



Substantive Change Proposal:

3.7.1 Addition of a Program or Courses that Represents a Significant Departure
from an Institution's Current Programs or Curriculum

Offering a program 100% online

Cañada College
4200 Farm Hill Blvd
Redwood City, CA

Approved by Board of Trustees of the San Mateo County Community College District
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A. OVERVIEW OF SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE

Description of Proposed Change

This Substantive Change Proposal is to request formal approval by ACCJC to offer degrees in which all of the courses could be completed through distance education. In spring 2013, the College submitted a substantive change report to ACCJC to get approval to offer 10 degrees and eight certificates 50% or more via distance education. The Substantive Change was approved March 22, 2013. Since that time, we have added a few more online classes to our offerings, such that a review of the degrees and certificates in our catalog indicated that it is possible for a student to now complete a degree taking only online courses.

AA Degrees where 100% of the courses could be taken in the online format

Anthropology
Economics
History
Political Science
Psychology, including AA-T
Interdisciplinary Studies: Social and Behavioral Sciences
Interdisciplinary Studies with Transfer: Social & Behavioral Sciences
Interdisciplinary Studies: Natural Science and Mathematics
Interdisciplinary Studies with Transfer: Natural Science and Mathematics

Relationship to Mission

Cañada strives to *ensure opportunity* for all students to achieve their goals, and the College offers courses and programs in a variety of formats, including distance education, to meet the needs of a diverse student body. Through distance education courses and programs, Cañada offers flexible and innovative instruction. This responds to community requests for distance education options. Thus Cañada College is addressing the changing needs of our students. New technologies and instructional methodologies are part of our distance education courses.

Mission: “Cañada College provides our community with a learning-centered environment, ensuring that students from diverse backgrounds have the opportunity to achieve their educational goals by providing transfer, career/technical, basic skills programs, and lifelong learning. The college cultivates in its students the ability to think critically and creatively, communicate effectively, reason

quantitatively to make analytical judgments, and understand and appreciate different points of view within a diverse community.”

Vision: “Cañada College is committed to being a preeminent institution of learning, renowned for its quality of academic life, its diverse culture and practice of personal support and development, extraordinary student success, and its dynamic, innovative programs that prepare students for the university, the modern workplace, and the global community.”

The vision, mission and values of Cañada College can be found on the website:
<http://canadacollege.edu/about/mission.php>

Rationale for Change

The growth in online learning at Cañada College has been proceeding at a modest rate. However, the College planning processes show an ever increasing demand from students to have programming that is more flexible in terms of scheduling. Hybrid and online courses reduce time on campus and provide students with work and family obligations expanded opportunities to complete their educational goals. As the demands grow, the College continues to expand non-traditional delivery modes and scheduling so that programs and services can more effectively serve our local community. A large part of this expansion is in the area of distance education. To date our main focus has been on developing and offering hybrid courses that reduce the time on campus, but maintain face-to-face contact with the students.

As part of the San Mateo County Community College District (SMCCCD) Distance Education Advisory Committee, Cañada College representatives reviewed statewide distance education participation and performance data in relationship to the SMCCCD data. The College is behind most of the community colleges in the state in terms of enrollment in distance learning courses. While developing the most recent Education Master Plan, the College reviewed emerging trends in higher education. Specifically for distance learning, growth in online enrollments is predicted to accelerate and colleges need to offer more digital options in addition to face-to-face options. This information has led us to re-evaluate our distance learning options for our students.

Evidence:

Cañada College Educational Master Plan 2012-2017

<http://www.canadacollege.edu/inside/ed-master-plan/2011/EMP-2012-web.pdf>

SMCCCD Strategic Plan

http://www.smccd.edu/strategicplanning/documents/sp-SMCCCD_Strategic_full_web_09.pdf

B. DESCRIPTION OF EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS TO BE OFFERED

In fall 2010, the College studied its course offerings approved through the curriculum committee. This study showed an increase in the number of courses approved to be offered through the distance education modality – either hybrid or online. As a follow up to this study, a review was completed of degree and certificate programs to see if any could be completed with 50 percent or more courses approved to be offered through distance education instruction. The results of this analysis were submitted in the Substantive Change Report in 2013. At that time 10 degrees existed in the catalog for which 100% of the courses in the major could be taken through distance education. Since then, addition of a few more courses in the general education area now allow for completion of general education requirements completely online. Therefore, we went back to the degrees we had identified where 100% of the major courses were available online. Four of these degrees can now be completed

entirely through distance education. In addition, the psychology and political science departments added additional online offerings, which might allow students in these disciplines to take all of the required courses in the major through distance education.

Degrees identified in 2012 with 100% of major courses available through distance education	Degrees identified in 2014 with distance education courses available to satisfy <u>all</u> requirements
Anthropology with 4 areas of emphasis	<u>Anthropology</u> removed areas of emphasis.
Economics	<u>Economics</u> – all courses could be completed online
History	<u>History</u> – all courses could be completed online
Political Science – not on the list in 2012	<u>Political Science</u> – all courses can be completed online
Psychology (AA and AA-T) – not on the list in 2012	<u>Psychology</u> – beginning spring 2015 the last required course in the major will be added to the online options
Interdisciplinary Studies (and with transfer): Natural Science and Mathematics	<u>Interdisciplinary Studies (and with transfer): Natural Science and Mathematics</u> – only lab class available online is ASTR 101
Interdisciplinary Studies (and with transfer): Social and Behavioral Sciences	<u>Interdisciplinary Studies (and with transfer): Social and Behavioral Sciences</u> – all courses could be completed online

Eligibility Requirements, Accreditation Standards, Commission Policies Met

Cañada College is submitting this substantive change proposal to address changes in delivery modes for courses that are part of degrees or certificates. The courses addressed in the proposal are already part of existing programs that have been approved by the College and the Office of Academic Affairs of the California Community College Chancellor's Office. The courses are already offered in a face-to-face format.

The College Curriculum Committee ensures that the rigor, breadth, objectives, learning outcomes, and academic quality of courses and programs offered in the distance education mode meet the same standards as those offered in the traditional face-to-face mode by having each distance education course outline reviewed by a faculty member with expertise in distance education. The curriculum

committee separately approves each course proposed for distance learning to ensure that the following criteria are met:

- Regular and effective contact is maintained between the instructor and students through group or individual meetings, orientation, review sessions, study sessions, field trips, library workshops, discussion forums online, telephone contact, email, or other activities.
- Effective pedagogical techniques appropriate to the distance education mode are utilized to ensure that quality and rigor of instruction is equivalent to that of the on-campus version of the course.
- Appropriate technology is used to achieve course objectives
- Multiple measures are used to achieve and assess student learning.
- Student authentication: The course utilizes a log-in and password protected course management system in order to verify that the student who registers in a distance education course is the same student who participates in and completes the course or program and receives the academic credit. Alternatively, the instructor may choose to require a proctored examination for the course in order to meet the Higher Education Opportunity Act (HEOA) regulations. To date, all of the proctored examinations have taken place in the Learning Center on-campus where students must show identification in order to begin an exam.

A Performance Evaluation Task Force was been constituted by the district to review all evaluation processes for faculty. The new faculty evaluation procedures have components specifically addressing distance education courses and will be effective beginning spring 2015. Pilots of the evaluation for online instruction are planned for Fall 2014.

C. PLANNING PROCESS LEADING TO THE CHANGE

Relationship to Planning, Evaluation, and Mission

This substantive change request directly ties to the mission of Cañada College and to the overall planning within the institution. Cañada College strives to *ensure opportunity* for all students to achieve their goals. Through distance education courses and programs, Cañada offers flexible and innovative instruction to achieve the College mission.

Through bi-annual program planning, each department within the instructional and student service areas review on-going programs and plans for the following two-year period. These program plans evaluate the success of the current programs and address any identified need for development of alternative and innovative instruction and student services. For example, a department might see a growing demand for online offerings in their area and propose a plan to develop specific courses for distance learning. The program planning cycle also addresses assessment of student learning outcomes at the course and program level. The learning outcomes are evaluated for both face-to-face and distance learning.

Under the direction of the Vice President of Instruction, a Distance Education Advisory Council was constituted in 2010 to provide oversight of the distance education offerings and student services. The council helps provide data and feedback to departments and divisions to help balance the growth in distance education offerings and to ensure that the student services meet the needs of the online student. For example, an evaluation of the enrollment patterns in the distance learning options has

shown faster growth in enrollment in online classes during the summer session. Therefore, each instructional division was asked to review their online plans for summer with a view towards increasing the number of options for our summer students. A full program review of distance education was completed in spring 2013.

Evidence:

Comprehensive Program Review and Analysis for Distance Education Program 2013

http://canadacollege.edu/programreview/1213/DE_APP_2013.pdf

Needs and Resource Assessment

In order to grow the distance education program, the College identified the need for faculty and staff development around distance education. To help meet these needs, an instructional designer was hired by the College to focus on professional development with an emphasis on distance education. The College also regularly sends faculty to a District-sponsored training in distance education. To date, these resources are adequate to meet the needs of our faculty and staff in the area of distance education. College assessment of technology resources determined that we have the needed support for a robust distance education program.

The College Distance Education Advisory Committee each year updates a strategic plan, which focuses on program needs and resource assessment specifically for distance education. The group has chosen to focus on student success in online classes for the 14-15 academic year.

Anticipated Effect of the Proposed Change

Cañada College anticipates increased enrollment in online education. However, we expect that students will behave in a way that is well documented in the district and they will take both online and onsite courses. We routinely monitor for out-of-state student enrollment and have only had 1 student NOT from California, in spring semester 2013.

