

Substantive Change Proposal Template

Change in Mode of Delivery

Correspondence Education

Directions: This application should be submitted *at least* 45 days prior to the anticipated start date of the change. Applications must be complete and the required fees received in order to be scheduled for review.

Email completed application to substantivechange@accjc.org. Fees must be submitted to ACCJC, 10 Commercial Blvd, Suite 204, Novato, CA 94949

Date of Inquiry: 11 October 2021

Anticipated Start Date: 15 January 2022

Institution Name: College of the Redwoods

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Title of Application and description of Proposal: College of the Redwoods Correspondence Education Proposal. This is a proposal to run correspondence education, primarily in the Pelican Bay State Prison but also in county jails, when circumstances make it impossible to teach face-to-face classes in those facilities, like in the present pandemic or when local faculty are not available to provide courses required to meet graduation/CSU transfer requirements.

Standard I: Mission, Academic Quality and Institutional Effectiveness, and Integrity

Describe the planning process used to determine the rationale and need to offer programs through correspondence education.

The college has had a robust program, teaching face-to-face classes, in Pelican Bay State Prison (PBSP) since January 2016 and has also offered face-to-face non-credit Adult Education courses in county jails. The COVID-19 pandemic made it impossible to teach face-to-face courses in those facilities and the students in those facilities do not have access to computers, so they were unable to take courses through the College's existing distance education modality. Beginning in March of

2020 college faculty teaching face-to-face college courses at PBSP were no longer able to enter that institution due to increasing COVID-19 case counts at the prison. To complete the Spring 2020 semester for the currently enrolled students the college had to switch to a Correspondence Education (CE) modality, the only modality option left. The California Community College Chancellor's Office approved this change in modality under its "Emergency Temporary Distance Education Blanket Addendum for Summer 2020 or Fall 2020" dated March 31st, 2020 (attached). Faculty members submitted updated Curriculum Addenda for CE approval to the Curriculum Committee of the College's Academic Senate for approval, and they were all approved prior to the expiration of the "Emergency Temporary Distance Education Blanket Addendum."

Based on what was learned and the systems we implemented over the remainder of the Spring 2020 semester, and in consultation with the Academic Senate and the administration, it was determined that the college would be able to implement a quality CE program at PBSP whose primary goal would be to allow for the population at PBSP to continue to make progress towards degree completion. In the Fall of 2020 the program did not add new students. It was determined that the best course of action would be to offer courses to student who had already had face-to-face classes from College of the Redwoods. This would give program faculty the opportunity to become more informed and practiced in CE course delivery with seasoned students prior to allowing new students to enroll in the Spring of 2021 if face-to-face courses were not an option.

Although the college is new to CE, we are confident that our experiences with incarcerated students has helped us direct our efforts to the services and a structure that is supportive of our students learning.

EVIDENCE DOCUMENTS 1-12 pertain to this section.

Describe how the change is consistent with the mission and goals of the institution.

The College's mission includes the following: "College of the Redwoods puts the success of every student first while providing accessible and relevant transfer, career and adult education of the highest quality." In order to provide that to students in the Pelican Bay State Prison and county jail facilities during the COVID-19 pandemic, the College needed to provide correspondence education courses in order to continue to provide education services to those students and keep them on track to earn their degrees. If the College does not make this change, then it will be unable to provide "accessible" education to students in those facilities.

EVIDENCE DOCUMENT 13 pertains to this section.

What is the expected impact of this change? What benefits will result from this change?

The College ideally wants to offer face-to-face classes in the prison facilities. This change will make it so that it can continue to provide classes to those students during times when it is unable to offer courses in a face-to-face modality. The obvious benefit of this change is that incarcerated students in the College's service

area will continue to have access to high quality education from a local provider. Because the College has campus locations near to these institutions it can offer additional support services to its students with quicker and more substantive feedback as well regular contact when compared to a college offering a CE program from a long distance. Another benefit of offering courses via CE is course access. Incarcerated students often have jobs and required programs they must attend. With CE the students do not have a class schedule to navigate. This allows capable students to take more courses and progress towards degree completion at a quicker pace. In many cases degree completion can shave 6 months off one's sentence. CE has also allowed for a greater variety of courses because faculty who would not otherwise be able to travel to PBSP can teach a course with the need to drive 90 minutes from our main Eureka campus to the prison.

Describe how CE programs will be incorporated into the college's integrated planning processes.

The CE program will follow the same integrated planning process as any other program at the college.

Standard II: Student Learning Programs and Support Services

Describe how the institution will ensure that the CE program is evaluated for academic quality and improvement.

CE courses will be assessed in the same way as all of the College's courses through its assessment processes and on the assessment timeline (the College is currently on a 4-year cycle). Improvement plans developed out of assessment dialog appear in the "Program Review Reports".

