

# Program Review Reflect Form - Hybrid

**Supervisor:** Lopez, Carlos (Dean, Math and Sciences)

**Program** (program, dept, committee, etc.): Online Education

**Program Review Year:** 2014

## Program Performance

**Analysis/Discussion:** (less than 3,800 characters)

For 2013-14, 17.2% of MCC FTES were from DE, 46.6% of MCC students took at least one DE course, and 14.5% of MCC students took only DE courses. All of these numbers continue a pattern demonstrating the increasingly important role of DE classes at MiraCosta. MiraCosta continues to be a regional and statewide leader in both the absolute amount of distance education enrollments and the portion DE represents within the overall enrollment mix. According to the CCCCO Datamart, for spring 2014, MiraCosta had 8,445 DE enrollments, accounting for 22.0% of all enrollments. Only two California Community Colleges exceeded MiraCosta in both absolute DE enrollments and percentage of enrollment attributable to DE (Coastline and Foothill).

According to Program Review data, the WSCH/FTEF ratio for DE sections exceeds that of non-DE: 482 vs. 420 (a significant gap, though less than last year's 496 vs. 396). This demonstrates both the student demand and the administrative appeal of DE. Balancing that, however, are lower success (64% vs. 72%) and retention rates (77% vs. 84%) in DE vs. non-DE. Compared to statewide data, MiraCosta's 2013-14 DE success rates are superior (64% vs. 61%), but retention rates are behind (77% vs. 81%). Compared to 15 colleges similar to MiraCosta in the amount of DE offered, MiraCosta's success rate is exceeded by just five, but MiraCosta's retention rate is exceeded by all 15. More attention has been directed to the DE vs. non-DE achievement gaps this fall by MiraCosta's VPI.

Program review data should raise concerns about achievement gaps for some demographics where DE outcomes significantly lag non-DE. More local research is needed, but state and national research indicates on-ground achievement gaps between different student populations are often exacerbated online. The 3-year MiraCosta Online Education Plan (OEP) being written this fall will address various efforts to improve DE student outcomes.

MiraCosta student satisfaction with DE historically compares well with statewide data, but results from CCCCO DE surveys conducted in early summer have not yet been received, so it is not possible to update this analysis.

The Online Ed program continues to be held in high regard. Internally, Online Ed personnel reviews are quite positive and participant ratings from workshops for faculty and students are very strong. Externally, both Online Ed staff have been asked to provide workshops for other colleges, and MiraCosta was selected this year as one of 24 colleges to participate in the CCC Online Education Initiative pilot.

Online Ed continues to become more systematic and data-based. The coming OEP will provide metrics and benchmarks to further institutionalize these efforts. Program Review provides an important set of data for the program itself, and enables improvement of the elements of online ed across MiraCosta.

The Online Ed program continues to lead MiraCosta's engagement with DE regulations and effective practices, not only in terms of compliance but also toward continuous improvement. During the 2013-14

year, a research effort engaging faculty, staff, and students affirmed the integral nature of online education with MiraCosta's current mission, and the OEP team developed vision and mission statements for online ed at MiraCosta. A substantive change proposal for 98 DE programs was approved with commendations by the ACCJC. A new student orientation for online learning students was rolled out with over 250 students participating. A new sequence of 15 workshops was developed and offered as an introductory overview of effective online teaching, with total attendance of 437 across the sequence. Online education presentations were made to numerous governance groups including the Board of Trustees.

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## Program Learning Outcomes

**Analysis/Discussion:** (less than 3,800 characters, including spaces)

Online Education needs to establish Service Area Outcomes (SAO). It is anticipated that the writing of the new Online Education Plan will include development of Online Education SAOs as well as a variety of metrics, benchmarks, and goals for improvement, which will become the basis for future program reviews. The Online Education program is not directly responsible for SLOs.

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## Program Performance - Service Area

**Analysis/Discussion:** (less than 3,800 characters)

No additional service areas.