In order to increase flexibility in scheduling for our students and to grow our distance education offerings, general education courses were specifically targeted to ensure that at least one course in a particular content area or department is available online. The result is that, although we offer comparatively little online instruction when compared to most colleges in the system, our targeted and strategic development of online instruction in the general education area has resulted in students being able to take more than 50% of most of our degrees in the online or hybrid format and now a few AA degrees. As a result of increasing the availability of online courses, we intend greater access to, and completion of, courses, degrees and certificates.

Benefits Resulting from Change

Expanding the distance education program by officially recognizing and offering these programs will increase access to education by offering more flexible scheduling options for our students.

Preparation and Planning Process

District-wide planning: In 2006, faculty, administration and staff representatives from throughout the college participated in a district-wide steering committee to develop an overall vision and strategic plan for distance education. Three Task Groups were formed to address various aspects of the planning process:

- Course Offerings – Faculty and staff considered the existing offerings and what was necessary to increase access to degrees and certificates online. The group established the definitions for online versus hybrid instruction. They reviewed curriculum approval processes to ensure

online instruction met the same high standards for curriculum approval as onsite instruction. The group also made recommendations regarding the issues of intellectual property rights on matters that are outside of the bargaining processes.

- Resources—Faculty and staff addressed issues related to the availability of online resources for student support. Such resources include: admissions, registration, faculty and staff development, tutorials, library resources, and learning center resources.
- Technology—Faculty and staff considered various platforms and service level agreements for district-wide support. The district currently supports Moodle and each semester generates Moodle shells for every section of every course offered by the College. The Moodle shells are maintained by Moodlerooms, a Moodle hosting site.

Evidence:

District Distance Education Vision 2006

http://www.smccd.edu/accounts/smccd/departments/educationservices/deac/files/deac_VisionPlanningFinal.pdf

Minutes from District DEAC meeting 2008

<http://www.smccd.edu/accounts/smccd/departments/educationservices/deac/files/DEAC%20Minutes%2020080222.pdf>

Cañada College Planning: In 2011, through a series of campus-wide dialogues the 2008 Educational Master Plan was updated. The new 2012-2015 Master Plan includes 4 strategic directions to guide the school for the next three years. Under the Teaching and Learning strategic direction there are goals and activities related to distance education. These include:

Objective 1.2: Assess, evaluate and implement flexible course scheduling options and pathways to accommodate students' needs. (Offering more hybrid and online courses fits into this objective.)

Objective 1.2, Activity 4: Develop and implement a distance education plan. (The initial plan has been completed and this substantive change request is a consequence of this plan.)

Objective 2.3, Activity 1: Develop plan and content for improving new student orientation program, to include an online orientation. (Online orientation has been developed and implemented.)

Evidence:

Cañada College Educational Master Plan

<http://www.canadacollege.edu/inside/ed-master-plan/2011/EMP-2012-web.pdf>

D. INSTITUTIONAL RESOURCES

Student support services are readily available to our online students through a variety of means. We have revised our distance education website and separated resources for faculty and students. The Overview of Distance Education links to getting started with Distance Education and Steps for Success.

Evidence:

Getting Started with Distance Education: <http://canadacollege.edu/distanceducation/index.php>

Student Services: <http://canadacollege.edu/distanceducation/studentservices.php>

Academic Resources: <http://canadacollege.edu/distanceducation/academicresources.php>

Admissions and Registration

Students can apply for admission online (<http://canadacollege.edu/admissions/apply.php>). Online registration is available to all students through WebSmart (<https://websmart.smccd.edu/>), a student,

faculty and staff Web resource. Students may perform all aspects of registration online – registration for classes, drop or add classes, withdrawal from classes, select variable unit levels of enrollment, and select a grade option for a class. Students can check their class schedule, class location, time and instructor information, at any time.

Students may check their registration status, display their class schedule, purchase their parking permit and display or pay their student fees online. Students can view holds on their records, display their grades for a term and request or check on the status of an official transcript or view an unofficial transcript.

Financial Aid

During the registration process, students can access both the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and the Board of Governors' Fee Waiver applications online. At any time, students may check the status of their financial aid application, ascertain if further documentation is needed, or learn of any awards they may receive through WebSmart.

<http://canadacollege.edu/financialaid/index.php>

If a student is new and desires an onsite appointment, s/he may make an appointment online for certain student services using by logging on to their WebSmart account.

Bookstore

Students are able to access the Cañada College Bookstore online (<http://bookstore.canadacollege.edu/home.aspx>). They can purchase their books, supplies and other college merchandise online. Students may shop twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week online at the Cañada College Bookstore.

Self Assessment for Online Learning

Students may take a self assessment to determine if online learning is the type of learning in which they would be able to engage and be successful

(http://www.smccd.edu/degateway/self_assessment.php). After answering questions, students are given a numerical score. Depending upon the range in which they score, they are advised as to whether they would be good candidates for online learning. However, no student is prevented from enrolling in an online course based on the self assessment.

Counseling

Electronic Counseling Services is an internet based service that allows continuing students to receive general counseling services via e-mail (<http://canadacollege.edu/counselingcenter/ecounseling.php>).

This service is particularly helpful for students who find it difficult to schedule counseling appointments at convenient times. Examples of the services available:

- Schedule planning
- Progress reviews
- Transfer information
- Educational plan preparation
- General education status checks
- Certificate completion checks
- Education problem solving
- General career planning

Orientation

An online orientation for Canada College is currently available and information on signing up for the online orientation can be found on the Getting Started in Distance Education Web Page.

Cañada Library Services

An array of online resources and services that support the distance education student are offered.

<http://www.canadacollege.net/library/>

These include:

- Remote access to an extensive collection of periodical and reference subscription databases covering the social sciences, humanities, natural sciences, law and business.
- Remote access to the full range of book and periodical holdings, audio-visual materials, and online database subscriptions of the Peninsula Library System (PLS), a consortium of thirty-four public and community college libraries in San Mateo County.
- Remote access to several full-text digital book collections, including the PLS Digital Book Library, NetLibrary, and the American Council of Learned Societies Humanities eBook collection.
- Online tutorials written by Cañada librarians on finding, evaluating and citing sources.
- More than 75 online research guides (“pathfinders”) offering research tips for courses and subjects taught at Cañada College, as well as a pathfinder for distance education.
<http://guides.canadacollege.edu/DISTANCEeducation>
- Online “Ask a Librarian” Reference Service (“E-Reference”).

Disability Resource Center

The Alternate Media Center is part of the Disability Resource Center at Cañada College. It produces instructional materials (textbooks, course materials, exams, class schedules) in alternate format for students with disabilities and teaches students with documented needs to use assistive technology resources such as:

- Kurzweill 3000 – scanning/reading software
- Dragon Naturally Speaking – voice recognition system
- ZoomText Xtra 9 – screen magnification for DSO and Windows
- JAWS – screen reader for windows

In order to access and use the Alternate Media Center, students with disabilities must have basic computer skills and meet eligibility requirements of the Disability Resource Center.

Online Tutoring

The Learning Center works to provide support for all classes, no matter their mode of delivery. Since the Learning Center is open Monday through Thursday from 8am to 9pm, Fridays from 8am to 3pm and Sat 10am to 2pm, the students in distance learning classes, like other students, take advantage of the tutoring support. Drop-in math support is available every hour we are open, and for all other subjects, appointments are available. Currently, the Learning Center offers online tutoring for math and biology via CCC Confer. Students, using their student ID can log onto WebAccess, and during select times, chat, talk, and draw their problems. For writing, students can upload documents via Google docs when the tutor is on duty and the tutor will provide feedback on the document.

Because most of our online students are “local” and by tracking the usage of the Learning Center, we have learned that most online students come to the Center rather than choosing online support. Additionally, faculty increasingly are utilizing textbooks that have built-in online support provided by

the publisher. For example, our pre-algebra, elementary and intermediate algebra, statistic and calculus students do their homework on MyMathLab or MySTATLAB, from Pearson Education, which accompanies their textbook. Built into the programs are tutorials that provide immediate feedback online.

Faculty, Management, and Support Staffing

Management

The Vice President of Instruction is responsible for the distance education program. One Dean has been assigned to oversee the distance education mission of the College and one faculty member has been assigned as faculty coordinator. Their jobs include providing oversight of the distance education program, developing the strategic vision and plan for distance education, planning for professional development and monitoring of the quality of course offerings by working with the curriculum committee and with faculty evaluation committees.

To provide oversight from the District perspective, the San Mateo County Community College District has implemented its own version of Distance Education Advisory Committee (DEAC). Various members from Cañada College's DEAC serve on the District DEAC to ensure that the interests and needs of the college are represented at district level discussions and decisions.

Support Staffing

The distance education program is supported by an instructional designer who is an adjunct faculty member. The instructional designer works directly with faculty on curriculum design for both distance education and for face-to-face courses and on technical aspects of Moodle (the course management system). She also organizes and presents workshops open to all faculty.

Faculty

There is a central core of both full time (18) and part time (26) 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.

Professional Development

The District and the College are committed to providing extensive professional development opportunities to assure high quality distance education offerings and support.

