will be updated as appropriate.

Measurable Outcomes

- The Distance Learning Task Force created by the College Planning Council will meet regularly to update the DL Plan, monitor its implementation, and make recommendations to improve and further the DL implementation at LBCC.
- All courses adding DL modalities will be approved by the Course Evaluation Subcommittee of the Curriculum Committee which includes the Director for Instructional Technology and Distance Learning.

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- A yearly DL report tracking numbers of classes, students, FTES, student success, completion, retention and other relevant information will be published on the LBCC web site.
- Number of certificates, programs, and degrees that can be achieved via DL.
- System availability as measured against the industry standard of “Five nines” (99.999%).
- LBCC policies and regulations appropriately reflect DL laws, regulations, and considerations.