

# All Fields Report

Program Overview	
<b>Program</b>	Distance Education
<b>Does this program have a CTE component?</b>	Yes
<b>Academic Year</b>	2020/2021
<b>Review Period</b>	6 Year
<b>Service Areas</b>	

## Program Description and Goals

*This section addresses the big picture. Prompts should help you describe your program and goals and the relationship to the institutional mission, vision and goals, and how the program is funded.*

### **1. Describe the program and/or service area under review and how the program supports the mission of Santa Monica College.**

The Distance Education (DE) program provides an alternate learning mode for students who are working toward realizing their academic goals while allowing them to maintain flexible schedules. This flexibility enables them to attend to their coursework but also allows them to focus on other life demands concurrently such as demanding work schedules and tending to family obligations. Additionally, online classes provide students with a cost-effective logistical option to minimize transportation concerns and expenses due to traveling to and from campus.

Online classes are offered by most academic departments and disciplines which provides student with a wide selection of classes they can take as well as focusing on A.A., degree & transfer and certificate programs so they are able to progress in reaching their educational goals. As of spring 2020, the District transitioned most on-campus face-to-face (FTF) courses to online delivery due to COVID-19.

The DE program supports faculty with their online pedagogy and technology training needs to better ensure they not only have the resources necessary but are staying current with their technology skills and pedagogical best practices with the ultimate outcome being student success.

All online/hybrid courses are taught by SMC faculty and maintain the same standards of our on-campus FTF coursework. The program tries to ensure student success is at the forefront including mirroring the same student services such as online counseling and online tutoring.

### **2. Identify the overarching goal(s) or charge/responsibilities of the program or service area. If appropriate, include ensuring/monitoring compliance with state, federal or other mandates.**

To meet the District's mission in ensuring we are supporting student success, the DE Department constantly strives to meet the training needs of faculty, so they are better prepared to support our students in reaching their academic goals.

Below are a few examples of how the DE program works to maintain compliance with District, state and federal mandates:

[Online Course Quality and Faculty Readiness: Training & Support Resources](#)

Course quality for online classes continue to be a focus and a high priority for the District and the Distance Education Department with the ultimate goal of serving our students as best as possible to ensure their success. Faculty who teach online not only need to understand subject matter but online pedagogy and be technologically adept at working within a learning management system (LMS). After a challenging 18-month migration process to move the District to a new course management system (CMS), winter 2017 was the full campus-wide launch of Canvas.

The DE Department embraces a multi-pronged approach in training with a focus on preparation and best practices. While the Distance Education committee agreed that the CMS migration was a great opportunity to institute some form of readiness/certification, the Academic Senate opted not to support this venture. Given the fact that educational technology is an ever-changing arena, supporting faculty in building and sustaining pedagogically solid and quality online classes is a dynamic and ongoing task. The Distance Education department provides a number of training support services to assist faculty as they develop a course:

- On-campus/Online trainings
- Live and archived webinars
- Faculty-to-faculty mentoring
- Drop-in lab hours
- Canvas course consultations with the Instructional Media Specialist in the DE department.
- Online Network of Educators (@ONE) courses provides free and low-cost training and online resources to CCC faculty and staff to enhance student learning and success.
- Canvas support resources: various self-paced online courses and tutorials, Canvas community, and California Virtual Campus-Online Education Initiative (CVC-OEI) resources which support faculty and students.
- All faculty are enrolled in "Canvas Central" that provides robust information and resources that covers pedagogy as well as how to effectively use the tools within the platform and includes a great selection of "how to" videos.
- 24/7 Canvas Instructure helpdesk available to all faculty and students.
- Peer Online Course Reviews (POCR) provide an opportunity for faculty to volunteer to receive feedback from SMC faculty on their online/hybrid courses using the CVC-OEI Course Design Rubric.
- Optional SMC adapted @ONE online courses

A major challenge and consideration are how to offer current online faculty ongoing professional development training given the fact that DE supports hundreds of busy full-time and part-time online faculty from nearly all of its District's academic departments. This means the DE program consists of a cross-discipline group of both full-time and adjunct faculty who are never in the same place at the same time. An additional challenge is that the DE department cannot mandate a gathering of DE faculty for "department" meetings which could be used for training opportunities. What has become apparent over the years is there is no ideal day or time to meet as a group to hold real-time on-campus trainings including webinars.

In spite of the busy schedules of instructors, the DE department continues to address training needs to online faculty as they continue to update their online class materials. Areas of focus includes: online course design, current pedagogy issues in online education, accessibility, equity-minded practices, best practices and exposure to new and emerging platforms and online classroom technology.