The District DEAC was formed for the purpose of establishing a vision and strategies for our district's distance education program, identifying best practices, and encouraging faculty interested in distance education by connecting them to professional development opportunities. Through this committee, the District offers professional development in the form of seminars, online short courses such as STOT (Structured Training for Online Teachers), and hands-on mini-STOT workshops focused on a variety of topics such as adult learning, e-pedagogy, best practices, Moodle tools and features, as well as media production software and media design and delivery strategies. Participation in STOT requires recommendation by a faculty member's dean or Vice-President.

In spring 2011, Cañada College hired an instructional designer to assist with training faculty on course design and development using the Moodle course management system, to provide best practices and pedagogy training, and to aid in solving instructional needs and problems. In order to

meet the needs of the largest number of faculty possible, the instructional designer offers a variety of training opportunities in coordination with the Center for Innovation in Teaching and Learning (CIETL). Faculty can attend workshops which address distance education and instructional technology topics of general interest, or they can meet on-on-one with the instructional designer to focus on their specific instructional needs.

The Center for Innovation and Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CIETL) (<http://www.canadacollege.edu/inside/CIETL/index.html>) was initiated by the Vice President of Instruction and various faculty leaders, to serve as an institutionalized place for directed focus on issues of teaching and learning. CIETL is committed to the college's core mission of helping all our students move successfully through their academic plan, including basic skills, transfer, and career/technical education courses. CIETL does this by piloting, evaluating, and supporting innovative teaching and learning practices that encourage collaboration and community building and increase the retention, success, and persistence rates of our students. CIETL promotes sharing of this scholarship of teaching and learning among faculty here and elsewhere. The college has purchased 5 iPads, 5 Flip Cameras, 3 Snow Microphones, 1 Chroma key screen, 30 HP laptops, 5 McIntosh laptops, and HP desktops for faculty training. All these computers and equipment, are located in the CIETL center and are used for training faculty as well as for short-term check out for media development to support curriculum

Faculty interested in professional development in the area of distance education are also encouraged to enroll in @ONE training classes and to consider certification by @ONE. To date, certification is not required to teach distance education courses at Cañada College.

Equipment, Facilities, and Off-Site Campuses

Equipment

The District provides extensive support to the Colleges to assure that the distance education program operates smoothly. Through the Information Technology Services (ITS) department, a centralized District-level service organization, a variety of support and training is provided for information technology leadership, support staff training, monitoring and updating policies and procedures related to technology, effectively deploying and utilizing information technology, and assisting with local technology initiatives, projects, and planning. All ITS personnel, including those providing desktop support to the Colleges, are centrally managed and supervised. This allows ITS to allocate its resources to each College based on need or based on requirements for specialized knowledge or skills. This also helps the Colleges to seamlessly share technology solutions and best practices to leverage savings and efficiency.

ITS and the Colleges collaborate district-wide, and one-on-one, on decision-making processes and set priorities related to technology. ITS staff participates regularly in various College committees to discuss operational issues and developing project plans for a variety of topics which include technology needs in support of teaching and learning, district-wide communications, research, and other operational systems. To best meet the college's needs, the district's IT Strategic Plan outlines specific information on planning, policies and equipment. <http://www.smccd.edu/itstrategicplan/>

Facilities

In terms of facilities specifically geared towards students in distance education classes, our Learning Center and Library both have computers available for student use. These computers are maintained by the IT department. Students have access to these computers whenever the Library or Learning Center is open.

Off-Site Campuses

Students enrolled in courses offered at an off campus sites have the same access to online courses, to computing and to support resources as students at the main campus.

Fiscal Resources and Sustainability: Initial and Long-Term Sources of Funding

Cañada College is one of three colleges in the San Mateo County Community College District, and both the District and the College are fiscally strong due to the leadership, vision, strong community and voter support of general obligation bonds, parcel tax measure, and the college obtaining numerous state and federal grants. The institution has been very resourceful and successful in providing fiscal stability which allowed for both short-term and long-term planning. The District and college have a long-range technology plan where funds have been earmarked for improvements to infrastructure and equipment which will support distance education.

The college is fiscally well-positioned to maintain the equipment and professional development necessary to offer excellent distance education options for our students. The fiscal resources are overseen by the College's Cabinet, working through the participatory governance process. Cañada College's Cabinet consists of the President, Vice Presidents, Instructional and Student Services Deans, Business Officer, Director of Marketing and Public Relations, Dean of Planning, Research and Institutional Effectiveness. In March of each year, current year expenses are reviewed, analyzed, and compared with current year's budget by Cabinet to determine if there is sufficient financial support for instructional and student service programs, which includes distance education. Any substantive changes to the budget are then reviewed and discussed at the Planning and Budgeting Council – the top level advisory committee in the participatory governance structure. Any recommendations from the Council are then forwarded to the College President who makes final decisions on the budget.

The College general fund has and will continue to support Distance Education expenditures, including salaries, office hours, benefits and professional development for faculty teaching distance education courses. Providing administrative oversight are the Vice President of Instruction (.05 FTE) and the Dean of Science and Technology (.025) who co-chairs, with a faculty member, the Distance Education Advisory Committee. The general fund supports instruction in distance education courses and for the faculty who manage the Center for Innovative and Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CIETL), which supports professional development for distance education. The general fund supports the Distance Education website, supplies, software, and equipment needed for the Distance Education platform. In order to grow the Distance Education program, we allocated additional funding from a recent parcel tax to fund an instructional designer's salary and benefits (.67 FTE) who works directly with faculty and staff in layout, pedagogy and design of website for students' use and the faculty coordinator for distance education (.50 FTE). The position of Distance Ed Coordinator has recently been combined with the Instructional Designer at 100%.

The SMCCCD/Cañada College uses the Banner financial accounting system for journal entries, accounts payable, account receivables, revenues, payroll, student administration and purchase requisitions as well as budget information. The VPI and Business Officer track all budgets and expenditures for distance education in Banner.

Moving forward, the Distance Education committee will include the budget required for the Distance Education program as part of the strategic plan. The Distance Education committee will submit their bi-annual plan to the Instructional Planning Council in March. The Instructional Planning Council

reviews all bi-annual plans in April and budget recommendations are forwarded to the PBC for discussion and review and then to the President of the College who makes the final decisions.

Evidence: Technology plan <http://www.smccd.edu/itstrategicplan/>

Plan for Monitoring Outcomes

Outcomes from distance education offerings are overseen by the College Distance Education Advisory Council (DEAC) and individual Departments. Program reviews and plans are compiled in March each year and reviewed by the Instruction or Student Services Planning Council in May. The bi-annual plan for distance education is reviewed by the Instructional Planning Council. Program reviews include review and discussion of student learning outcomes for all courses and programs, including distance education. The Office of Planning, Research and Student Success monitors student success and retention in both face-to-face classes and online classes. This information is updated annually and reviewed by DEAC.

Annual Program Plan and Comprehensive Program Review

<http://www.canadacollege.edu/inside/research/programreview/programreview.html>

Student learning outcomes and assessment results for all courses are located in TracDat, but distance education courses are not separated out for assessment purposes within the departments. For example, the learning outcomes in Psychology are assessed in both face-to-face and online sections in the same way and the data is reviewed as a whole. Variations in outcomes between online and face-to-face sections would be discussed within the psychology department.

Evaluation of Student Success, Retention, and Completion

Cañada College analyzes the following:

- Online enrollment
- Retention in online courses
- Success rates in online courses
- Attainment of student goals such as certificate completion and degree completion

Cañada College's Office of Planning, Research & Institutional Effectiveness conducts annual analyses of online courses compared to face-to-face courses. The data packet put out by the Office of Planning, Research & Institutional Effectiveness includes data on the number of students taking 1) only face-to-face classes, 2) only online classes and 3) both types of classes. The percentage of students enrolled in only online classes is between 4-8% of total enrollment. Interestingly, students taking only online classes largely take only 1 class at a time. The data packet also includes information about success and retention in these groups of students. Students taking both face-to-face and online classes (66% success and 82% retention) have nearly the same success and retention as students taking only face-to-face classes (71% success and 84% retention), while students only enrolled in online classes are less successful (56% success and 74% retention). This data packet is updated each academic year and reviewed by departments, the Instructional Planning Council and the Curriculum Committee. Improving success and retention in online classes has been a major focus of the distance education program and will continue to be a focus.

Program Review Information Packets

<http://canadacollege.edu/programreview/datapackets.php>

E. EVIDENCE OF APPROVALS

Approval Requirements

All courses, certificates and degrees offered by Cañada College have been approved by the Cañada College curriculum committee, the San Mateo County Community College District Board of Trustees and the California Chancellor's Office. The approval process at the College for courses delivered via distance education (hybrid or online) is the same as it is for face-to-face courses but includes an addendum for distance education delivery approval, which receives separate approval. A member of the College Distance Education Advisory Council serves as a technical expert for the curriculum committee and reviews each course outline for compliance with distance education requirements, particularly regular and effective contact between faculty and students and method of student authentication.

To ensure consistent communication with potential distance education students, faculty members teaching online courses are advised to use their smccd.edu email accounts as their primary email contact. In addition, the faculty member should use the district provided Moodle (WebAccess) shell to ensure authentication compliance. All Moodle shells require login with password. If a faculty member wishes to utilize another course management system, they have to assure the curriculum committee that they can authenticate students who attend and complete their courses. The curriculum committee thus confirms that distance education courses have clear policies for regular effective contact and student authentication.

Evidence: Distance Education Handbook (see appendix)

F. ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

1. Authority

Cañada College is accredited by the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges, 10 Commercial Blvd., Suite 204, Novato, CA 94949, (415) 506-0234, an institutional accrediting body recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation and the U.S. Department of Education. The accreditation reports and approval are available for review in the Office of the President. These accrediting bodies oversee all programs offered at Cañada College, including distance education.

