Distance Education Program Review


Presented to: Educational Planning Committee on June 1, 2009

Enrollment

Online enrollment has increased from 168.4 FTES in 2006-07 or 3.9% of FTES, to 388.0 of 6.9% (a 73% increase). In 2006-07 there were 46 online classes with census enrollment of 1,550, and in 2007-08, 84 classes with census enrollment of 2988, or almost a 100% increase in enrollment, and a doubling of the number of online classes. In 2007-08, Law had 25 online classes with 100.7 FTES and almost 26% of the FTES for online classes, followed by Sociology with 13%, Philosophy 8%, History 8%, Chicano Studies 8%, Political Science 7%, Management 5% and Psychology 4% (1)

Retention

The March 27, 2009 (2) and April 7, 2009 (3) California Community Colleges Distance Education Course Survey showed the following: 2/3rds of the students polled had already taken an online class. This demonstrates the prevalence of online classes taken amongst California Community College students. 94% of students self-select their online classes. Half of the students who withdraw from class do so after they had participated in the online class. 65% of students select online classes because their work schedule is heavy and online classes are more convenient. 58.6% had a good experience with previous online classes, and 80.6 % enrolled in online classes because of personal circumstances (family, health, etc.) which made online classes more convenient. The reasons for dropping online classes were personal problems (68.8%), got behind in class and it was hard to catch up (40.7%), had financial problems (34.5%) and signed up for too many classes and had to cut down on the course load (24%). 77% said they were very likely to register for another online class.

Online Instruction – LACCD – Online instruction has grown dramatically over the past five years (4) – Online class enrollments have doubled at each of the nine colleges and has increased
three fold from 2003-2004 to present. Online classes produced almost 6% of all district enrollments.

Mission College

Growth – In 2003-2004, 1237 students were enrolled in online classes, compared to 4107 students enrolled in online classes in 2007-2008. In Fall 2007, 884 students out of our total enrollment of 8527 students (or 10.4%) were enrolled in online classes compared to 4% at City, 7% at East, 9% at Harbor, 3% at Pierce, 7% at Southwest, 9% at Trade, 5% at Valley, and 27% at West, and 8% District Wide. Also 60% of our online students are dual enrolled.

See the increase in enrollment below (5)
- 2000-2001 - 345 students enrolled in 28 sections
- 2001-2002 - 726 students enrolled in 48 sections
- 2002-2003 - 1472 students enrolled in 67 sections
- 2003-2004 - 1081 students enrolled in 38 sections
- 2004-2005 - 1283 students enrolled in 52 sections
- 2005-2006 - 1674 students enrolled in 71 sections
- 2006-2007 - 2095 students enrolled in 109 sections

Demographics - Overall online students are somewhat older than those enrolling in only traditional classes. Online only students are more likely to be enrolled in only one course, a significant characteristic when considering course success and term to term persistence. (4). 69% of our online students are 25 and older, and 77% are female, and about 50% take online only classes and 30% take no online classes.

Ethnicity - 13% of our online students are Black, 11% Asian, 31% Hispanic, and 44% White. (4)

Success Rate - On the whole, students in online classes are less likely to complete their classes successfully. District Wide 68% of traditional students over past five years have remained enrolled past the no penalty drop date with a grade of C or better, compared to 55% of online students. At Mission, online students had the following success rates: 63.2% were successful compared to the 56% average of the District in Successful Course Completion. Fall to Spring Persistence: Mission showed 69.1% with 2+ classes but no enrollment online (70.7% District), 64.5% with both online and regular classes (69.5% District), 50% with online classes only.
(District 37%), and 39.2% with only one class (not online) (District 32.6%). One conclusion is that Mission College out performs all of the colleges in the District in Fall to Spring Persistence both in students with only one online class and with only one class (not online) (4-paes 3 and 4).