Some examples of other measures implemented to ensure academic quality and improvement are:

- A Canvas page was developed to ensure all faculty teaching in the correspondence modality were properly prepared to adapt their classes effectively. Regular professional development opportunities were provided as part of the "CR Keep Teaching" efforts led by several faculty. Regular check-ins are conducted where faculty can problem solve together and a culture of transparency and accountability for high quality programming was established, including a "certification" process similar to the certification required for faculty who teach online (examples attached).
- A comprehensive training was provided to all faculty scheduled to teach CE classes in fall 2021. The training including elements such as regular and effective feedback and ways to respond promptly to student concerns (burning questions sheet).
- On-going faculty/staff meetings ensure open communication between all members of the team who are responsible for the academic quality and the

logistical procedures necessary for providing higher education inside the prison using CE.

- PBSP students were encouraged to participate in the faculty of the year nominations, resulting in a PBSP faculty member being voted as the 2020-21 faculty of the year.

Because we cannot meet with students at this time, instructor assessment forms have been provided to students with a preaddressed envelope that allows anonymous participation. We offer a meeting space for program staff and faculty to meet regularly to problem solve issues. The semester “kickoff” training has been updated to reflect relevant information related to CE and includes recommendations guided by student needs and program status.

EVIDENCE DOCUMENTS 14-21 pertain to this section.

Describe the comparable programs, services and activities which will support correspondence education students (tutoring, learning resources, counseling and advising, etc.), and how students will be informed of their rights and responsibilities including the college’s grievance process.

Each semester, students receive a comprehensive student advising letter and educational planning documents. In addition, a weekly newsletter is sent to students informing them of upcoming events, deadlines and their rights and responsibilities as students in the program, program and prison education updates, requesting feedback on topics, important reminders, positive messaging, and addressing questions. Enrollment in correspondence classes is entirely voluntary. Student feedback is solicited regularly. For example, students enrolled in the EOPS program receive three opportunities each semester to provide feedback on their needs as students, particularly with regard to the CE modality. Faculty work closely with other student services staff to address individual needs as they arise using the mail system and, when necessary, a face-to-face meeting may be scheduled.

Individual and group additional supplemental materials are provided based on student feedback, requests and expressed anxieties. For example, this semester all students received an MLA/APA packet providing an overview of the main writing and citation styles used in courses at the College. Last semester, all students received packets regarding pursuing baccalaureate degrees through transfer, based on student interest. On an individual level, students will request supplies or information about colleges and programs when pursuing continuing their education after parole.

All new and returning students are provided an enrollment packet each semester. The contents included:

- Fall 2021 Registration Calendar providing the timeline of events
- An academic calendar from the College’s website
- Course Schedule: Yard-specific face-to-face and correspondence offerings

- Course Descriptions: Includes unit value, transferability, and faculty designation
- A personalized and semester-specific advising letter breaking down course offerings and how the courses apply to degree completion
- Academic Evaluation Report: A roadmap to degree completion that reflects what students have completed and what they may still need to complete
- Add/Drop Cards
- Promise Grant Application

New students receive invitation packets that include:

- An invitation letter including basic information about the program
- An application guide with directions on the forms
- College application, College release, Promise Grant, transcript request forms, an assessment providing insight into their academic plans and strengths/barriers to meet student needs, and an “Ask CR” form.

After new student applications are received back and processed, students receive an acknowledgment letter congratulating them on their official admission to the program. The letter contains introductions of the staff they will interact with and their roles, about their selected program, and what they can expect as “next steps” in their educational process.

EVIDENCE DOCUMENTS 22-28 pertain to this section.

Describe how the college will confirm student authentication for enrollment and attendance purposes.

Students authenticate their work by writing their full names and student identification numbers on all work submitted. Work is submitted on lined paper and is nearly always handwritten, thus making it easy to identify each individual student’s work.

Faculty utilize rosters to track the receipt of work submitted by students in their classes. Some also use Canvas to track and document attendance and participation for their own records, because the students cannot access Canvas. Students who have not submitted work are dropped prior to the “Census Date”. When a student has not communicated with an instructor or submitted any work for more than two weeks, an individual letter is often written requesting that the student re-engage with the class, or give an explanation as to their absence. Students may be dropped, consistent with college policies, if they have stopped attending entirely or appear to be unable to pass the class by the official withdrawal deadline.

For general purposes, we use the official “add/drop” card and an “Ask CR” form that includes a date and signature line.

All student work is scanned and preserved on a secured shared drive. Instructors

can compare handwriting across documents if participation is in question. Students receive individualized packets to assist in keeping information private and secure.

Describe how instruction will be delivered and how communications between faculty and students will occur.