2. Mission

Cañada College's educational mission is clearly defined and is reviewed periodically by the College Planning Council (advisory body to the President) and the San Mateo County Community College District Board of Trustees, according to Board policy. The mission is published in the current catalog and on the Cañada College website. By offering courses and degree options in distance education format, the College provides more opportunities for its diverse students to access coursework and attain their educational goals.

3. Governing Board

Cañada College is part of the San Mateo County Community College District (SMCCCD), which also operates the College of San Mateo in San Mateo and Skyline College in San Bruno. The District and its Colleges are governed by a five-member Board of Trustees with all elected at large for four-year terms by county voters. There is also a student trustee elected by students for a one-year term. The board's organization including authority, membership, election, and terms of office are found in [Board policy 1.02](#). The duties and responsibilities of the Board are detailed in [Board policy 1.10](#).

4. Chief Executive Officer

The SMCCCD Board of Governors appoints a Chancellor to act as CEO. [Policy 2.02](#) spells out the chancellor's responsibilities. The Chancellor oversees a president at each of the three district colleges, and the President administers the college. [Policy 2.03](#) discusses the President's duties and responsibilities. From that policy: "The Chancellor shall delegate to each College President the executive responsibility for leading and directing the College operations including Administrative Services, the Office of the President, the Office of the Vice President of Instruction, the Office of the Vice President of Student Services, Research, Marketing, and Public Relations."

5. Administrative Capacity

Cañada College has sufficient academic and support services administrative staff with appropriate preparation and experience to provide the administrative services necessary to support the college's mission and purpose. In addition to the President, Cañada College has Vice Presidents of Instruction and Student Services, Deans of Humanities and Social Sciences, Business, Design and Workforce, Science and Technology, Library, Learning Center and Athletics and Counseling, Directors of Financial Aid, Student Support Services and TRiO, Disability Resource Center and the Center for International and University Studies.

6. Operational Status

Cañada College has been in continuous operation since 1968. In Fall 2013, the College had a unique headcount of 6,758 (1,898 FTES) enrolled in 654 sections. Nearly equal percentages of the students list transfer, career development or educational development as their educational goals. None of the online students were out of state. Online and hybrid enrollment was 13.4% of the total enrollment in spring of 2014. The most growth in distance education has been in the summer session with the summer of 2013 having 32.8% of the total enrollment in online and hybrid classes. Most of the growth in distance education offerings over the past two years has been in the Humanities and Social Sciences Division.

7. Degrees

Cañada College offers Associate of Arts and Associate of Science degrees and a variety of certificates. The degrees and majors offered by Cañada are listed in the catalog and online <http://canadacollege.edu/degrees/>.

8. Educational Programs

The degree programs offered at Cañada College are aligned with its mission and meet the California Education Code of Regulations, Title V curriculum requirements and, when combined with the general education component, represent two years of full-time academic work. Certificate programs may be shorter than 2 years.

All course outlines of record and degrees have student learning outcomes, which are achieved through class content, assignments, and activities. All course outlines have been carefully reviewed. All curriculum is approved by the Board of Trustees, including courses offered through distance learning. Training for faculty is designed to ensure that pedagogical techniques are appropriate to distance education and that the quality of education mirrors that in the face-to-face sections of the same courses. Student learning outcomes are used in all courses to assess effectiveness of the instruction and to improve the learning experience.

Program and course descriptions are found in the catalog and on the web (<http://canadacollege.edu/catalog/index.php>).

9. Academic Credit

Cañada College awards academic credit based on accepted practices of California community colleges under California Code of Regulations and Title V. Credit is awarded for courses using the Carnegie standard unit. This follows the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office requirement for awarding academic credit. Sections of courses offered through distance education earn the same credits as other sections of the same courses.

10. Student Learning and Achievement

Every course and every program offered at Cañada College has defined Learning Outcomes. These student learning outcomes are regularly assessed by a variety of methods. Coordinated by department and discipline faculty, every course, regardless of mode of delivery or location, follows the course outline of record and the defined student learning outcomes. The College has also defined learning outcomes for general education and for the institution. All degree programs have program level learning outcomes.

Program Learning Outcomes example:

<http://canadacollege.edu/physicalsciences/index.php>

Institutional Learning Outcomes:

<http://canadacollege.edu/academics/learningoutcomes.php>

11. General Education

All degree programs offered by Cañada College require a minimum of 23 units of general education to ensure breadth of knowledge and to promote intellectual inquiry. Students must demonstrate competency in writing, reading and mathematical skills to receive an associate degree. The institution's general education requirements (listed in catalog) were carefully reviewed in the 11/12 academic year and aligned with the CSU general education requirements where possible. The College has defined learning outcomes for general education.

General Education Learning Outcomes:

<http://canadacollege.edu/academics/learningoutcomes.php>

12. Academic Freedom

The San Mateo County Community College District is dedicated to maintaining a climate of academic freedom, encouraging the sharing and cultivation of a wide variety of viewpoints. Academic freedom expresses our belief in inquiry, informed debate and the search for truth; academic freedom is necessary in order to provide students with a variety of ideas, to encourage them to engage in critical thinking and to help them understand conflicting opinions. Academic freedom encompasses the freedom to study, teach, and express ideas, including unpopular or controversial ones, without censorship or political restraint. Academic freedom, rather than being a license to do or say whatever one wishes, requires professional competence, open inquiry and rigorous attention to the pursuit of truth. The District's faculty have the right to express their informed opinions which relate, directly or indirectly, to their professional activities, whether these opinions are expressed in the classroom, elsewhere on campus or at college-related functions. In a search for truth and in a context of reasoned academic debate, students also have the right to express their opinions and to question those presented by others. Employment by the District does not in any way restrict or limit the First Amendment rights enjoyed by faculty as members of their communities. Faculty members are free to speak and write publicly on any issue, as long as they do not indicate they are speaking for the institution. Protecting academic freedom is the responsibility of the college community.

Therefore, in a climate of openness and mutual respect, free from distortion and doctrinal obligation, the District protects and encourages the exchange of ideas, including unpopular ones, which are presented in a spirit of free and open dialogue and constructive debate.

Academic freedom applies to all courses, including distance education.

<http://canadacollege.edu/catalog/pdfs/1415catalog.pdf> - p. 9

13. Faculty

Cañada College has 69 full-time faculty and 185 part-time faculty. All faculty meet the minimum requirements for their disciplines based on regulations for the minimum qualifications for California community college faculty. Clear statements of faculty roles and responsibilities can be found in the faculty handbook and the AFT contract. Faculty carry out program review, annual program plans, curriculum review and update, and develop and assess student learning outcomes.

Faculty evaluation procedures are negotiated as part of the union contract. Faculty teaching online or hybrid courses are subject to the same evaluation schedule and procedures as faculty teaching face-to-face sections. In 2008, the district and the AFT adopted a *Memorandum of Understanding* with provisions for evaluation of faculty teaching distance education classes (<http://www.aft1493.org/DistanceEdMOU-9-08.htm>). More recently the faculty and district administration have completed an update to the faculty evaluation procedures, which are active as of Sept. 9, 2014.

14. Student Services

Cañada College offers a comprehensive array of student services for all of its students, including those enrolled in distance education courses. Unless exempted, each new student is required to participate in the matriculation process, which involves assessment for admissions, appropriate course placement, college orientation, academic career and personal counseling. All student support services programs promote the objective of serving the whole student and supporting student success.

15. Admissions

Cañada College adheres to admissions policies consistent with its mission as a public California community college and compliant with California Code of Regulations, Title V. Information about admissions requirements is available in the catalog, in the schedule of classes and on district and college websites. <http://canadacollege.edu/admissions/apply.php>

16. Information and Learning Resources

Cañada College provides long-term and short-term access to sufficient print and electronic information and learning resources through its library and programs to meet the educational needs of its students. The library is staffed to assist students in the use of college resources. Wireless internet is available throughout the campus and through computers in the library and learning center without charge to students. The institution is committed to enhancing its learning resources, regardless of location or delivery method.

17. Financial Resources

Cañada College is one of three colleges in the San Mateo County Community College District and has an annual budget including benefits of \$18,571,203 in unrestricted general funds and \$7,298,327 in restricted funds as of July 1, 2013. The funding base is reviewed and revised on an annual basis. The distance education courses are integrated into the annual budget that is approved by the Board of Trustees.

18. Financial Accountability

The San Mateo Community College District is a fiscally healthy district and maintains a healthy reserve. The 2013-14 beginning balance is \$19,703,765, which includes the District's 5% contingency reserve of \$6,519,951 and the General Unrestricted Fund 1 2012-13 site ending balances of \$3,763,743. The contingency reserve is not budgeted as a line item as there is no intention to expend these funds.

The San Mateo County Community College District undergoes an annual external financial audit for the district and the three colleges. The audit is conducted by a contracted certified public accountant and in accordance with the standards contained in the Government Auditing Standards issued by the Comptroller General of the United States. The Board of Trustees reviews these audit reports on a regular basis. The District's last 8+ years of audits show no financial audit adjustments and no major findings.

19. Institutional Planning and Evaluation

Cañada College is in a constant state of review and improvement by systematically evaluating how well the college is meeting its goals and outcomes. The College completely supports integrated strategic planning, and through assessment and improvement, endeavors to ensure quality and excellence to all students served. The institution has an Educational Master Plan, which is available to the public on the college website, and a Participatory Governance Handbook. Each year the planning processes are reviewed and suggestions made, if deemed necessary, for improvement of institutional structures or planning processes – always with a focus on student achievement of their educational goals and student learning.