Success Rates – Internet vs. Campus – Mission College

Fall 2002-2006 internet vs. on campus (5 –page2)
2002 - 56.3 internet vs. 74.4 on campus
2003 - 70.4 internet vs. 73.3 on campus
2004 - 65.2 internet vs. 72.7 on campus
2005 - 64.3 internet vs. 70.1 on campus
2006 - 61.9 internet vs. 70.8 on campus

Spring 2003- 2006 internet vs. on campus (5-page2)
2003 - 62.5 internet vs. 72.5 on campus
2004 - 71.7 internet vs. 73.2 on campus
2005 - 64.0 internet vs. 69.4 on campus
2006 - 59.3 internet vs. 69.5 on campus

Curriculum & Instruction

1. Oversight over Distance Education – Under Article 40 of the AFT Contract 2005-2008 effective 7/01/05, each college is to have a "Distance Education Committee”. Mission College organized its DE Committee in October of 2005, and had its first meeting on 10/14/05 (5A-page 1-4) The DE Committee has been holding meetings twice a month since then. (see minutes at http://lamc-ddl.pbworks.com/Minutes)

In March 2007, the DE Committee provided a report on Distance Education at Mission to the Accreditation Site Visit Team (5A-page 1-4)(see http://lamc-ddl.pbworks.com/lamc-report)

The DE Committee and the VP of Academic Affairs established a .2 release time position of DE Coordinator in September of 2007 (6), and outlined the duties and responsibilities of the DE Coordinator (6) (see http://lamc-ddl.pbworks.com/de-coordinator) which include acting as Chair of the DE Committee and assisting with the many aspects of DE education at Mission.

Over the period of October 2006 – December 2008, DE developed standards of evaluating online faculty courses (7) – see http://lamc-ddl.pbworks.com/evaluation and DE Shell Review Rubric (7A) at http://lamc-ddl.pbwiki.com/f/DE%20Review%20Rubric.doc and have been applying those standards in reviewing and recommending online courses for approval by the Curriculum Committee. The standards of review of an online course websites include course description, type of assignments, discussion forums, quizzes, syllabus, assessments and measurement, learner support and resources, web design, ADA
compliance, criteria, and overall course evaluation with a minimum score on “at least meets” in the critical areas of evaluation. Refer to Content Review Rubric – 2/28/07 and updated on 12/04/07 (7A). Curriculum implemented an Application to Teach Online (7B), Distance Education Approval Process (7C) and DE reviewed and approved a Checksheet to Teach Online (7D)

DE/Curriculum Shell Review

The DE/Shell review sub-committee (8) reviewed 6 classes in Winter 2008 (Chicano 47, Child Development 1, Philosophy 6, Chicano 37, Chicano 42, and Chicano 8), 5 classes in Spring 2008 (Biology 33, FCS 26, History 86, Interior Design 113, English 101 PACE Hybrid), 2 classes in Fall 2008 (History 12, and Psychology – PACE Hybrid), 4 classes in Spring 2009 (Sociology 22, AJ1, Health 11, CSIT 401), and 6 classes for Spring 2010 (English 101, Library Science 101, Political Science 1, Psychology 14, Sociology 7, and Sociology 24) for a review of a total of 23 online classes from Winter 2008 to Spring 2010. Fall 2009 shell review of online classes was suspended by the VP of Academic Affairs in consultation with the DE Committee to review the DE Program.

2. Materials, Programs, and Courses are Current – DE requires that a new faculty who wants to teach online must first receive certification in one of three course management systems – Etudes, Course Compass or Moodle. The DE Committee maintains a list of all faculty who have received certification. (9) The faculty member must have a certificate in the course management system used by the faculty who teach the online class. If a faculty member changes platforms they must obtain a certificate in the new platform.

The faculty then develops and uploads at least 50% of their course into a course shell which is reviewed in the DE Shell Review – see Shell Review Rubric at [http://lamission.edu/curriculum/forms/DE_Rubric.pdf](http://lamission.edu/curriculum/forms/DE_Rubric.pdf) (7A ) and recommends changes, or improvements of the shell. Once the shell is approved by DE it is recommended for approval and returned to the Curriculum Committee for final review and approval, and then listed on the DE website as an approved course shell.

Every five years following the initial certification of the online course shell, the course shell must be again reviewed in DE/Curriculum Shell review for recertification of the online class. During the same time period, faculty is required to take an online pedagogy class to maintain currency with their technology skills and knowledge.

