Comprehensive Program Review and Analysis
(6 year review)

Distance Education

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Program: Distance Education

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2. Program Information

A. Team Members:
Since its inception, the Distance Education Program at Cañada College has operated under the collaborative guidance of the members of Cañada's Distance Education Advisory Committee (DEAC). This committee reports to the Vice President of Instruction, and includes a chair (the Dean responsible for distance education), Distance Education Coordinator and Instructional Designer (faculty), a representative from District Distance Education Committee, 3 additional faculty members, 2 Student Services representatives, and 1 student.

In fall semester 2012, there were 25 faculty members teaching courses labeled as distance education at Cañada. Of these faculty members, 11 are full-time and 14 are adjunct.

B. Program Mission
Cañada strives to *ensure opportunity* for all students to achieve their goals and offers courses and programs in a variety of formats, including distance education, to meet the needs of a diverse student body. In offering courses and programs through distance education, the College is responding to community requests for online options and addressing the changing needs of our students. Students in distance education classes benefit not only from flexibility in scheduling, but also from access to new technologies and instructional methodologies.

The mission of the Distance Education program is to increase opportunities for our diverse student population by offering flexible and innovative instruction via technology. In keeping with the mission of the College, the Distance Education initiative is committed to meeting the changing needs of our community by developing distance learning opportunities that increase student access, support student success, and provide quality instruction in general, transfer, career, and basic skills education, while also fostering relationships among faculty, staff and students.

3. Program Background, Data Measures, and Reflection

The Distance Education Advisory Committee (DEAC) at Cañada has been charged with developing a distance education plan that focuses on growing and strengthening our distance education initiative.

To accomplish this task, the committee first compiled a report assessing the current distance education practices at Cañada, within our district, and at our neighboring community colleges. The initial findings suggested that, compared to other colleges, Cañada's distance education was in its nascent stage. To develop our strategic plan, we looked at numerous

distance education offerings across the state, studied our current distance education course offerings, and also carefully considered the following documents and surveys:

- Guide to Evaluating Distance Education and Correspondence Education (ACCJC/WASC)
- Periodic Report on Distance Education and Learning (CCC Chancellor's Office)
- Distance Education Guidelines (CCC Chancellor's Office)
- Distance Education Accessibility Guidelines
- SMCCCD Distance Education Strategic Plan
- College of San Mateo's Distance Education Committee Institutional Plan, Fall 2010
- Survey of Distance Education Faculty, Spring 2011

In spring of 2011 a survey was conducted of 14 faculty members teaching fully online classes. Only four of them had completed the District STOT training for online teachers. The STOT Program consists of online and face-to-face sessions designed to help faculty learn to teach effectively online. Participation requires recommendation by a faculty member's dean or campus VPI. Records indicate as of spring 2011 16 Cañada faculty members had completed at least the first portion of STOT. Faculty may also qualify to teach distance education courses through previous online teaching experience and/or through other equivalent training programs.

Well over half (78%) of the faculty members teaching online in spring 2011 were using WebAccess, Cañada's implementation of the Learning Management System Moodle, which some augment with materials from textbook publishers. More than half (64%) were interested in workshops or other training on distance education, learning theory, and WebAccess. Five faculty members expressed interest in mentoring faculty developing their first online or hybrid course. In response to an open-ended question assessing distance education faculty, 35% reported a need for more opportunities to share ideas with other distance education faculty.

In March 2011 a second survey went out to all Cañada faculty members, in order to gauge interest in distance education training, development of new courses, enhancement of face-to-face courses with technology, and teaching online. Thirty faculty responded to the survey, with almost 70% reporting high to extremely high interest in developing courses and teaching online, enhancing their traditional courses, and participating in training or workshops.

Faculty Development: In spring of 2011, the College hired a part-time instructional designer, who worked with CIETL, to offer a series of workshops and one-on-one consultations for all faculty. His primary focus was on distance education, but all faculty were encouraged to attend workshops to gain expertise in adult pedagogy and to enhance student learning for all courses, whether online or not.

There is a central core of both full-time and part-time faculty teaching distance education, and most also teach on campus. Faculty have been trained for distance learning through three main routes: informal "training" with or without a mentor, STOT (Structured Training for Online Teaching) offered through the district, and @ONE training supported by the State Chancellor's Office. More recently, our instructional designer has worked with faculty through workshops and one-on-one to train them in distance learning pedagogy and Moodle features.

What changes have you seen, and why?