Each department completes a bi-annual plan that is available on the college website. Included in these reviews and plans are the assessments and reflections of student learning outcomes.

Educational Master Plan: <http://www.canadacollege.edu/inside/ed-master-plan/2011/EMP-2012-web.pdf>

20. Public Information

Information is published in the catalog, on the website, and in course schedules. These documents, along with other appropriate publications, publicize accurate and current information about the institution, including the mission, vision and goals, academic calendar, degrees and certificates offered, admissions, student fees, graduation requirements, costs and refund policies, available learning resources, grievance procedures, sexual harassment policies, academic regulation, including academic honesty, nondiscrimination policy, academic freedom statement, names and credentials of faculty and administrators, names of Board of Trustees, and all other items relative to attending the institution.

21. Relations with Accrediting Commission

The San Mateo County Community College District Board of Trustees provides assurance that Cañada College complies with all ACCJC/WASC requirements and accreditation standards and policies. The College maintains contact with the Commission through its Accreditation Liaison Officer.

G. ACCREDITATION STANDARDS MET

Cañada College meets all accreditation standards of ACCJC/WASC. The College received renewal of its accreditation in Feb 2014.

The growth in distance education does not change Cañada College's ability to continue to meet the standards. Online instruction must meet the same curriculum processes, Carnegie unit requirement, faculty assignment qualifications, support resources, student services support, and assignment/content requirements as onsite instruction. All online courses are held to the same academic rigor, review and student learning outcomes assessment as face-to-face courses. Additionally, the curriculum process treats online instruction as another modality of instruction. Therefore, the student learning outcomes, assessment plans, program review processes and academic revision and renewal processes are applied to online instruction and services in the same way as onsite instruction and services.

Standard I: Institutional Mission and Effectiveness -

On April 11, 2007 the San Mateo County Community College District Board approved the Cañada College mission statement. In 2012, the College Planning Council reaffirmed the mission statement. In March 2013, the Cañada College Educational Master Plan, which includes the most recent mission statement, was reviewed and approved by the Board of Trustees.

Institutional effectiveness is assured by the use of outcomes-based assessment. The entire college is involved in the strategic planning process and in self-reflective dialogue about student learning and institutional processes. All strategic planning is linked to data-driven program review. The program review process includes all areas of the college (instruction, student services and administration). The overarching goals of the institutional planning and assessment processes are to meet the needs of our students, respond to the ever-changing educational needs of the community at large and to ensure that resources are aligned to achieve these goals. The Cañada College Distance Education Advisory Council (DEAC) has oversight of the distance education program. This group monitors student success and retention, student services and enrollment trends in distance education courses and also provides guidance to the Deans about needs in distance education.

Standard II: Student Learning Programs and Services

Cañada College offers a complete range of courses for transfer, selected career technical education areas and basic skills. All disciplines participate in the program review process, which includes course offerings, curriculum development and updating, student characteristics and success, student learning outcomes, facilities and equipment needs, and personnel needs. New course proposals are initiated by faculty and require review by their discipline and the curriculum committee. Course modifications, for example offering a section through distance learning, are also initiated by faculty and reviewed by the curriculum committee. A faculty member from the Distance Education Advisory Committee serves as a distance education advisor to the curriculum committee for technical review of courses being proposed for distance learning. All actions on new, revised, banked or deleted courses are approved by the Board of Trustees.

Every course offered at Cañada College has student learning outcomes. If the course is offered through distance education, the learning outcomes are the same. Cañada College maintains the same standards, quality, and breadth in its distance learning offerings as it does in its traditional-mode courses and the institutional review mechanisms ensure their integrity. All distance-mode courses are reviewed to ensure rigor and compliance with Title 5 and they must meet the same requirements as traditional-mode courses. In addition, the review also includes the course's proposed instructional

media, types of student participation, methods of student evaluation, representative courseware and/or materials, assignments, and types of proficiency demonstrations (e.g. testing arrangements).

Cañada College offers a broad array of services to assist students in establishing appropriate educational goals and to help them achieve these goals. The college provides comprehensive services to all students whether on-campus or online.

Students can apply for admission online and may perform all aspects of registration online – registration for classes, drop or add classes, withdrawal from classes, select variable unit levels of enrollment, and select a grade option for a class. Students can check their class schedule, class location, time and instructor information, online. Students may display their class schedule, purchase their parking permit and display or pay their student fees online. Students can view holds on their records, display their grades for a term and request or check on the status of an official transcript or view an unofficial transcript.

During the registration process students can access both the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and the Board of Governors' Fee Waiver applications online. At any time, students may check the status of their financial aid application, ascertain if further documentation is needed, or learn of any awards they may receive through WebSmart. Students are able to access the Cañada College Bookstore online. They can purchase their books, supplies and other college merchandise online.

Electronic Counseling Services allows continuing students to receive general counseling services via e-mail. This service is particularly helpful for students who find it difficult to schedule counseling appointments at convenient times. An online orientation for Cañada College is also available. An array of online resources and services that support the distance education student are offered through the library, disability resource center and learning center, including online tutoring. Because most of our online students are “local” and by tracking the usage of the Learning Center, we have learned that most online students come to the Learning Center rather than choosing online support.

Standard III: Resources

Cañada College integrates institutional planning with human resource planning, physical resources planning, technology planning and financial planning. The College strategic plan is tied into data-driven planning and annual program review. Adequate facilities support education and student services. Technology is continually reviewed for upgrading and financial resources are carefully allocated through program review and strategic planning. The district determines the allocation to each of the colleges and then the colleges each develop a budget for that academic year.

The district offices also contribute significantly to resource planning and support. The District Office of Human Resources supports all hiring, including orientation for hiring committees, working with CSEA for approval of hiring committees, advertizing of open positions, development of job descriptions, new hire paperwork, negotiation of benefits, etc. The District Facilities manages all of the facilities and housekeeping at each of the three colleges in the district. Facilities planning has been guided by the SMCCCD Facilities Master Plan completed in 2011. Budgeting also occurs at both the district and college level.

SMCCCD Facilities Master Plan

<http://www.smccd.edu/accounts/smccd/departments/facilities/masterplan.shtml>

As previously mentioned, the IT services at Cañada College are overseen by the district IT department. Planning for IT services occurs at both the district and college level. The district manages the contract with MoodleRooms for hosting all of the Moodle shells. Since these shells are used by all courses (both online and face-to-face) support for Moodle is independent of the distance education program and courses. Use of online support for courses is fully integrated into the college budget regardless of the number of online courses offered. Help desk support for Moodle and other IT issues are also fully integrated into the college and district budget because Moodle is used for all courses offered by the College. In the same way, computer access and support, including free wireless internet access, is offered to all students and is integrated into the College budget and planning processes. In other words, these services and support would continue even if no distance education courses were offered at the College.

Professional development is managed almost entirely at the local college level. Faculty, staff and administration have access to professional development opportunities funded through a variety of sources. At Cañada College, much of the professional development is organized through the Center for Innovation and Excellence in Teaching and Learning – a faculty-led center. Funding for professional development is stable and fully integrated into the budget and planning processes. To date, the available resources have been sufficient to support professional development in the area of online pedagogy. Each year, up to three faculty members begin teaching online or hybrid classes. This rate of growth in distance education is easily supported by the professional development funds available.

Courses offered through distance learning are part of the planning for each department and program and, thus, are fully integrated into the course offerings of the College. This means that distance education courses are funded through stable sources (general fund) and are not considered “special” projects or programs that are short-term.

Standard IV: *Leadership and Governance*

The decision-making, planning and implementation processes at Cañada College involve faculty, staff, administrators and students through a participatory governance model. The Instructional Planning Council and Student Services Planning Council report to the College Planning Council, which makes recommendations to the President. The President reports to the Chancellor of the District.

Each department and service area completes a bi-annual program review and plan. These plans feed into master plans for facilities, technology, human resources and curriculum. The College is committed to continuous improvement and all faculty, staff, administrators and students regularly participate in discussions on improving practices, programs and services.

The San Mateo County Community College District is home to three accredited colleges and is overseen by one governing board. The Board of Trustees is responsible for considering approval on all curriculum forwarded by the District Curriculum Committee after local approval at each college. The Cañada College Curriculum Committee is a standing committee of the Academic Senate. The Board has approved all courses available online or hybrid which constitute the 50% or more of the graduation requirements. A full list of courses approved for distance learning is included in the appendix.

Appendix A
Associate in Arts/Science Degree Requirements
Analysis of General Education and other Requirements

Graduation from Cañada College with the Associate in Arts (AA) Degree or the Associate in Science (AS) Degree is based on completion of 60 units including the requirements “A” through “F” listed below:

A. Residence

Requirement: A minimum of 12 units must be completed at Cañada College. Also note information under MAJOR.

DL Options: More than 12 units are available; see also list of majors.

B. Scholarship

Requirement: A minimum overall GPA of 2.0 in the 60 units submitted for the AA Degree 2.0 GPA in course work taken in the San Mateo County Community College District (SMCCCD) and a minimum GPA 2.0 in units applied to the major.

DL Options: Independent of mode.

C. Basic Competency Requirements

1. Reading

Requirement: Eligibility for ENGL 100 as determined by the English Placement Exam or satisfactory completion of Read 836

DL Options: Met via completion of writing requirement (see below).