In terms of an overarching goal, we have been challenged with how to best ensure faculty are prepared to teach online at the time that they receive their first online teaching assignment. This is to compliment the "DE Committee Best Practices" guidelines adapted from the CVC-OEI Course Design Rubric. The DE program continues to encourage department chairs to recommend faculty to complete a foundational course hosted by @ONE that focuses on best practices for running online classes including Title 5 requirements. In response to the demand and shortage of @ONE courses offered during the transition to distance education delivery for all CCCs, the DE program received approval to offer an adapted version of the 12-week @ONE Online Teaching & Design (OTD) course. In summer 2020, the DE program successfully piloted and completed four sections of an optional SMC hosted OTD certification course open to all faculty. Of the 155 registrants, 108 faculty successfully completed the six-week course in summer 2020. Exit surveys were deployed after each session and faculty responded positively to the experience. The demand for OTD from SMC faculty has continued and two sections of the 8-week OTD course were offered in fall 2020.

#### Course Management System: Ongoing Support and Maintenance

One of the charges of the DE Program has been to stay engaged and current in updates connected to our current CMS, Canvas. Canvas routinely releases enhancements and updates to the CMS that may impact the entire campus at any given time. Additionally, the DE department must continuously monitor and resolve system issues that would disrupt a seamless online learning experience for users. The DE department has made various changes to the system in collaboration with the MIS department as needed over the years. The DE department also stays abreast of the latest technological innovations for online education and vets Learning Tools Interoperability (LTI) integration requests for accessibility compliance.

### Supporting Student Success

Smarthinking Online Tutoring provides students with flexible tutoring options when they cannot attend in-person tutoring. The DE department continues to promote this service to online/hybrid faculty and students. However, the 2016-17 campus-wide launch of Canvas and the Smarthinking online tutoring services were made available within every Canvas shell, and it was observed that half of the tutoring sessions were used by students taking on-ground classes. While the student survey results for this service remains quite favorable, the DE department worked with the MIS to restrict this resource to only online/hybrid courses effective fall 2017. This resource is an asset for all online/hybrid students and there has been an increase in usage over the years. As a result of COVID-19, the number of tutoring hours purchased to support students will not be sufficient for the 2020-21 academic year and will require additional funding.

### **Statewide, Chancellor's Office & Federal Changes & The Impact on Distance Education**

#### CVC-OEI -California Virtual Campus - Open Education Initiative (Statewide)

“The California Virtual Campus – Online Education Initiative (CVC-OEI) is a collaborative effort among California Community Colleges (CCCs) to ensure that significantly more students are able to complete their educational goals by increasing both access to and success in high-quality online courses.”<sup>1</sup> In 2018, the CVC-OEI expanded the number of college from 23 to 57. After ongoing discussion and debate since the adoption of Canvas, in fall 2019 the Academic Senate unanimously passed a resolution presented by the DE Committee to join the CVC-OEI Consortium.

The application to join the CVC-OEI is reviewed on a rolling-basis and requires a CVC-OEI Consortium Master Agreement that requires a commitment from various stakeholders on campus beyond the DE department to successfully join the consortium. While the DE program planned to have Academic Affairs review the agreement and continue conversations with campus stakeholder in spring 2020, this conversation was halted in response to the change in priorities due to COVID-19.

One requirement to join the consortium to join the CVC-OEI Consortium is to establish a local Peer Online Course Review (POCR) process certified by the CVC-OEI designed to align online courses to the CVC-OEI Course Design Rubric. The current DE Committee chair and experienced SMC DE faculty, Laura Manson, has offered optional course reviews to online/hybrid faculty since spring 2018 on behalf of the DE department. Laura Manson has expanded the program by recruiting reviewers and reviewees through the one-time \$500,000 CVC-OEI Improving Online CTE Pathways grant awarded to SMC in 2019-20. As result, by the end of fall 2020, SMC will be eligible to apply to be deemed as a local POCR certified campus.<sup>2</sup>

#### Title V Changes - Regular and Effective Interaction (Statewide)

In 2018, the CCC Board of governors approved changes to Title 5 §§55200-55210.3 Regular and effective interaction conducted through distance education, between faculty and student was amended to add regular and effective interaction ‘among students.’ Title 5 requires that online classes include student-to-student interaction, which has a positive impact on success.<sup>4</sup>

#### State Authorization for Online Students (Federal)

Over the past few years there has been, on a federal level, discussion on residency status and changes in how DE program are allowed to serve out of state students, it might be important to mention that the federal legislation regarding state authorization is moving forward but doing so with much debate. The Department of Education is still expecting that all institutions who deliver their coursework online seek state authorization to legally offer distance education classes to students in a state where the institution does not have a physical presence. While the various stakeholders in this initiative continue to clarify expectations, rulings and deadlines on compliance, the DE program continues to monitor the situation via the CCC Chancellor's office and SARA the "state authorization reciprocity agreement" team. This includes WCET-WICHE (Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education) who continues to advocate for educational institutions. Participation in NC-SARA, the National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements allows accepted out-of-state students to take online courses from other NC-SARA states. Currently, California is the only state not to join NC-SARA.<sup>5</sup> Current legislation makes it unlikely that California will join.

