

Los Medanos College
Distance Education Committee
Three-Year Plan
Beginning Spring 2007

Los Medanos College has been at the forefront of distance education, having offered online classes in various formats for over 5 years. To date, there are in excess of 50 individual online sections offered in various departments at Los Medanos College the courses that currently exist have been developed through the efforts of early pioneering faculty. These faculty members have invested a tremendous amount of work in building online content, and have developed many courses that take advantage of web based instructional platforms. These classes offer students and educational experience that is the equal of a traditional classroom based offering.

This new educational delivery system presents instructors and the institution with many challenges. Addressed properly these challenges present LMC with the opportunity to provide our service community with an exciting new methodology for achieving their individual educational goals.

The community of instructional professionals working to build online content for the college has the following jobs as it moves into the future:

- Develop online curricula using sound educational principles
- Provide the campus community with the appropriate tools for ensuring that online offerings provide the proper academic rigor
- Develop performance standards for faculty who chose to develop and offer online content
- Develop processes and procedures that ensure that the student experience online is smooth and efficient
- Educate the college community as to the value of online offerings and foster an environment which encourages the future development of online classes

The information presented as part of this document is meant to represent a three-year plan for addressing the items identified above. As part of the document, a brief history of the online movement will be presented, as well as a status report on the current organizational structure of the Distance Education group. Further, the document will report on the ongoing efforts of the group to help build an online curriculum that provides curricular quality to the college-wide curricula.

As of this writing, the following projects are either planned and/or under development:

- Best Practices Document- to be completed Spring/Fall 2008
- Faculty Training- ongoing twice a semester during FLEX and Variable FLEX
- Curriculum Development Guidelines- embedded in BPD

- Student Accessibility/Portal Update- to be completed Spring 2008
- Research Study- to be completed Spring 2008
- Associate Degree Feasibility Study- to be completed Fall 2007

The Distance Education Committee has developed a mission statement that encompasses the online movement college-wide and gives a breakdown as to the composition of the committee membership:

The Distance Education Committee (DEC) supports and facilitates the planning and delivery of the college's distance education program. The Distance Education Committee for Los Medanos College supports and reinforces the understanding that online learning is an integral part of the college framework that promotes learner success through innovative, interactive teaching, learning and technology. The Distance Education Committee is committed to providing for all learners and promoting student success in both traditional and non-traditional learning environments within LMC's diverse community.

Membership in the DEC committee has been approved by the Shared Governance Council and forwarded for approval by the Academic and Classified Senates. This coordinating body consists of 5 faculty members appointed by the Faculty Senate, 3 classified confirmed through the Classified Senate, 2 students confirmed through the Associated Students, and three Managers. In addition, the Distance Education Committee will appoint a sub-committee of the following: DEC Chair, Curriculum committee member and one manager (or substitute) to advise and recommend online course curricula prior to committee presentation.

Additional ongoing committee charges such as those noted below improve and implement more information regarding online for current and prospective students:

- College website link
- Online Tutoring
- Online Counseling
- Course Information

In addition, the committee will begin in 2008-9 a process at the district and college level to discuss the upgrade of the current course management system, and discuss a fully online Associates Degree offering at LMC. The committee will also continue efforts in offering quality training for online instructors (pedagogical, instructional and technical). Finally, and equally important, the committee will develop more effective and efficient college-wide communication relating to online issues.