2. Writing

Requirement: Satisfactory completion of English 100

DL Options: English 100

3. Math

Requirement: Placement into transfer-level math course on SMCCCD Math Placement Test or completion of Intermediate Algebra (Math 120 or Math 122 and 123) with a grade of “C” or better or successful completion of any course with a Math 120 prerequisite

DL Options: Math 120/122/123 (and their prerequisites, Math 110/111/112)

4. Ethnic Studies

Requirement: 3 units

DL Options: COMM 150, HIST 242, 245, 246, 247, 422, 452; PLSC 310

5. Physical Education

Requirement: 2 units required of any Physical Education activity course.

DL Options: FITN 304.1 and 304.2

Continued on next page...

D. Major

See separate information on majors; fifty percent of the units required for the major must be completed at Cañada College

E. General Education**1. GE Area A: English Language Communication and Critical Thinking****Oral Communication Requirement:**

DL Option: COMM 110

Written Communication Requirement: ENGL 100

DL Option: ENGL 100

Critical Thinking Requirement:

DL Options: MATH 200; ENGL 110

2. GE Area B: Scientific Inquiry and Quantitative Reasoning**Physical Science:**

DL Options: ASTR 100, CHEM 410 /201 (hybrid only); METE 100; OCEN 100, GEOG 100

Life Science:

DL Options: ANTH 125; BIOL 110 (hybrid only), 130, 260 (hybrid only)

Lab Courses:

DL Options: ANTH 126, ASTR 101

3. GE Area C: Arts and Humanities**C1 Arts:**

DL Options: DRAM 140

C2 Humanities:

DL Options: ENGL 110, HIST 100, 101, 104, 106, 243, 245, 246, 247, 455, PHIL 100

4. GE Area D: Social Sciences**US 1:**

DL Options: HIST 201, 202

US 2:

DL Options: HIST 201, 202

US 3:

DL Options: PLSC 210, 310

Social Institutions:


DL Options: ANTH 110, 200; COMM 150; ECE. 201; ECON 100, 102; HIST 104, 106, 201, 202, 242, 243, 245, 246, 247, 422, 455; PLSC 130, 170, 210, 310; PSYC 100, 200

5. GE Area E: Lifelong learning and Self Development


DL options: BIOL 310, PSYC 200 or additional courses from GE areas A-D

F. General Electives

Requirement: Additional degree applicable courses to meet the minimum 60 units degree requirement. A number of online courses are available.



Cañada College
Distance Education Faculty Handbook
Distance Education Advisory Committee



2014

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Cañada College Distance Education Advisory Committee

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Janet Stringer, Lead Administrator for DE

SMCCCD DEAC Mission/Goals

Through the distance education program, the District will create innovative educational opportunities, provide responsive support services and strive for the high success and retention rates relative to (statewide or national) data. The District envisions the expansion of distance education offerings to increase distance education-based degrees and certificates.

Cañada's DEAC Goals

The distance education program is committed to the college's core mission of ensuring student success by building and supporting a distance education program that meets the varied academic plans of Cañada's students while supporting training, professional development, collegiality, and community building among faculty members.

Preparing to Teach an Online Course

Requirements for teaching online:

- The faculty member seeking to teach online has approval from division Dean.
- Distance Education addendum to the Course Outline of Record has been approved by the Curriculum Committee through CurricUNET.

Successful online teaching involves a fruitful marriage between technology and content, and a firm understanding of the teaching theories currently embraced by the online teaching community. The following sections outline technology recommendations, faculty training and certification, and course development guidelines.

Technology

Faculty members should have access to technology sufficient for managing their online courses. The technology recommendations, for both Windows and Macintosh users are:

- Fairly recent Mac or PC (not more than three years old) with a current operating system
- Current web browser (either Firefox or Chrome)
- Internet connection, preferably broadband (DSL speeds)

Training and Certification

Faculty electing to teach online classes should have training in both Moodle/WebAccess, and online pedagogy/andragogy. To teach a course in the Distance Education program or design a new course, the faculty member should receive training/certification in online teaching, either through the District (STOT), or through another approved or accredited program, or be able to demonstrate equivalent experience such as prior success at teaching online courses, then seek approval from the division Dean to teach an online course.

DE Course Approval (for existing face-to-face courses)

New distance education courses must also go through a course approval process before they are offered in an online or hybrid format. Since moving from the traditional classroom to a virtual classroom is not as simple as merely putting existing course notes and readings online, faculty should critically evaluate their course for online delivery.

Faculty wishing to adapt an existing class (a course with a current Course Outline of Record) to an online class must have approval from their department chair and dean. SMCCCD suggests the following guidelines for approving the development of an online course:

- Students will benefit from having access to the course via a distance offering;
- The Course Outline of Record is current and has been approved with a DE addendum request for approval;
- A DE addendum has been submitted to the Curriculum Committee adequately designating the

following:

1. Sufficient consideration has been given to adaptations of methods of instruction and methods of evaluation to ensure regular and effective contact as required in Title 5 and the proposed SMCCCD Regular Effective Contact Policy (See Appendix 1: Regular Effective Contact Policy).
 2. Necessary technical requirements are satisfied.
 3. Accessibility is ensured as required by Section 508 guidelines.
- All Title 5 mandates have been met and followed.
 - Courses have incorporated discipline SLO's.
 - Confirm that articulation with CSU/UC is not affected by offering the course through distance learning.

Teaching Online

Faculty members teaching an online course should follow these guidelines for instructional design, course management, communication with students, regular and effective contact, and providing accessibility.

Instructional Design and Development

Developing a successful online course involves understanding the particular strengths and weaknesses of this mode of delivery, the specific student population being served, and the technology—both hardware and software—that will aid faculty members in developing innovative online courses.

Faculty who are planning to teach a distance education course should be aware that online teaching requires much more planning and development time before the class begins than a traditional face-to-face class. Throughout the development process, faculty collaboration should be used to ensure best practices and to share insights into both the technology and the andragogy.

Several checklists or rubrics exist for assisting faculty in this critical endeavor. It is strongly suggested that faculty members developing a new course use the **Rubric for Online Instruction** developed by CSU, Chico and Butte College. This rubric is available here: <http://www.csuchico.edu/celt/roi/>. The instructional designer (Jane Rice) is available to advise and assist faculty with online course design and development.

Course Management

Faculty teaching online courses are responsible for the same course administrative functions as those teaching in a traditional classroom, including choosing books and curriculum, verifying course rosters, adding and dropping students, and entering grades at the prescribed times. For online courses, it is particularly important to communicate to students that they must log in to the course and participate on a regular (generally, weekly) basis, and to drop students who do not participate. In addition, online faculty are responsible for assuring that all features of the site are up-to-date and currently working and for facilitating interaction among their students.

Communication

To ensure consistent communication with distance education students, faculty members teaching online courses should use their smccd.edu email accounts as their primary email contact. In addition, the faculty member should use the district provided Moodle (WebAccess) shell to ensure authentication compliance. A textbook publisher's site may be used by linking from WebAccess.

Communication with distance learners often begins before the first class meeting. Faculty members are encouraged to develop a Student Prep Plan to send to enrolled students the week prior to the course start date. The Student Prep Plan should include:

- welcome letter
- syllabus
- course guidelines for communication

The syllabus is a critical channel for communicating expectations to distance learners. Faculty members should consider modifying their syllabus to clearly address course policies, assignment submission, testing and proctoring, and support services that may be affected by the distance learning modality. Syllabi for Distance Education courses should include a specific section that outlines how the course will be managed, how communication will be managed, and how special needs will be met. Appendix A contains examples of Distance Education syllabi and welcome letters that address the needs of online students.

Regular and Effective Contact

Faculty presence is an important factor in the success of online courses. Online instructors must meet the requirements for regular effective contact, using both synchronous and asynchronous channels, where appropriate, to connect with the students in their online courses. Moreover, student retention and success rates are improved when there is active participation in the class that fosters a sense of community. Faculty should be prepared to encourage student interaction, build opportunities for learner-learner contact and instructor-learner contact, and give response and feedback in a timely manner, as specified in the course syllabus.

In 2008, the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office published updated guidelines for distance education courses as outlined in Title V. Section 55204 (formerly section 55211) was amended to clarify guidelines for regular effective contact in online, hybrid, and web-assisted courses, including subsection (a), the responsibility of the instructor for initiating and maintaining contact, and subsection (b), a discussion of acceptable modes for maintaining contact. The entire document, titled Distance Education Guidelines, may be found at http://extranet.cccco.edu/Portals/1/AA/DE/de_guidelines_081408.pdf

Studies have shown that student success in distance courses, including retention and persistence, is enhanced by contact between the instructor and the student. Accordingly, all distance education courses should include frequent and ample opportunities for students to ask questions and receive comments and feedback from instructors. Moreover, feedback should be timely and interactive, and use a variety of channels. Best practices include:

- Early, continuing, and consistent communication from the instructor of record, including instructions for accessing the course material and opportunities for assessing whether students are accessing and understanding the course material.
- Regular contact hours established through published office hours (whether virtual or face-to-face) and availability for answering questions and giving feedback that includes both synchronous and asynchronous modes.
- Timely feedback that replicates the contact of face-to-face courses, with contact between faculty and students occurring no less frequently than in a comparable face-to-face course. Cañada's best practice guidelines suggest that, during the work week, instructors should answer student questions as soon as possible or within 24 hours. In their syllabus or welcome letter, instructors should clearly indicate when they will be available to students, how often they will respond to student work, and when they are not available (i.e., over vacations, holidays, or weekends, if appropriate).
- Interaction between faculty and students using multiple channels, including but not limited to forum discussions, email, and weekly announcements. Faculty are strongly encouraged to use a variety of communications modes in their classes including synchronous channels, such as chat, Skype, CCC Confer, or other collaborative tools, such as Google docs, wikis, and Twitter, to name a few.