Communication between faculty and students will occur by:

- Mailing weekly announcements or updates to help students stay on task and know what is coming up in the course.
- Mailing weekly lessons or presentations related to course content.
- Mailing unit packets with course content.
- Mail is picked up twice a week and delivered once a week:
 - Tuesday- Pick up mail and forward Burning Questions (BQs) form to faculty to ensure they can reply by the Friday mail delivery deadline.
 - Friday- Deliver weekly packets, pick up mail and forward BQ's and assignments
- Providing check-in or “just-in-time” opportunities to students through course assignments, letters, and other correspondence forms (for example, our Burning Question form for our Pelican Bay Scholars Program, which allows students to send time-sensitive questions and receive timely answers). Utilizing the BQ form allows student to inquire about assignments at any time and participating instructors the opportunity to reply to inquires within the week.
- Providing meaningful, substantive, individualized, and timely feedback to students when grading required or representative assignments, which can be done through written or typed feedback forms, rubrics, or letters sent to the students in response to complete assignments.
- Communicating to students when they can expect feedback on their assigned work and when they can expect a response to their mailed questions. The “turn-around time” for feedback is expected to take 1 to 2 weeks, depending on mail delays.

Instruction will be delivered to students through the traditional mailing system or the correctional facility’s mailing system or, when feasible, delivered directly to students at Humboldt County Correctional Facility or the Pelican Bay State Prison directly by the instructor, department staff, or college staff (such as the program coordinator). Required and representative assessment or learning tasks will be completed and returned to the instructor through this delivery process. Completed and mailed assignments will be given to the instructor electronically from program staff or, when feasible, picked up by the instructor at a designated location such as a department office on the College’s campus or a designated location at the

Humboldt County Correctional Facility or Pelican Bay State Prison.

EVIDENCE DOCUMENTS 29-31 pertain to this section.

Standard III: Resources

Human Resources:

Please describe the staffing plan to support the CE program.

The existing full-time program coordinator and full-time Student Services/Instructional Support Specialist have been dedicated to correspondence support during the COVID-19 pandemic. The program has also hired a "special projects" temporary, 24 hour support person to cover day-to-day tasks related to CE, and a periodic part-time temporary Student Advisor to assist during advising periods. In addition to these program-specific positions the Del Norte Center student services and administrative teams support the program on a daily basis.

The district has also hired two tenure-track faculty members whose assignment is wholly or substantially serving the students in PBSP. One faculty member, in English, is 100% assigned to courses in PBSP and the other, in Communication Studies, is currently 75% assigned to courses in PBSP and will be assigned to that facility as per the district's need.

Eligible students also receive support from Extended Opportunity Program Services (E.O.P.S.).

Financial Resources

Describe the impact on institutional finances, including a budget showing evidence those resources are available and committed to support the change.

The addition of CE courses has not created a significant cost increase to the program. The primary increase in cost is in printing. This has been somewhat off-set by the lack of travel pay for commuting faculty. Staffing has not increased; the temporary positions hired have changed from supporting the program with face-to-face assistance to assistance with CE related duties.

Standard IV: Leadership and Governance

What leadership and governance oversight exists to ensure the continued academic quality and institutional effectiveness are maintained and sustained?

The program at PBSP is overseen and directed by the Dean of the Del Norte Education Center where all of the program staff and faculty are located. All program staff and faculty report to the Del Norte Center Dean. Program staff and faculty receive the same training as non-program staff and faculty with the addition of program-specific training. The staff and faculty also participate in their respective department/division trainings and meetings to make sure they are still connected to the resources and innovations happening throughout the College.

This program follows all of the same quality control measures as other programs at the College. Program staff and full-time faculty are evaluated on the same timelines as all other college staff and full-time faculty. Students' feedback is solicited regularly and other non-program full-time faculty, Deans, and administrators visit the program and participate in the evaluation process.

To ensure the continued academic quality and institutional effectiveness, the college will continue to integrate correspondence courses into its regular institutional cycles and processes. Correspondence courses will continue to operate with a comprehensive curricular "correspondence addendum", approved by our College's Curriculum Committee, Academic Senate, Board of Trustees and the Chancellor's Office. Correspondence courses will continue to be evaluated on planned assessment cycles, as well as reviewed through our program review process. By going through these processes, the institution can offer necessary curriculum oversight.

Additionally, faculty will continue to receive training and support in correspondence education through regular professional development opportunities, developed by program directors or deans, program coordinators, and correspondence faculty mentors. All professional development resources will be housed on our College's professional development site, as well as inside Canvas modules.

Evidence

Please include documentation that will help the Committee understand the process by which the change was developed, such as former and proposed mission and/or objectives, summary of discussions with campus constituents (Board of Trustees, Academic Senate, students, community members), curriculum committee minutes, strategic plans, financial plans, copies of Board minutes, as appropriate, copies of draft legal documents dealing with matters of facilities and other institutional property, including agreements with state and/or federal agencies. Please include any state and/or federal approvals, as appropriate. Please include state or other legislative approvals, as appropriate.