

Distance Education Strategic Plan Initial Draft

In the highly rural area served by the College of the Redwoods District, CR is uniquely positioned to meet the needs of non-traditional students with a need to access high quality educational programs and superior student services in an off-campus setting. To meet this great and growing need, CR is committed to providing the necessary administrative, technological, instructional, student services, and design support to serve learners, faculty, and staff involved with distance education. Specifically, nine (9) strategic initiatives are provided for the successful implementation of distance education to meet the growing needs of CR constituencies.

1. Create learner-friendly and effective distance education environments to meet the educational needs of non-traditional students.
 - a. Review courses, processes, and procedures for consistency.
 - b. Research, test, and recommend technological innovations to use for enhancement of classes and student services.
 - c. Provide opportunities for use of student experiences in class discussions, assignments, and projects.
 - d. Monitor external environments and establish benchmarks for updating course/program content and distance education initiatives.
2. Work with partners, both internal and external, to maintain and upgrade the technical infrastructure and technologies needed to offer high quality courses, certificates, and programs offered at a distance.
 - a. Review and recommend modifications to Datatel to better meet the needs of non-traditional/distance students.
 - b. Review and recommend modifications to College of the Redwoods learning management system (LMS) to better meet the needs of non-traditional/distance students.
 - c. Research and test third party and open source vendor products associated with distance education.
 - d. Work with College of the Redwoods to identify technology that will provide a seamless system for non-traditional students working with multiple campuses.
 - e. Review and recommend modifications to course and program design and delivery to better meet the needs of all students, but specifically distance students.
3. Offer degree completion and professional enrichment programs which support the workforce needs of the College of the Redwoods district.
 - a. Work with market research entities in the areas of licensure, certification, training, and career enhancements to match College of the Redwoods district educational resources with workforce needs.

- b. Annually review current offerings (both credit and non-credit) and determine future directions for each program/course.
 - c. Identify funding models to develop newly identified programs.
4. Provide the necessary training and professional development in distance education for instructional staff, support staff, and students.
- a. Provide budgetary support for annual external professional development opportunities for employees in distance education.
 - b. Expand the internal distance education resource library.
 - c. Develop internal training opportunities by sharing experiences from webinars, conferences, training, listservs, books, etc.
 - d. Encourage employees to further their education and to participate in distance education offerings.
5. Maintain a comprehensive set of services (administrative, academic, and learner support) specifically designed to address the needs of students at a distance.
- a. Annually review current services for improvements, consolidation, deletion, and/or integration with other systems.
 - b. Annually review opportunities to add new services, based on student feedback, assessments, and funding availability.
 - c. Test new communication methodologies to better serve both current and prospective students.
 - d. Explore the development and funding of a “Student Success Center” for non-traditional/distance students.
6. Establish partnerships with other post-secondary institutions, school districts, businesses, industry, and community groups to receive classes offered at a distance.
- a. Review current partnership agreements to determine level of use and make recommendations for future use or discontinuation.
 - b. Develop standards for cultivating better use of existing partnerships.
 - c. Identify mechanisms for developing future partnerships.
 - d. Provide annual report on impact of partnerships to distance education.
 - e. Coordinate with sister institutions in California to identify appropriate partnerships.
7. Monitor current trends in distance education to identify and incorporate best practices.
- a. Identify quality benchmarks against which DE measures its activities, successes, and areas for improvement.
 - b. Maintain memberships in distance education associations and participate in appropriate training to bring new ideas to College of the Redwoods for consideration.

- c. Provide an annual opportunity to discuss trends in distance education and College of the Redwood's response through distance education action planning.
8. Develop new programs and services based on student need, institution strength, and the ability to operate on a cost recovery basis.
- a. Develop an appropriate funding model for existing and new programs.
 - b. Identify criteria to be used for adding new programs and services.
 - c. Institutionalize an appropriate revenue allocation to support existing and new programs.
 - d. Work with appropriate market research entities to determine additional programs and services that are needed.
9. Administer a variety of assessment mechanisms to obtain feedback for continual improvement of programs and services offered at a distance.
- a. Develop annual assessment report.
 - b. Annually review assessment instruments to determine if modifications need to be made, or assessments added or dropped.
 - c. Review industry trends and compare with assessment results.

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