3. Appropriate Technology – Currently, Mission uses 3 different course management systems – Etudes, Course Compass, and Moodle. Etudes cost about $16,500 for 2009-2010. Course Compass costs are born by the student when they purchase their textbook packaged at additional cost with a required access code to the Course Compass system (which is a Blackboard system), and the costs for Moodle hosting is currently being carried by L.A. Trade Tech and Pierce College with no cost to Mission. In the future, Mission will pay hosting costs as part of a consortium of colleges who use Moodle (LA Trade Tech, Pierce) at a cost of approximately ½ the cost of what we spend on Etudes.
4. Selection of a Single, Common College Course Management System

The DE Committee and District DE Committee have reviewed the adoption of a single district wide or college wide course management system. The District DE Committee supports the use of more than one platform District Wide (Etudes and Moodle, and others). Mission DE Committee supports the use of three course management systems (Etudes, Moodle, and Course Compass). The Budget and Planning Committee has renewed the 2009-2010 costs for maintaining Etudes, but stated it was the last budget approval for support of Etudes.

The Academic Senate in a paper, adopted in Spring 2008, on “Ensuring the Appropriate Use of Educational Technology: An Update for Local Academic Senates”, (page 16), states the following (10):

“Local Academic Senates should support the right of individual faculty members to select the technological materials most appropriate for their course. In the case of technology this would include the choice of best software. This is analogous to a faculty member’s selection of appropriate textbooks. Moreover, the broader decisions such as choice of computer platform and other software must be made using a process where academic instructional reasons take priority…. "

“This is most immediately applicable to software used by the individual to create course content whereas the choice of institution-wide course management software should be made with significant academic advice rather than as an individual selection” (emphasis added). Thus both the EPC, and College Council, and other Shared Governance Committees including Budget and Planning must weigh in on either the continuation or discontinuation of Etudes, or the adoption of a single course management system.

5. Faculty Training – There is little systematic faculty training for either developing an online class, or for continuing training of our existing online faculty. In its meeting of 4-16-09 (11), the DE Committee agreed to the following list of acceptable training for faculty who wish to obtain certification in one of the approved course management systems so they can teach online:

1. **Moodle** - through @One - 4 week class
2. **Etudes** - through Foothill, or WLAC, ELAC – 2 units – 4 weeks
3. **Course Compass (Blackboard)** – Pearson Publishing has developed the curriculum for training online faculty. This curriculum needs to be reviewed to ensure it is similar to the Etudes and Moodle training. @One also provides a certificate in Blackboard which is acceptable for teaching with Course Compass.
6. **Training of Department Chairs** – The DE Committee in its meeting of 3-26-09 (12) stated that training needs to be developed for Faculty Chairs so they can appropriately evaluate the effectiveness of their faculty who are teaching online.

7. **Load Limit Policy** - The DE Committee in conjunction with the VP of Academic Affairs reviewed and drafted a Load Limit policy. The policy was endorsed by the EPC in its 4-16-09, and is currently implemented by the VP of Academic Affairs.

   The policy states: A full-time faculty member shall teach at least 40% of their regular assignment on campus. All of an adjunct assignment can be taught online. Any deviation from the 40% on campus assignment needs to be approved by the department chair, the dean, and the Vice-President of Academic Affairs. Hybrid classes (which are at least 51% on campus, and the remainder on the internet) are considered “on campus” classes for purpose of computing the faculty load limit under this policy.

   **Late Add Policy** – DE and Admissions instituted a “Late Add Policy” see policy at [http://missiononline.pbworks.com/late-add](http://missiononline.pbworks.com/late-add) (see District “Late Add” policy - [http://lamc ddl.pbwiki.com/f/interim.rtf](http://lamc ddl.pbwiki.com/f/interim.rtf)

8. **Scheduling Policy for Online Classes** – The DE Committee reviewed in its 4-16-09 meeting (11), the Trade Tech Policy, and the VPAA and DE are in the process of developing a similar policy during its program review process.

9. **Faculty Guidelines** – The DE Committee is currently reviewing a letter in “draft” format to advise online faculty on DE guidelines (see Draft 1)(13) regarding the teaching certification process, curriculum and shell review approval, scheduling process, faculty evaluations, student surveys and Faculty re-certification.