With so many states each with their own individual requirements, often revised annually, authorization and reporting can be an onerous and expensive venture. Some institutions have hired full-time state compliance officers who have the sole duty of managing authorization with each state and ensure they are current on changes. Prices vary for authorization and for annual certification. A few local community colleges have decided that due to the low number of students served outside of California the lesser of evils is to forgo authorization from certain states and restrict students from taking online classes. In the academic school year of 2018-19, there were fifty-two students identified as being "out of state" taking SMC online classes. In response to COVID-19, The Department of Education offered flexibilities in regard to Federal Compliance, but those flexibilities do not extend to state compliance. Only a few states offered any flexibility or suspended requirements due to COVID.

Hence, each state has their own individual requirements that may or may not involve flexibility. Currently, a small team in the Government Relations and Institutional Communications department has begun the task of researching and investigating how to obtain approval from individual states in partnership with CTE marketing initiatives to recruit non-resident enrollments. It has become apparent to this team, as well as the DE department, that beyond a small number of states, the project is outside of their scope and will need greater institutional support across various areas of the college.

#### FOOTNOTES

1. <http://ccconlineed.org/about>
2. <https://sites.google.com/cvc.edu/localpocrresourcecenter/certification>
3. California Code of Regulations.  
<https://govt.westlaw.com/calregs/Browse/Home/California/CaliforniaCodeofRegulations?guid=ICD714E20D48411DEBC02831C6D6C108E&transitionType=Default&contextData=%28sc.Default%29&bhcp=>
4. Glazier R. A. (2016). Building Rapport to Improve Retention and Success in Online Classes. *Journal of Political Science Education*. DOI: 10.1080/15512169.2016.1155994
5. <https://www.nc-sara.org/sara-states>

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#### **3. If applicable, describe how the Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs), Supporting Goals, and/or Strategic Initiatives of the institution are integrated into the goals of the program or service area.**

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Our unit's goals are to support the mission of the college and the Board Goals & Priorities of implementing multiple measures, guided pathways, and models of support that increase student success. Whereby, providing support and technology training to ensure faculty are prepared to develop and teach high-quality online courses that promote student success. We also support the District's ability to schedule classes without constriction of classroom availability, or in the event of an emergency, to sustain and/or increase FTES.

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#### **4. If your program receives operating funding from any source other than District funds identify the funding source. If applicable, note the start and end dates of the funding (generally a grant), the percentage of the program budget supported by non-District funding, and list any staff positions funded wholly or in part by non-District funds. Do not include awards for non-operational items such as equipment (ex. VTEA) or value added activities (ex Margin of Excellence).**

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The DE program typically does not receive funds other than those provided by the District (approximately \$14k for software licensing). However, in partnership with CTE, the DE Department was able to collaborate and benefit from grant funding.

**One-Time \$500,000 CVC-OEI Improving Online CTE Pathways Grant** (Awarded for 2019-20) - Due to COVID-19, the grant completion timeline has been extended to December 2020. The funding has afforded the DE Department to partner with co-lead faculty of the grant, Steven Sedky and Laura Manson, to host the 'Online Teaching Winter 2020 Institute' to learn and share effective online teaching strategies facilitated by our own expert SMC faculty. We had 140 faculty complete an interest form, and 100 applicants were accepted. 86 faculty members completed the training. The funding afforded the pilot of the online proctoring software, Proctorio, in spring 2020. The funding also established the POCR program and funded @ONE course reimbursement for faculty. The grant funding was used to improve the quality of our online courses, expand the number of CTE courses and programs available via online delivery, and make SMC Associate Degree's available online by putting math and lab science general education courses online. The following staff positions were also funded by the grant:

- Part-Time Project Manager - SMC Faculty "Instructional Designer"
- Adjunct SMC Faculty Accessibility Specialist

## Populations Served

*In this section you will provide information that describes who your program or service area serves. When comparing data from different periods, use a consistent time frame (ex. Compare one fall term to another fall term)*

### Saved Information For Populations Served

#### Area/Discipline Information Pertains To

#### *Distance Education*

**1. Describe the students your program serves in terms of ethnicity, race, gender, age, residency status, citizenship, educational goal, enrollment status, and full/part-time status. Note any changes in student or enrollment data since the last program review.**

This data in Table 1 represents two groups: Students taking a fully online schedule and combination of online & on-ground classes. The data can be found on the SMC Office of Institutional Research (OIR) data dashboard on the website.