Cañada has relative few students enrolled in distance education courses, compared to other California community colleges, but enrollment has grown steadily over the past several years. Enrollment in fully online classes, for example, increased from 662 in 2007/08 to 1375 in 2011/12, a 108% increase. There was a total enrollment in distance learning courses in the spring 2012 semester of 1,202 (7.3% of total census enrollment) with 725 of these students in online sections and 477 in the hybrid sections. There were no out-of-state students in the spring or fall 2012, but one out-of-state student in spring 2013.

Course Offerings: In the spring 2012 semester, 39 sections of 28 courses were offered via the distance learning modality, with 22 sections offered fully online and 17 offered in the hybrid format. In the current semester (spring 2013), there are 50 sections of 35 courses offered through distance learning.

Course Approvals: Cañada has approved 133 courses for distance education. Analysis of DE course approvals revealed that it was possible for a student to take more than 50% of the units for an Associate's degree in the distance learning format – should the courses be offered by the College. This came about because of targeted course development in general education areas. The only departments that currently offer the major courses in the distance education format are anthropology and economics. The history department has a goal of getting approval for all of their courses to be offered through distance education, but it is not clear when these courses might be offered. Because of this analysis, the College prepared a Substantive Change Report for Distance Education, which the Board approved in February 2013 and was submitted to the ACCJC in the March 2013.

When we reviewed the courses approved for distance education and compared it to the degree requirements, it appears that students cannot complete an Associate's degree fully online because of the physical education requirement. The distance education appendix for a physical education course was approved in March 2013, but it is not known when the class might be offered.

What changes, if any, will you make?

Because distance education at Cañada is in its foundational stages, we have the opportunity to build a well-designed, student-centered, and robust distance education initiative that will decisively propel Cañada College towards excellence in distance education. Given input from faculty members, consideration of best practices, and limited resources, we believe our goals should focus on developing a community of well-trained faculty members and strategically growing our distance education offerings to support degree, certificate, and transfer paths.

In support of this vision, our major goals last year focused on developing faculty and courses. Survey results suggest there is increasing faculty interest in incorporating distance education and technology into current classes, developing hybrid and online classes, and supporting one another through this process. Significant strides were made on many of the goals and objectives in the strategic plan from last year.

During the current cycle, Service Area Outcomes for Distance Education at Cañada College are aimed at increasing student awareness, retention, and success.

The specific objectives are:
- Link a self-assessment of student readiness for distance education to course descriptions in WebSmart.
- Determine whether misconceptions about courses and the requirements for online learning can be reduced by changing DE course descriptions.
- Continue to monitor services to students enrolled in distance education to ensure access to services.
- Develop an "online bill of rights/code of conduct" and a transparent grievance/appeals process for online students for the 2013/2014 catalog.
- Complete a study of the student services offered by other colleges with robust and successful distance education programs and determine what we can add or improve at Cañada College.
- Review the size and composition Distance Education Advisory Committee to improve its effectiveness.
- Recruit someone knowledgeable about student services and interested in distance learning to help plan the growth of the services to our distance learners.

6. Resource Identification
A. Faculty and Staff hiring requests
While staffing is adequate right now, distance education as a program is likely to grow and will require additional staff. Currently the Distance Education Coordinator/Instructional Designer position is funded for one year with the possibility of renewal. To ensure continuity of services and support for faculty and students in distance education courses the ideal is to have the DE Coordinator/Instructional Designer position moved to Fund 1.

B. Professional Development needs
Guidelines:

> *List any professional development activities faculty/staff participated in.*
- In June 2011 Cañada offered a two-day workshop for distance education teachers. 20 faculty members from various disciplines attended this workshop.
- During Fall 2011 the instructional Designer was sent to attend the Ubiquitous Learning Conference at UC Berkeley.
- In 2012 the Distance Education Coordinator and the Instructional Designer attended the Online Teaching Conference, and the Google Apps for Educators Conference.
- Throughout the year faculty are encouraged to attend a variety of professional development workshops offered through CIETL.

> *Describe professional development requests for next year.*
- Continue to encourage faculty to attend workshops and conferences
- Reimburse for registration fees
- Fund trainers to come to campus

C. Equipment requests – must be related to instruction
There are no equipment requests at this time.

D. Office of Planning, Research & Student Success requests
- We need the research office to continue to monitor the success and retention of face-to-face vs. online classes, as this is of particular importance to ACCJC.
- Enrollment in online and hybrid classes needs to be tracked, including unique headcount.
- The research office needs to continue to monitor for out-of-state student enrollment in online classes.

E. Facilities requests
There is a need for a testing center for online courses. The small area of the learning center is no longer adequate in terms of space, noise level, monitoring, etc. to meet the growing numbers of online students.