Accessibility

To ensure that students with disabilities have the same opportunity, Distance Education courses should be designed to provide “built-in” accommodation (i.e. closed captioning, descriptive narration) and/or interface design/content layout, which is accessible to “industry standard” assistive computer technology commonly used by students with disabilities. Specific guidelines are provided in the California Community Colleges document titled Distance Education Accessibility Guidelines for Students with Disabilities, which can be found at:

<http://extranet.cccco.edu/Portals/1/AA/DE/2011DistanceEducationAccessibilityGuidelines FINAL.pdf>

In addition, the SMCCCD website for the Center for Teaching and Learning (a now defunct group) is still maintained and available. To access tutorials on designing ADA compliant instructional websites, visit <http://ctlonline.net/websavvy/access.html>

Evaluation and Assessment

District policy for evaluating faculty performance for distance education is under review by a district-wide committee. Any new or revised evaluation processes will be instituted in 2014. Hopefully, these new processes will take into account the specific needs of distance education.

The Distance Education Advisory Committee should approve all new DE courses, before they are taught. Towards this goal, the curriculum committee has agreed that new distance education courses or modifications will be required to be reviewed by a distance education expert. Jane Rice, when possible, will serve as this review expert. If she is not available, then another member of the Cañada Distance Education Advisory Committee will review the curriculum. Courses will be specifically reviewed for student authentication, regular and effective contact, and course management system and support.

Support Services

Student Support Services

Library

Our library supports remote access for both faculty and students, including remote access to search tools, library catalogs, online articles, ebooks, and a remote helpline via email. Additionally, library faculty are available for designing custom library resource pages for distance courses. For more on the library's services, visit <http://canadacollege.net/library/>

A Library Guide for Distance Education, to which you can provide a link from WebAccess, is available at

<http://guides.canadacollege.edu/DISTANCEeducation>

Counseling and Student Services

In addition to our regular on-campus advising and counseling, distance learners can use Cañada's Electronic Counseling Service to receive limited counseling on schedule planning, transferring, and GE and Certificate questions, or contact the counseling center atesto make a phone appointment.

District Support

Technical Support

San Mateo Community College District supports WebAccess. Information Technology Services (ITS) contracts with Moodlerooms to maintain WebAccess, which includes a suite of integrated online tools such as assignment posting, grade book, quizzes, forums, chat rooms, white boards and much more.

All technical questions about WebAccess will be handled by the WebAccess support center:

<https://smccd.mrooms.net/mod/page/view.php?id=3828>

In the event the call center cannot answer your question, the call center will escalate your issue to the appropriate ITS personnel for further follow-up.

DEAC

SMCCCD has identified distance education as an area for development. Accordingly, the Distance Education Advisory Committee (DEAC) was formed, and is currently working on developing district-wide training via Structured Training for Online Teaching (STOT), identifying district-wide needs and technology support, and sponsoring guest speakers. Information about DEAC, committee members and contact information, and resources available through DEAC are available on the SMCCCD website at <http://www.smccd.edu/edservplan/deac/default.shtml>

STOT

SMCCCD instructors may apply to take the two-part distance education training through the district, Structured Training for Online Teaching (STOT). Announcements about how to apply for training are made early in the fall semester.

Online Resources

State Guidelines

http://extranet.cccco.edu/Portals/1/AA/DE/de_guidelines_081408.pdf

Moodle resources

<http://www.moodle.org>

Bloom's taxonomy for the digital age

<http://www.google.com/search?client=safari&rls=en&q=Bloom's+taxonomy+digital&ie=UTF-8&oe=UTF-8>

A deeper look at this revised taxonomy

<http://www.scribd.com/doc/8000050/Blooms-Digital-Taxonomy-v212>

Faculty resources on the California Virtual Campus

<http://www.cvc.edu/faculty/>

A portal to DE resources

<http://www.web-miner.com/deindex.htm>

The American Distance Education Consortium (ADEC)

<http://www.adec.edu/online-resources.html>

Instructor Links

<http://www.distance-educator.com/>

Glossary

Asynchronous Learning—teaching and learning that is delivered in a manner that allows the student (within the framework of the course) to work at his/her own pace, and at hours appropriate to his/her schedule.

Distance Education—Instruction in which the instructor and students are separated by distance and interact through the assistance of communication technology.

Hybrid Course—A course that substitutes 51% to 99% of face-to-face instructional hours with online work, and has some regularly scheduled on-campus meetings without alternative distance education means of student participation

Moodle—(Modular Object-Oriented Dynamic Learning Environment) open-source course management software used by SMCCCD to host our distance learning courses. Our installation of Moodle is branded as WebAccess.

Online Course—a course in which the instructor and the student are separated by distance for the entire course and can interact exclusively through the assistance of communication technology. Testing may be done online, via proctoring arrangements, or other means. If an instructor wishes to incorporate on-campus meetings into the course, the instructor must also provide for alternative distance education means of student participation.

Synchronous Learning—teaching and learning in which instructor and student or student and student communication is occurring in ‘real-time’ with simultaneous participation.

Telecourse—a course that provides explanatory and illustrative subject material through a series of programs broadcast by TV or through DVDs or videotapes. On campus meetings are held for introduction, review, and testing.

Web-Assisted Course—A course that is designed to include a certain number of instructional contact hours (but fewer than 51%) through distance education, including TBA. This course must undergo a separate approval process by the curriculum committee, just as online and hybrid courses do.

Appendix A

Regular and Effective Contact

Title 5 and the Distance Education Guidelines for the California Community Colleges state:

http://extranet.cccco.edu/Portals/1/AA/DE/de_guidelines_081408.pdf

55211 (just changed to 55224). Instructor Contact.

In addition to the requirements of section 55002 and any locally established requirements applicable to all courses, district-governing boards shall ensure that: (a) All approved courses offered as distance education include *regular effective contact* between instructor and students, through group or individual meetings, orientation and review sessions, supplemental seminar or study sessions, field trips, library workshops, telephone contact, correspondence, voice mail, e-mail, or other activities. (b) All distance education courses are delivered consistent with guidelines issued by the Chancellor pursuant to section 409 of the Procedures and Standing Orders of the Board of Governors. *Regular effective contact* is an academic and professional matter pursuant to title 5, section 53200. **Note:** Authority cited: Sections 70901 and 66700, Education Code. Reference: Sections 70901 and 70902, Education Code.

Guideline for Section 55211

This section defines what contact must be maintained between instructor and student:

Subsection (a) stresses **the responsibility of the instructor in a DE course to initiate regular contact with enrolled students to verify their participation and performance status.** The use of the term “regular effective contact” in this context suggests that students should have frequent opportunities to ask questions and receive answers from the instructor of record.

Subsection (b) honors the principle that for DE courses, there are a number of acceptable interactions between instructor and student, not all of which may require in-person contact. Thus, districts will need to define “effective contact, “ **including how often, and in what manner instructor-student interaction is achieved.** It is important that districts document how regular effective contact is achieved. Since regular effective contact was declared an academic and professional matter, this documentation must include demonstration of collegial consultation with the academic senate, for example through its delegation to the local curriculum committee. A natural place for this to occur is during the separate course approval process. Documentation should consist of the inclusion of information in applicable outlines of record on the type and frequency of interaction appropriate to each DE course/section or session. As indicated in the *Guideline to Section 55219*, districts need to describe the type and quantity of student-faculty interaction in their annual reports to their local governing boards and the State Chancellor’s Office.

Appendix B

Sample Welcome Letter for a Hybrid Class

COMM 120

Welcome to Speech 120! I will be your instructor for the course, and couldn't wait to send you an official welcome to Cañada's first hybrid speech course. In the coming weeks, we'll be studying the relationship between communication and our identities, our relationships, and our approaches to conflict--we have a lot of interesting things to study!

This section of Interpersonal Communication is a *hybrid* class--we'll be doing some of our work in class, and some online via WebAccess. Our first meeting is Thursday, August 18th, but for those of you eager to get started, here's a brief overview of the class!

What's a Hybrid Class?

While we'll meet several times over the semester, most of our work will be done online. We'll use our face-2-face meeting times to present projects, introduce new units, and answer questions; however, the majority of our class discussions and homework will be completed on our course website. Hybrid classes offer us the best of both worlds--we get face-2-face interaction, and all the wonderful resources technology has to offer.

Still not sure what a hybrid class looks like? Want to take a peek? Though class doesn't officially begin until our first face-2-face meeting on the 18th, you can access our virtual classroom starting on the 15th. Feel free to poke around, look at the resources available, and get a feel for our virtual classroom! To check out the course site:

- Be sure you are officially registered in the class
- Go to the WebAccess Login and enter your G-number and password
- Choose Speech 120 - 42721 from the list of courses in the left-hand column

How much work is a hybrid class?

Students take online and hybrid courses for a variety of important and compelling reasons. If you are interested in a hybrid class, though, because you think it will be less work than a face-2-face class, this is probably not the right class for you. Like any other class, you should expect to spend between 8-10 hours *per week* on this one. We'll spend our time reading, engaging in forum discussions, building a glossary of important communication key terms, journaling, and working on special projects.