**Table 1: Student Headcount Age Range & Schedule Patterns - Fully Online Schedule vs. Both (On-Ground & Online Schedule)**

Age Range	Fall 2018 Fully Online Schedule	Fall 2018 Mixed Schedule	Fall 2019 Fully Online Schedule	Fall 2019 Mixed Schedule
19 or Younger	58	2415	18	3163
20-24	116	3925	140	4124
25-29	177	1504	174	1535
30-39	234	974	248	1028
40-49	123	357	124	359
50 or Older	91	203	88	244

The age-range with the highest representation of mixed schedule is 20-24-year old students. This is consistent with findings from the previous program review. The OIR website reports almost 40% of all SMC students are within the 20-

24 age range. It appears mixed schedule mirrors this data. However, 30-39 year-old students seem to have the highest representation of online courses. The OIR website indicates that almost 4% of our students are in the age range of 40-49 but for online students in this age-range, 12.1% are taking all of their classes fully online so this difference is noteworthy as it indicates that a higher number of students between the age of 40-49 take online vs. campus-bound classes. This is also consistent with findings from the previous program review. This is likely due to the flexibility online classes provide for working adults.

According to the "Distance Education Fast Facts Fall 2018" document provided by OIR, 59% of DE students are part-time, while 41% are full-time status. Additionally, the largest proportion of DE students identify as Latinx/Hispanic (35.9% in fall 2018), followed by White (27.6%). This is similar to the college-wide data, 37.7% of SMC students identify as Latinx/Hispanic in fall 2019, followed by 32% White. This is also consistent with findings from the previous program review. While the majority of DE students are California residents, there is a noticeable increase over the years in the percentage of residents of a foreign country enrolled in DE classes. In fall 2013, there were .2% of students and in fall 2018 there were 14.1%. Foreign country residents were 9% of the SMC enrollments in fall 2018. This change may be attributed to possible marketing efforts of the college and/or the growing popularity of online classes for students.

In the appendix, the document titled "Six-Year Trend of Online Credit Students" showcases the upward trend of the increase in DE sections offered each academic school-year. The number of SMC distance education offerings increased from 1,408 sections in 2018-19 to an all-time high of 1,676 sections in 2019-20 (this does not include the 2,904 on-ground sections that were converted to online delivery in Spring 2020).

## **2. Compare your student population with the college demographic. Are the students in your program different from the college population? Reflect on whether your program is serving the targeted student population.**

The majority of our online students also take F2F campus-taught coursework, so this indicates that we serve the same student population with some minor differences in percentages noted in #1.

## **3. Discuss any significant change(s) in the population(s) served since the last full program review and the possible reasons for the change(s).**

As indicated in number #1, DE has seen an increase in international student enrollment since the last full program review.

## **Program Evaluation**

*In this section programs/units are to identify how, using what tools, and when program evaluation takes place. Evaluation must include outcomes assessment as well as any other measures used by the program. Please use Section D to address program responses to the findings described in this section.*

**Programs/units with multiple disciplines or functions may choose to answer the following questions for each area. If this is your preferred method of responding, begin by selecting a discipline/function from the drop down, answer the set of questions and click "Save", your answers will be added to the bottom of page. Do this for each discipline/function. If you would like to answer the questions once, choose "Answer Once" from the drop down.**

**How would you like to answer these questions?**

### **Saved Information For Program Evaluation**

**Area/Discipline Information Pertains To**

Distance Education

#### **1. List your student or instructional support service SLOs or UOs.**

*SLOs are specific, measurable statements of what a student should know, be able to do, or value when they complete a program/course or sequence of activities. An SLO focuses on specific knowledge, attitudes, or behaviors that students will demonstrate or possess as a result of instruction or program activity.*

*UO statements focus on service or operational outcomes such as:*

- *Volume of unit activity*
- *Efficiency (responsiveness, timeliness, number of requests processed, etc.)*
- *Effectiveness of service in accomplishing intended outcomes (accuracy, completeness, etc.)*
- *Compliance with external standards/regulations*
- *Client/customer satisfaction with services*

With the guidance of the Office of Institutional Research, the unit outcomes were recently revised.

One measurable outcome was specific to online student support, in this instance, how Smarthinking online tutoring support is linked to improving student success.

Unit Outcome #1 - Students who utilize Smarthinking Online Tutoring will demonstrate positive student outcomes.

The Office of Institutional Research assisted with compiling data from spring 2017 and fall 2017. In spring 2017, Smarthinking were made available to all students enrolled in credit classes including online and on-ground students. According to the data, students who participated in at least one online tutoring session, had success rates that were 21.6% higher than students who did not participate.

In fall 2017, Smarthinking were made available to online and/or hybrid students only. According to the data, students who participated in at least one online tutoring session, had success rates that were almost 11% higher than students who did not participate.