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## Program Resources

**Analysis/Discussion:** (less than 3,800 characters)

The Online Education department is housed in the Teaching/Technology Innovation Center (TIC), OC 1253. The area includes two offices for the Online Ed staff; a small lab with four workstations, scanners, printer, phone, office supplies, and a small meeting table; and a larger meeting space (1253B) with smart classroom capabilities. 1253B also includes equipment storage, a number of laptops, and two workstations with specialized software for faculty and staff to use in creating instructional materials/resources. One of those workstations is housed inside a professional soundbooth. 1253B may be reserved for meetings as well as for individual soundbooth use via 25Live. Much of the equipment in 1253B is in the process of being updated by AIS.

Online Education has acquired technology to help faculty experiment and innovate; this includes iPads, an Android tablet, a Chromebook, and several small netbooks, as well as accessories. At present the checkout of this equipment is managed through a paper-based system; eventually this should be migrated to an online system that will enable faculty to be more aware of these options and easily reserve equipment. TIC resources also include a wireless microphone system that enables meetings held in the TIC to be simulcast live over the web if desired.

While this facility and the budget to maintain and supply it are more than adequate to support the current Online Ed program, its location remains a question mark. Out of the way at the back of the second floor of the library, it is not easy for faculty to “stumble upon” or just to quickly drop into. While more publicity and perhaps some creative thought on improving access might help, it may be worth considering a move to a more central, accessible location, and/or to co-locate the TIC with the center for teaching and learning proposed in the new MiraCosta strategic plan.

The Online Education website is fairly simple but includes some important resources for faculty and students. Although it is in need of a refresh once the new Online Ed Plan is done and the Online Ed Faculty Handbook is updated, the site still gets kudos, especially for the DE student readiness quiz (which is used by several other institutions). The site includes numerous video tutorials, and information about and links to the various key online education systems that MiraCosta supports. It also includes the Online Course Schedule, which enables faculty to provide important information about DE courses that cannot be included in SURF or print schedules. This information helps students to learn about the details of DE courses, make course selections, and understand the initial steps required at the beginning of a DE course. Students continue to underutilize this resource; the new student orientation to online learning helps participants learn about it.

Online Education (in conjunction with Academic Information Services) supports resources enabling MiraCosta’s online learning environment to remain current and innovative. Key resources include the Blackboard and Moodle course management systems; Respondus, for managing question pools for online tests; Turnitin, supporting plagiarism prevention and effective grading and feedback of written work; Camtasia Relay, enabling simple screencasting with automatic captioning for all MiraCostans; Blackboard Collaborate Voice Authoring, enabling voice-based interactions in Blackboard and Moodle; and CCC Confer, a web conferencing tool. A pilot this fall is assessing the potential of YouSeeU, a tool enabling student-created audio and video to be easily integrated into course management system activities.

As the OEI progresses, it will be important to determine which tools and resources provided by the OEI should be adopted for use at MiraCosta.

## Program Personnel

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**Analysis/Discussion:** (less than 3,800 characters)

The Online Education staff consists of the Faculty Director of Online Education (FDOE) and a classified Faculty Technology Specialist (FTS). The budget for Online Ed includes sufficient funds for travel and professional development opportunities. This enabled the FTS and to FDOE attend and present at important regional and national conferences, as well as supporting the attendance of about 15 faculty at the Online Teaching Conference in June. Both the FTS and FDOE also actively participate in online learning opportunities such as webinars and professional communities connected by listservs, discussion groups, and social media. The FDOE has worked with the FTS to plan professional development including courses in the San Diego State master's degree program in learning design and technology, starting in the summer of 2014. The FDOE is an active participant in MiraCosta Flex activities and the FTS and FDOE each offer numerous Flex workshops as well. The FDOE also builds and maintains professional networks with other CCC DE Coordinators through the statewide CCC DE Coordinators organization which meets online each month and maintains communication via an email distribution list, as well as through a regional SDICCCA DE group which meets monthly and for which he serves as chair this year.