10. **Faculty Support** - There is minimal faculty support for online teaching. Institutional support must be developed.

11. **Quality Assurance** – The DE Committee in consultation with the EPC will do program review to ensure quality of the online classes at Mission. Also the DE Committee is currently meeting every two weeks, on the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays of the month with the VP of Academic Affairs to ensure that DE aligns with curriculum and instruction at Mission. The Mission DE Committee will also review and adopt any District DE policies which would assure quality of its online courses and faculty.

12. **DE Policies** - The DE Committee needs to communicate a clear and consistent set of guidelines and policies. This will include reviewing literature, and materials from other colleges – for example, see Best Practices at - [http://lamc-ddl.pbworks.com/f/best-practices-sw.doc](http://lamc-ddl.pbworks.com/f/best-practices-sw.doc) which covers the basic assumptions and seven guiding principles, classifications and definitions, faculty qualifications, faculty support student support, course requirements, course management system, accessibility requirements, course evaluations, a Process Flowchart, Methods of Instruction, Verification of Process (Mt. San
Antonio College)(18), Guidelines, Principles, Implementation (one-on-one Mentoring) San Diego State University (SDSU)(19), The “ABC’s in Proposing a DE class at Suffolk Community College (20) and Georgia Tech Office of Assessment – Online Learning – What to Assess and What Tools to Use (22)

13. **Disabled Students** – DE needs to work with DSPS to accommodate the DPSS students in online learning.

**Evaluation & Assessment**

1. **Student Information, Orientation, Readiness and support to students** – Mission has a Help Desk, staffed by the DE Coordinator whose cell phone and email are located at http://lamission.edu/online but this function needs to be Institutionalized, and support resources and services provided to students and faculty. We also need to develop better online orientation and tutorials.

2. **Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes and Student Satisfaction.** Currently DE uses an AFT Contract online student survey. DE needs to work with IT to implement and manage the student surveys.

3. **Integrity of Student work and Credibility of Degrees** – The LACCD IT staff and Etudes currently uploads student rosters at the start of every semester, or online session. Moodle is in the process of implementing course roster upload this Summer and Fall. Course Compass requires students to self register for class. The DE Committee is reviewing how to implement the new requirements under the **New Distance Education Requirements of the Higher Education Act of 2008 Require Immediate Implementation** of September 24, 2008 (21) http://lmc-ddl.pbwiki.com/f/authentication.doc

4. **Timely Interaction between faculty and students** - The Academic Senate Paper in 1999 on “Effective Instructor-Student Contact in Distance Learning” (14) suggests the development of “open-ended” questions, to ensure frequency of instructor-student conduct. The DE Committee needs to continue to develop its policies and procedures in reviewing and approving online classes to ensure frequent contact. To also ensure timely interaction, at the end of each semester or session, online faculty are required to imbed a student survey (15) which students fill out. This survey is forwarded to the Department Chair for use in the DE faculty evaluation.

**Library & Learning**

1. Access to Library Resources and Databases Online – need to integrate this with online faculty
2. Authentication of Students - uploading of student rosters – in progress
3. Online Virtual Librarian – develop
4. Library & LRC Assistance for online students - develop
Student Services

1. DE to work with Student Services to develop access to Student Services, Admissions, Financial Aid, Academic Advising - developmental
2. Resolution of Student Complaints - developmental
3. Clear Advertising, Recruiting and Admissions Information on online programs, requirements, available services. - developmental
4. Information on Minimum equipment and knowledge required for online classes - developmental
5. Virtual Student Services - help with technical, textbooks, academic questions - international students, and out of state residents – developmental

Facilities & Finances

1. Equipment, technical expertise, trained faculty, Instructional design – exists but needs improvement, implementation and integration of systems.
2. Long range planning, budgeting and support of course management systems - etudes, moodle, and course compass – need more integration in our Shared Governance process.
3. Strategic planning on which online classes and programs to offer. – non-existent.

What are your challenges?