Unit Outcome #2: The percentage of students who report using Smarthinking Online Tutoring will increase year-over-year over the baseline of Fall 2016 (4%).

A collaborative effort from the Distance Education Committee, our Office of Institutional Research and using the California Community College Chancellor's Office, an update student satisfaction survey was deployed during the fall 2016. One question in this survey addressed students' usage of Smarthinking Online tutoring.

1. Did you use the Smarthinking Online Tutoring service?

70 students out of 73 responses indicated no. As of Spring 2018, we piloted a banner notification located inside Canvas advertising the service and contact information to notify the DE department if the service was not visible in an online/hybrid course. This strategy was effective, as the Student Services Specialist received information from several students over the semester and then alerts the faculty member on how to "unhide" the service. There was also an increase online tutoring services usage by 17% in 2018, compared to 2017 usage.

Unit Outcome #3: At least 90% of DE faculty will report being satisfied with Canvas, including the system itself, tech support services, training, Canvas Central, and Canvas-services received from the DE department.

In Spring 2019, through collaboration with the Office of Institutional Research, the DE Department deployed a DE faculty satisfaction survey to 200+ online/hybrid faculty. 92 faculty responded to the survey.

The survey questions specific to our UO #3 were:

1. I am satisfied with the learning management system, Canvas
2. I am satisfied with the technical support offered from the 24/7 Canvas Helpdesk Support Line
3. I am satisfied with the professional development opportunities for online/hybrid course offered on campus.
4. I find the resources available in "Canvas Central" (curated just for SMC faculty) useful.
5. I am satisfied with the support I have received from the Distance Education Department
6. Which format do you prefer most for trainings offered by the Distance Education Department (choose one only)?

Question #1: 97.8% of faculty indicated that they at least somewhat agreed.

Question #2: 98.9% of faculty indicated that they at least somewhat agreed.

Question #3: 81.4% of faculty indicated that they at least somewhat agreed.

Question #4: 92.4% of faculty indicated that they at least somewhat agreed.

Question #5: 92% of faculty indicated they at least somewhat agreed.

Question #6: 46.2% of faculty indicated “Scheduled: Virtual” was the preference.

As a result of this survey, the DE Department changed their drop-in lab hour support model to offering appointments via Zoom or in-person. Faculty were able to schedule appointments via Canvas and/or e-mail with our Instructional Media Specialist to schedule an appointment for Canvas course consultations. This model proved to be more efficient and meet the needs of our SMC faculty in comparison to drop-in lab hours.

**2. Describe when and how the program assesses these SLOs and UOs and uses the results to inform program planning including:**

- how outcomes are assessed and how often
- the assessment tool(s) used
- the sample (who gets assessed)
- how and when the program reviews the results and who is engaged in the process

The UOs are assessed by the Interim Associate Dean of the DE department initially and shared with the department by the end of each semester. Online/hybrid faculty and students are the targeted population.

**3. What other evaluation measures does your student or instructional support service use to inform planning? (For example, surveys, longitudinal data, support service use etc.) Note trends, differences in performance by group (ethnicity, gender, age), and any unusual patterns in student success and retention.**

**Student Retention and Success**

According to the Chancellor’s Office data-mart, the disparity between student success and retention rates has not only narrowed between the F2F in-person classes vs. the online classroom, but SMC online courses have a higher success rate and retention rate than F2F courses at SMC as reflected in Table 2 below. SMC online courses also tend to have a higher success rates in comparison to statewide DE rates. The historical trend on the statewide DE vs. face-to-face success and retention rates are also reflected in Figure 4 and Figure 5 in the appendix. While student success and retention rates for online classes fluctuate over terms, rates continue improve as noted below.

**Table 2. SMC DE vs. Non-DE Retention and Success Rates Fall 2019**

Student Outcomes	Statewide DE	SMC DE	SMC Non DE
Retention	84.02%	84.17	83.11%
Success	66.71%	71.41	67.08%

In order to provide the committee with a broader, historical view on how online education reflects on campus class retention and success rates, below are some tables which exemplify how the disparity narrowed between the two delivery modalities from the early years to more recent times.