The operation of the Online Education department within the MiraCosta structure has continued to be smooth in the second year under the Dean of Math & Sciences. Online Education has benefitted from the closer connections with the administrative and support functions of the Office of Instruction. At the same time, the relationships between Online Ed personnel and Academic Information Services staff and administration continue to be cooperative and mission-focused. The FDOE was added this year to the Technology Advisory Committee and as such is helping to write the new 3-year Technology Plan for MiraCosta.

It has been anticipated for some time that Online Education may eventually need to expand to include a professional instructional designer. At present both the FDOE and FTS can and do provide some instructional design support to interested faculty, though the FTS's expertise is primarily technical, and the FDOE's time is limited in offering 1-1 support to faculty. As the work of the FDOE to systematize and further institutionalize Online Ed continues, especially in the development of broader and deeper professional learning opportunities for faculty, and as the adoption curve for online instruction moves further along to faculty who may have less interest in devoting considerable time and energy to exploring online education technologies and pedagogies, the need for additional support more focused on instructional design may grow. To that end, the FDOE has secured the services of two SDSU graduate students with instructional design training and experience who will work during 2014-15 with the FDOE to pilot instructional design support for faculty and to perform a needs analysis for such a position here. If their work supports the creation of a permanent position, this will likely be an important future Program Review plan.

## **Program Curriculum and Students**

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**Analysis/Discussion:** (less than 3,800 characters, including spaces)

DE curriculum is subject to the same processes of review and approval as all curriculum at MiraCosta. The Faculty Director of Online Education is an ex-officio member of the Courses & Programs Committee (C&P), as well as the Courses & Programs Curriculum Committee (CPCC). This helps ensure that DE issues are thoroughly considered in the approval of courses and programs. The C&P committee revised the state-required Form A for approval of online/hybrid courses in the spring to better reflect the requirements for offering DE at MiraCosta according to the updated AP 4105.

As mentioned previously, the ACCJC approved MiraCosta's substantive change proposal for 98 DE programs in the spring. This affirms MiraCosta's compliance with DE regulations and capacity to successfully offer DE courses and programs.

As noted in the first section, program review data shows that 14.5% of MiraCosta's headcount in 2013-14 was comprised of students taking only DE courses. Research needs to be done to learn more about this population, but the existence of this significant portion of DE-only MiraCosta students raises curricular questions. Should more programs be made available completely via DE? Do we need to look more closely at systematically offering DE courses such that programs could viably be completed via DE? These issues will be addressed in the new Online Education Plan.

The transition from WebCMS to CurricuNET has taken longer than anticipated, but once complete, it will become easier to track the programs affected by DE course approvals, and also to determine the proportion of courses offered via DE for newly proposed programs. This kind of data tracking and analysis is important to ensure that C&P is fully informed about the implications of possible accreditor approval necessitated by any local approval of a course or program to be offered via distance education.

Demographics of MiraCosta students enrolled in at least one DE course in 2013-14 are similar to last year's data (which was the first year of this reporting) and mostly mirror the MiraCosta population, with a few minor distinctions. Fewer DE-takers are first-time college students (13% vs. 16%), and more are continuing MiraCosta students (57% vs. 50%). Representation of females is stronger among DE students (66% vs. 56%). Ethnicities are very similar, with slightly lower representation of Hispanics among DE students (28% vs. 33%) and slightly higher White representation (49% vs. 46%).

As mentioned in the first section, it is important to conduct additional research to learn more about the performance of students in various demographic groups across various DE modalities, as well as to undertake research on the effects of different approaches to supporting student success, not just in general, but especially with regard to particular demographic groups that have achievement gaps which show up or are magnified in DE courses. These areas of inquiry should be spelled out in the new Online Education Plan.