DE faces many challenges in the future, including, but not limited to the following:

1. To improve the DE Shell Review of course content.
2. To ensure online courses meet criteria and standards and are high quality classes.
3. To keep faculty current in DE technology
4. To work with the Budget and Planning Committee and the College Council to ensure Institutional support of DE and the Course Management Systems, along with training and scheduling and to budget for future costs, and future increase of online classes.
5. To communicate more clearly to DE Chairs, and Faculty – its DE policies, timelines, forms, processes, etc.
6. To work within the AFT contract which identifies DE as a distinct area of instruction and places limitations on class size.
7. To comply with the new Higher Ed Act on Authentication.
8. To be more proactive with faculty training in DE
9. To develop a newsletter to online faculty and students
10. To develop a better online webpage at http://lamission.edu/online with tutorials, videos, and online orientation, along with student services, advisement, counseling, and the like.
11. To carefully plan the growth of online classes, and to select which classes work well in an online delivery format and classes which lead to a degree.
12. To continue taking surveys of faculty and students required by t
13. To work with the Accreditation Site Visit Teams on DE requirements under ACCJC standards, including any required “Substantive Changes” which might be required.
14. To assist Faculty Chairs on evaluation of online faculty.

How does your unit planning support the mission of the college?

Online courses are in very high demand for today's students and provide very high enrollment to the campus without the use of facilities.

What are your visions for changes, revisions and growth?

Online classes are growing 11% nationwide, and 10% at Mission. We need to carefully plan for the expansion of our online offerings.

What resources are needed to support as well as to build the programs in Distance Education?

1. **On Campus DE Office** to meet needs of our online students – 80% of our online students live within 5 miles of Mission and they would benefit by having a physical location to visit for help and assistance in their online classes.
2. **Online Student Tutoring** – Title V or BSI funding possibilities
3. **Multiple year Budgeting** for our Course Management Systems to provide more certainty and stability
4. **DE line item in Budget** for training of faculty in online pedagogy
5. **Student Services** to provide advisement, counseling, and other student services
6. **College wide support** for 24/7 help desk and online materials, tutorials, videos, virtual librarian, and other virtual services for both on campus and online students

What is the status of SLO assessments?

SLO’s are set at the course level and are included in the syllabus for all new online classes. The Department Chairs ensure that SLO assessments are current and up to date.

**Distance Education Program Review References – June 1, 2009**

link for resources = http://lmc-ddl.pbworks.com/References

1. L.A. Mission College Distance Education Program Review - Maury Pearl Statistics
2. March 27, 2009 California Community Colleges Distance Education Survey
3. April 7, 2009 California Community Colleges Distance Education Survey
4. Office of Institutional Research and Information - 8/15/2008, Los Angeles Community Colleges
6. Distance Education Coordinator - .2 Release – Duties and Responsibilities – 9-17-07
7. Evaluation of Online Faculty Guidelines – 10/11/06, 7A. Content Review Rubric for an Online Course – 2/28/07 – 7B Application to Teach Online, 7C Distance Education Approval Process, 7D Checksheet to Teach Online
8. Probationary Online Classes – Shell Review Status and approved shells
9. Current List of Certificated Online Faculty – updated 5/26/09
10. “Ensuring the Appropriate Use of Educational Technology” – Adopted Spring 2008 – Academic Senate
11. DE Minutes of 4-16-09
12. DE Minutes of 3-26-09
13. Draft 1 – DE and VPAA letter to interested and current DE Faculty re new DE guidelines for teaching online
14. The Academic Senate Paper in 1999 on “Effective Instructor-Student Contact in Distance Learning”
15. DE Online Student Survey (developed by L.A Trade Tech)
16. LATTC Online Instructor/Student Absentee Policy
17. LASC Best Practices for Online Courses
18. Mt. San Antonio Process Flowchart, Methods of Instruction, Verification of Process
19. SDSU Distance Education Policy
20. The “ABC’s” in Proposing DE Courses – Suffolk County Community College
21. New Distance Education Requirements of the Higher Education Act of 2008 – 9/24/08 – Barbara Beno – Authentication of Identification of Distance Education Students submitting work
22. Georgia Tech Office of Assessment – Online Learning – What to Assess and What Tools to Use