**Table 3. Historical View of Retention Rates by Fall Semester for Online and Traditional Campus Classes**

Fall Semester	STATEWIDE DE	SMC DE	STATEWIDE NON-DE	SMC NON-DE
2014	80.27%	82.04%	86.77%	83.32%



2015	81.03%	80.62%	86.88%	82.74%
2016	81.77%	81.13%	87.29%	82.76%
2017	82.83%	83.27%	87.25%	82.64%
2018	83.44%	82.98%	87.58%	82.86%
2019	84.02%	84.17%	87.60%	83.11%

**Table 6. Historical View of Success Rates by Fall Semester for Online and Traditional Campus Classes**

Fall Semester	STATEWIDE DE	SMC DE	STATEWIDE NON-DE	SMC NON-DE
2014	60.76%	68.56%	70.34%	67.92%
2015	62.28%	67.79%	70.84%	67.63%
2016	63.41%	67.78%	71.63%	67.67%
2017	65.53%	70.76%	71.91%	68.41%
2018	66.27%	70.77%	72.24%	67.94%
2019	66.71%	71.41%	72.05%	67.08%

\*Source: CCCCCO Data-Mart

While DE success rates and retention rates have improved over the years, the one area that has not received much attention until recently, is the online equity gap for racially minoritized students. The “DE Equity Success Rates” document (located in the appendix) presents the course success rates comparing DE and On-Ground courses for each race/ethnic group for over six years. This data was provided by the Office of Institutional Research. When looking at DE course success rates by race/ethnicity, Black, Latinx, Native American, and Pacific Islanders students experience the largest gaps when compared to the highest performing group. Moreover, racially minoritized students were completing their DE courses at lower rates than the F2F courses. However, in Fall 2019, the gap has closed except for African-American/Black students; although their gap in successful completion between DE and F2F courses has reduced over the years. This is also noticed at the state level, as indicated in Figure 6, the DE success rates for African-American/Black students have consistently remained 20 percent lower than the highest performing group. There are studies that suggest that the equity gap that exists in a traditional face-to-face course is exacerbated in an online learning environment for African-American/Black students.<sup>6</sup> However, there are limited studies investigating this problem. As a result of COVID-19, studies to address online equity gaps for racially minoritized students will likely increase. The gap in performance may be attributed to many factors: faculty preparation (equity-minded and culturally relevant pedagogy in online environments), digital inequalities (access to stable wifi and mobile device vs. desktop), preference for f2f instruction, lack of sense of belonging, and lack of online support services, etc.

The DE Department also deploys several surveys throughout the academic year pertaining to satisfaction with training courses and POCR reviews. Although the response rate tends to be low, the results tend to be favorable. Furthermore, DE

Department provides faculty with an option to provide anonymous feedback located in 'Canvas Central' and the feedback is assessed each semester by the department.

A collaborative effort from the Distance Education Committee, our Office of Institutional Research and using the California Community College Chancellor's Office, afforded us with a Distance Education (DE) Faculty Satisfaction Survey for faculty who taught at least one distance education course in the Spring 2017 term. This survey was also deployed and assessed by the department.

#### FOOTNOTES

6. [https://www.ppic.org/content/pubs/report/R\\_514HJR.pdf](https://www.ppic.org/content/pubs/report/R_514HJR.pdf)

### D1: Past year's Objectives

As part of the planning process, programs are expected to establish annual objectives that support the program's goals. Please document the status of the program/function's previous year's objectives. Add comments if you feel further explanation is needed.

#### Objectives

Objective:

Market Online Tutoring for Online/Hybrid Students

Status: Completed

Comments:

Online/hybrid students and faculty were targeted to promote Smarthinking. Usage is up by 58% this year in comparison to last year.

Objective:

The Distance Education department will develop and promote useful trainings and opportunities to promote best practices using Canvas Instructure.

Status: Completed

Comments:

This is an ongoing objective for the department. The DE department offered countless workshops, training opportunities, drop-in support hours, and peer online course review opportunities for not only online/hybrid faculty, but all faculty in support of the transition to online courses due to COVID-19.

#### Looking Back

*In this section, please document what you did last year as a result of what you described in Section C.*

**1. Describe any accomplishments, achievements, activities, initiatives undertaken, and any other positives the program wishes to note and document.**

1. The DE department successfully implemented and executed the 18-month migration plan to move the college to a new CMS after over 13 years on the previous CMS. The process was supported by a team of dedicated faculty mentors, DE and MIS staff. In preparation for the migration, it was requested that the DE program try to hold off on growth. However, due to student demand, flattening enrollments in on-campus classes and FTES goal, the program experienced growth in sections and expansion of offerings in spite of a rigorous migration project taking the focus of the DE team. DE supported a 9.77% increase while also working through a course management system migration.

2. Upon the retirement of the Associate Dean of the DE department in 2017, the DE department was down to two staff members and one administrator to support the DE program for over two years. The department have had to be creative with limited resources and new challenges with learning a new CMS, while adapting to the training needs and support of faculty and students using a new CMS. The team has also managed to install educational technology software/services to enhance the online learning experience for users. This includes the director of the DE Department creating a new process to ensure LTIs integrated into Canvas undergo an accessibility check before installation. During these years, DE sections continued to increase at an all-time number each semester.

