**Contra Costa Community College District (4CD) DISTANCE EDUCATION COUNCIL**

**Background**

The Contra Costa Community College District is dedicated to providing exceptional learning opportunities in both traditional and non-traditional environments to a diverse community of learners. To promote innovation and increased access, the colleges will develop and revise programs and services based on student need, workforce demand, institutional strength, and the ability to operate effectively and efficiently. This will be accomplished through technology-ready classrooms, a districtwide learning management system, training and support of online and technology infused pedagogy, and strategic distance education (DE) course offerings.

The faculty of the three colleges of the Contra Costa Community College District, Contra Costa College, Diablo Valley College and Los Medanos College, believe that distance education is an established instructional method and means for student access to courses and programs. The technology and pedagogy are inherently dynamic. Instructional technology in distance education and in the classroom requires training and support in order to be successful. The District further recognizes that the State of California is developing standards for instruction via the Online Education Initiative. The colleges also find that distance education needs to be integrated in a consistent fashion into the colleges’ instructional programs.

The Distance Education Chairs and Coordinators of the three colleges informally created a 4CD Distance Education Council (DE Council) in fall of 2013 to address instructional technology needs of the District pertaining to distance education including both fully online courses and hybrid courses. This group is responding to the technology needs of the faculty using Desire2Learn (D2L) and the need for broader support for both students and faculty. The group intends to take a broader view of DE beyond D2L technical applications into areas such as online pedagogy, faculty professional development training and support, student support, user interfaces, evaluation, policies, accreditation, state and federal expectations and requirements, and more. The DE committees at each campus will be the regular source of input and feedback to this steering group. The DE Council will continue to interface regularly with the District Learning Management System (LMS) Taskforce as well as with instructional leadership at each campus and the District Office.

**Charge**

This districtwide council has been established to provide strategic direction, guidance and support to each college and District leadership to ensure that distance education is an effective and consistent part of how the District meets its mission. The 4CD Distance Education Council will be the primary mechanism by which this can be achieved and maintained.

**Areas of Focus**

The following are the three major areas of focus/emphasis of the council at the onset. As these areas are addressed, the council will continue to expand its efforts.

1. District wide coordination and planning of DE efforts
   1. Development of a district wide DE strategic plan
   2. Dialog concerning roles of college distance education committees
   3. Dialog comparing online supplement to Course Outlines Of Record (COOR) at the three colleges
   4. Focus on accreditation and ongoing evaluation of student success in DE courses
   5. Monitor compliance, for student authentication and regular, substantive effective contact between faculty and students as required by regulations, by proposing policies, procedures and collaborative efforts
   6. Provide coordinated strategic planning based on analysis and evaluation of performance data
   7. Maintain coordinated efforts on ACCJC Substantive Change reporting on DE
2. Faculty representation regarding LMS decisions
   1. Guide creation of D2L online support site
   2. Direct LMS Work Group efforts on all issues related to teaching and learning
   3. Standardize DE vocabulary across the District
   4. Provide ongoing assessment and improvement of Desire2Learn training and support for both students and faculty
   5. Prepare for evaluation of statewide LMS initiative
3. Preparation of the colleges and District for participation in the Statewide Online Education Initiative (OEI) and state authorization requirements
   1. Provide guidance and input to United Faculty (UF) on DE related issues
   2. Work with District Office on state authorization and other legal/legislative requirements
   3. Review faculty certification options for successful online teaching and learning
   4. Leverage enrollment management data to ensure that the colleges are offering the right mix of online classes to increase the success of our students.
   5. Provide standardization of DE research and data analysis across the District

**Membership**

The 4CD Distance Education Council will be composed of a maximum of eight people; two representatives from each college (e.g. the Distance Education Committee Chairs and the Distance Education Coordinators) and two non-voting District administrators. The Chair, a faculty member, will be selected by the group and rotated annually.

**Meeting Dates**

The meetings will take place monthly or as needed.

**Relevant Definitions and Policy**

***Distance Education Delivery Formats***

1. Completely online
2. Hybrid/fully online
3. Hybrid/partially online
4. Supplemental online

***Title 5 Definition of Distance Education***

Distance Education: “Instruction in which the instructor and student are separated by distance and interact through the assistance of communication technology.” (Title 5, section 55200)

***ACCJC Definition of Distance Education***

Distance education is defined, for the purpose of accreditation review as a formal interaction which uses one of more technologies to deliver instruction to students who are separated from the instructor and which support regular or substantive interaction between the student and the instructor, either synchronously or asynchronously. Distance education often incorporated technologies such as the internet; on-way and two-way transmissions through open broadcast, closed circuit, cable, microwave, broadband lines, fiber optics, satellites or wireless communication devices; audio conferencing; or video cassettes, DVDs, and CD-ROMs in conjunction with any other technologies. ([ACCJC Guide to Evaluating Distance Education and Correspondence Education](http://www.accjc.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/Guide_to_Evaluating_DE_and_CE_2013.pdf))

***CCCCD Board Policy 4014:******Student Authentication***

As per CCCCD Board Policy 4014: To ensure the integrity of the Distance and Correspondence Education offerings and comply with federal regulations (34 CFR§602.17g) and ACCJC policies, each college will ensure student authentication to Distance and Correspondence Education classes using the unique student ID and password issued by the Contra Costa Community College District as part of the enrollment process. Required use of the student ID and password serves as a means to validate that the student who is registered for a course is the same student doing the work and receiving the grades/credits. The District and the colleges will, at all times, work to ensure that each student’s password is protected against public disclosure. Students shall be notified about steps to take in order to request the issuance of a new password should they believe that their existing password has been compromised.