Some students also expect all online courses to be self-paced. While this is true for some, our success in this class relies on collaboration--we have to work together, so we have to follow some semblance of a schedule. Each week, we'll do assigned reading and 'discuss' the reading with one another online. Though this is more restrictive than a self-paced class--you have to stay current with the chapter we're reading/discussing!--you have the freedom to choose the best time for working for you.

In addition to the 'weekly' rhythm of the class, we have projects, too. The class is divided into 5 units--each is 3-4 weeks in length. A project is due at the end of each unit. To be successful in the class, be

sure you set aside time each week to engage our virtual classroom, do reading and homework, and work on your projects.

Did you say online? Do I need my own computer?

While owning a computer would certainly give you the greatest flexibility, if you don't have a home computer, there are many resources on campus that you can use. You can find out more about these resources at Cañada's [Learning Center/Computer Lab](#).

Still not sure a hybrid class is right for you? Take the survey on the following link to see if you have the recommended technology and skills:

[Online Readiness Self-Assessment](#)

How do I use WebAccess?

We'll use San Mateo Community College District's course management system, WebAccess, for all our online interaction. If you are new to WebAccess, a great place to start is the [student tutorial](#). If you are having trouble logging on to WebAccess, you can get help from [WebAccess Support](#).

At our orientation on August 18th, we'll review the features of WebAccess we'll be using for our class, including forum discussions, the glossary, journals, and uploading assignments. WebAccess is easy to use, but feel free to ask for help if you need it!

When do we meet?

We'll have 6 face-2-face class meetings in our on-campus classroom, Building 5, Room 100. Here's our calendar: We'll have asynchronous weekly 'meetings' in our virtual classroom, so be sure to look at your own calendar, and the best time for you to work!

DATE	ACTIVITY
8/18	Orientation
9/1	Intro: Unit 2
9/22	Intro: Unit 3
10/13	Media Project Presentations
12/8	Research Presentations
12/15	Final Projects

find

If I need your help, how can I find you?

Only seeing your instructor 6 times over the semester might sound exciting for some, but disconcerting for others. Don't worry! There are many ways to contact me. First, make sure your @smccd.edu email account is up and running, and check it on a regular basis. Our campus email is an essential avenue of communication.

Here are the 3 best ways to contact me:

1. Email! If you have a critical and burning question that needs prompt attention, email is the best channel. I check my email several times a day, and will respond to your email within 24 hours, except on Sundays. I use my campus email, whitleyputzl@smccd.edu
2. Office hours. I have weekly office hours. If you would like to meet me in my virtual office (located in my virtual classroom 😊), join the weekly chat at 9 a.m. every Monday. If you would prefer a face-2-face meeting, come to my office (Bldg 13, Room 243) Thursdays from 5-6 p.m.
3. Send me quickmail. Our virtual class has a quickmail feature that allows you to send me email without leaving the course site--just click on "compose", choose my name, and send me a message.

Appendix C

Sample Syllabus for an Online Class

English 110 Syllabus

Instructor: <instructor name>

Email: <instructor email address>

Phone: <instructor phone number>

Online Office Hours: MWF 11a.m. – 12 noon

Campus Office Hours: TTh from 1-2 p.m. in <instructor office number>

Welcome

Are you ready for a stimulating and challenging semester of online reading, writing, and analyzing literature? This may be the best way to practice composition skills because it requires you to read and write more than most any other course. In this course we will discuss various ways of 'opening up a text,' that is, finding something interesting and insightful to say about a literary work. Our big question will be the attempt to understand what makes great literature great.

Welcome to our online community. I'm looking forward to getting to know you.

Learning Outcomes

At the end of this course you will:

- Know how critics read, and be able to apply some of their strategies
- Understand what makes an essay effective
- Be able to write compelling essays about literature
- Be able to use MLA style for writing assignments
- Have gained confidence in your reading, interpreting, and writing abilities

Hours Required

This is a 17-week course. Course completion will take at least 10 hours per week. Throughout the semester you will be required to post at least two, and usually more, assignments per week in addition to essay drafts. These assignments (discussion postings, essay drafts, responses to peers, etc.) will be based on the required readings (3 books) and other readings and/or videos. The assignments and due dates will be posted each Monday; you "attend" the class by participating in the online forums.

Since this is an online course, we will not be meeting in person. HOWEVER, this course is not self-paced. Instead, you must progress regularly by completing weekly assignments in order to pass the course. These assignments build upon one another and must be completed by the due date/time. Although you cannot do the whole course at once, you can read ahead, knowing what we will be discussing in future weeks by following the course overview.

Contrary to common mythology, online courses are not easier or less time-consuming than regular courses. These courses place more responsibility on you, and you must expect to spend at least as much time on the course as you would a regular class. Successful online students are highly motivated, disciplined, and independent learners.

Grading

Essay 1: 10%	Midterm: 10%
Essay 2: 15%	Final Exam: 15%
Essay 3: 15%	Activities: 15%
Essay 4: 20%	Extra Credit: 5%

Required Texts

Fitzgerald, F. Scott. *The Great Gatsby* (Scribner; Reissue Edition)

Hurston, Zora Neale. *Their Eyes Were Watching God* (Perennial Library; Trade Paperback Edition edition, 2006)

Tyson, Lois. *Critical Theory Today: A User-Friendly Guide*, 2nd ed. (Routledge, 2006)

Short stories and other online resources, TBA

Recommended Skills

- Basic computer skills (use of word processor, email, organize files)
- Basic internet skills (use of browser, searches, uploading and downloading files)
- Familiarity with discussion boards and posting images a plus

Technical Requirements

- Modern (not over 5 years old) Mac or PC, with a current operating system and current browser (Firefox or Chrome, **not** Internet Explorer). Mac users: Use Firefox, **not** Safari.
- Internet connection, preferably broadband (DSL or cable speeds).

How to Login to and Use WebAccess

Go to: <http://smccd.mrooms.net>

Note the login area at left. At G-number, type in your G number

At Password, type in your six-digit birth date – mmddyy (no hyphens or spaces). Click Login.

The page that follows lists the course(s) you are enrolled in. Click the link for this course. If you don't see your course listed at left, search for it by course name (ie., PSCI 200) or CRN. You're now taken to the main course site.

Main Course Site

At left you will see the subheads People, Activities, and Administration. Basically, the links within these areas provide access to resources you'll use in this class. In the main window at right, you'll see course and instructor information, as well as links to helpful tutorials and support sites.

Weekly Outline

Below the course and instructor information you'll find the course lessons, organized by week. Each week's instructional material appears in blocks within this main section.

People

Clicking on the Participants link under the People subhead takes you to the class list, where you can see your classmates. Clicking on your name here allows you to edit your class profile.

Activities

This area builds to show the various activities being assigned/used in your course over the semester. You can click on an activity and be taken to it from this menu.

News Forum

Announcements to the class may be posted in the **News Forum**. For each post to the **News Forum**, you and others enrolled in the course will receive an email of the message.

Assignments

The requirements and details of your assignments will be posted by week. Most writing assignments will be submitted to the corresponding drop box on turnitin.com whereas discussion assignments will be posted in the 'forums' area on WebAccess. A course overview schedule charts the due dates for all reading and writing assignments. I suggest that you print out the schedule and post it near your workspace, so you can check off assignments as you complete them. Due to articulation agreements, English 110 students must write 8,000-10,000 words. Therefore, **all essays and exams are requirements. If you fail to turn in the final draft of an essay or to take an exam, you will fail the course.**

Late Submissions

You may turn in the final draft of one of your first three essays up to one week late, without penalty. Simply write "NQA" (no questions asked) atop the essay and notify me, via email, that you have submitted your essay late.

Extra Credit

You may turn in up to three short analyses of texts we have not studied this semester, using the lenses that we have studied. Your analysis should indicate the title and author of the text you're discussing and make clear the critical approach that you are using. Such texts may be anything—TV commercials, pop songs, political speeches, etc. The goal is to practice thinking analytically about what you see and hear. Please collate your short analyses into one document and submit them to the extra credit box on turnitin by Friday, December 6th. (one analysis=C; two analyses=B; three analyses=A for extra credit grade)

Discussions

This class makes use of various online tools to facilitate learning. You are required to participate in each assigned online discussion topic. Click on a discussion forum to read the discussion prompt and posts from others. Sometimes you will be prompted to "Add a new discussion topic" to post your own contribution to the discussion forum; more often you will click on a student's post to participate.

How to Succeed in this Online Course

Use your my.smccd.edu email for this class. All instructor and administrative emails will be sent there.

Block out time in your schedule to do the work, and follow the schedule.

Check in on class discussions daily.

Contribute to discussions early in the week to allow others the opportunity to respond. For most discussion forums, you are required to respond to at least one classmate's post each week, with comments to expand the discussion.

Treat your fellow course participants' learning efforts with respect; have patience and a sense of humor with technology.

Ask for help when you need it, and assist others when you can help. The 'open forum' box near the top of our WebAccess page is for clearing up confusion. Please post general questions about the course or assignments there. I will check it regularly, and posting publicly will allow your classmates (some of whom are guaranteed to have the same question) to see my responses. Also, if you know the answer to a classmate's question, please chime in. Extra credit goes to those who help others in this course.

If you have suggestions for me, please share. I've taught online for several years and improve my courses every semester, primarily by incorporating the excellent suggestions of my students. For general help with online learning, check out <http://www.smccd.edu/degateway/>