3. The DE Department has creatively offered numerous PD opportunities for faculty with limited fiscal resources and staffing. This includes: drop-in lab hour support, Peer Online Course Review opportunities, Canvas Central, faculty hosted trainings, training courses, course consultations, faculty peer-mentor support, @ONE course reimbursement, etc.
4. The DE Department pivoted all efforts to support and host the Spring 2020 Flex Day Workshop and ongoing PD to quickly prepare the campus for the transition to online delivery. These activities were successful due to DE staff, faculty, Academic Affairs support, and MIS staff.
5. The DE Department successfully partnered with co-lead faculty of the one-time \$500,000 CVC-OEI Improving Online CTE Pathways Grant. As of spring 2020, SMC Associate Degree's available online by putting math and lab science general education courses online and many professional development opportunities were made available to faculty (POCR program, learning communities, workshops, dedicated faculty trainer, DE accessibility expert, and the Online Teaching Winter 2020 Institute).
6. The DE Department successfully supported and assisted with the summer and fall 2020 DE Professional Development Plan submitted to the Chancellor's Office lead by Laura Manson, Edna Chavarry, and Dr. Tammara Whitaker.
7. DE Department's Instructional Media Specialist, Christine Miller, successfully assisted with the course design and implementation of the "Direct Connect" Canvas shell created by full-time counseling faculty, Dr. Tyffany Dowd. The Direct Connect shell is a central location with essential information to learn, access, and maximize student success. While this project is not a typical project for the DE Department due to limited human resources, the department agreed to assist with this task to be supportive of the DE Professional Development Plan. The planning and coordination of this venture required special expertise and human resources, which cemented the need for a dedicated instructional designer which will be discussed in the upcoming section.
8. Successful implementation and execution of the summer and fall 2020 6-week and 8-week Online Teaching & Design (OTD) certification course facilitated by expert DE faculty.

**2. Summarize how the program or service area addressed the recommendations for program strengthening from the executive summary of the previous six-year program review.**

The department has consistently expanded evaluation efforts to identify faculty professional development needs and the effectiveness of faculty training which are measured by surveys. The "DE Professional Needs" survey deployed in spring 2020 (390 responses) by the OIR was extremely helpful in the abrupt reprioritization of the DE department to address the training needs of all faculty transitioning to online course delivery.

**3. Describe any changes or activities your program or service area has made that are not addressed in the objectives, identify the factors (e.g., licensure requirements, state or federal requirements, CCCO mandates, regulations, etc.) that triggered the changes, and indicate the expected or anticipated outcomes.**

The DE department has always been a lean department and limited in capacity and resources to truly meet the needs of all faculty and students. As a result, the DE Department must prioritize projects and/or tasks with the most urgent need and often rely on the support of MIS for specialized coding for certain tasks that require additional customization.

Now that we are supporting nearly all faculty and students in an online environment, the bandwidth to support requests are very limited. For example, there are requests from special programs and departments that have an interest in using Canvas for their unique student population that would require MIS involvement. At this time, MIS is unable to take on any additional projects and must also prioritize projects for the campus. While the DE department has offered workarounds as a solution, the potential for Canvas usage to support the campus may not reach its full potential considering the aforementioned barriers. In addition, the demand to keep up with technological advancements and ongoing professional development needs are constantly evolving in online education and requires fiscal resources. The modest budget from the District does not meet the demand and need of the the DE community. Fortunately, the we have been able to acquire grant funding to meet some of the needs but this is often one-time funding and not a constant source of funding. It is very challenging to meet the growing demands of support considering the limited staffing and fiscal resources to address various needs to support a robust DE department.

**4. If your program received one time funding of any kind indicate the source, how the funds were spent and the impact on the program (benefits or challenges).**

The CVC-OEI Improving Online CTE Pathways Grant funding afforded the pilot of the online proctoring software,

Proctorio, in spring 2020. The funding also established the POOCR program and funded @ONE course reimbursement for faculty. The grant funding was used to improve the quality of our online courses, expand the number of CTE courses and programs available via online delivery, and make SMC Associate Degree's available online by putting math and lab science general education courses online. The funding was used to hire a part-time faculty course designer/trainer, and part-time faculty accessibility specialist. In attempts to sustain the efforts of the grant and support the additional professional development needs of faculty due to COVID-19, CARES and SEAP funding has also been a funding source. It is uncertain if these positions and training opportunities will be extended beyond fall 2020.

### Moving Forward

**Discuss and summarize conclusions drawn from data, assessments (SLO, UO) or other evaluation measures identified in Section C and indicate responses or programmatic changes planned for the coming year(s) including:**

- how the assessment results are informing program goals and objectives, program planning, and decision-making
- specific changes planned or made to the program based on the assessment results

The DE department will continue to offer pedagogical and technology training to faculty, reaching out to both online/hybrid and F2F faculty. The importance of the surveys is apparent in providing us with the feedback and guidance to effectively address the training needs of faculty.

The DE department will continue to promote and advocate for funding to ensure online tutoring is available to online/hybrid students. In addition, the DE department has intentionally collaborated with SMC Equity Practitioners to broaden professional development opportunities and address the current equity gap for racially minoritized students.

### D2: Coming year's Objectives (Moving Forward)

Objective #1

**Objective:**

Incorporate equity-minded online teaching professional development opportunities to promote best practices using the course management system, Canvas .

**Area/ Discipline/ Function Responsible:** Distance Education

**Assessment Data and Other Observations:**

Other data or observed trends  
Faculty attendance

**External Factors:**

Program Review Committee Recommendation

**Timeline and activities to accomplish the objective:** -Workshops

-Certification Courses

Fall 2021

**Describe how objective will be assessed/measured:** Faculty will receive surveys and attendance will be measured

**Comments:** While existing Canvas trainings are a function of the department, the department will ensure that equity-minded teaching practices are among the various trainings offered.

Objective #2

**Objective:**

Develop and become a certified local Peer Online Course Review (POOCR) campus.

**Area/ Discipline/ Function Responsible:** Distance Education

**Assessment Data and Other Observations:**

Other data or observed trends  
Successful completion and certification.

**External Factors:**

Other Factors  
The expansion of support needed for all faculty transitioning to DE courses.

**Timeline and activities to accomplish the objective:** Develop a local process and select three courses to be submitted to the CVC-OEI for certifications. This should be accomplished by Fall 2021.

**Describe how objective will be assessed/measured:** The objective will be assessed by faculty participation and feedback from participating faculty.

**Comments:** Through the CVC-OEI one-year grant, we were able to pilot a local peer online course review (POCR) team using the CVC-OEI rubric. We will also pilot optional certification courses for online faculty in the summer and fall 2020. We hope this will help expand the DE professional development opportunities offered to faculty.

## Community Engagement

*In the prompts that follow, please delineate the partnerships you have with the rest of the SMC community as well as those you have with external organizations.*

**1. If applicable, describe how your department staff members engage in institutional efforts such as committees and presentations, and departmental activities.**

This list reflects DE staff service during the six-year timeframe for this report:

Vice-Chair Distance Education Academic Senate Joint Committee

Curriculum Committee

DE Steering Committee

Student Conduct Appeals Committee

Academic Honor Council Committee

Technology Planning Committee (DPAC)

Guided Pathways Inquiry Team Participant

Benefits Committee

VIP Welcome Day

Faculty and Staff Hiring Committees

Flex Day Presenters

Benefits Committee

Redesign Scheduling Committee

Department Meeting Presenters

Black Collegians Presenter

Faculty Ranking Committee

Program Review Committee

**2. If applicable, discuss the engagement of program members with the local community, industry, professional groups, etc.)**

California Community College Chancellors Office Distance Education Coordinators Organization

SARA-WICHE (Western Cooperative for Educational Technologies” and “Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education”) (Listserv)

CVC-OEI Common Course Management System (CCMS) Advisory Committee

CVC OEI LTI Work Group Committee

### **3. Discuss the relationship among program faculty and staff, between program faculty, staff and students, and the involvement of program faculty and staff with other programs or areas.**

Most of the DE staff share interchangeable responsibilities but remain within the scope of their respective job duties. A department with such a small staff and such a large program necessitates this fluidity.

Christine Miller, our Instructional Media Specialist works mainly with faculty in assisting with audio/video/multimedia elements added to course shells. She works closely with faculty in offering training and ongoing support in best practices for training, course design suggestions, and assistance regarding the LMS for on-ground and online content.

Ashley Eutsey, our Senior Online Learning Services Specialist, works primarily with faculty to support their needs in ensuring their course shells are in place. She maintains and resolves issues within the LMS and provides guidance and support to faculty, students, and other District stakeholders regarding more complex functional issues related to the LMS. She also mentors and support our Online Learning Services Specialist in how to support student inquiries.

Willis Barton, our Online Learning Services Specialist, serves as our "welcome" person for all students. He answers email inquiries and calls from potential and current students regarding a myriad of topics regarding online classes.

## **Current Planning and Recommendations**

*The following items are intended to help programs identify, track, and document unit planning and actions and to assist the institution in broad planning efforts.*

**1. Identify any issues or needs impacting program effectiveness or efficiency for which institutional support or resources will be requested in the coming year. [This information will be reviewed and considered in institutional planning processes but does not supplant the need to request support or resources through established channels and processes].**

The demand and growth of DE is exciting, but it also difficult to meet the growing demands of support considering the limited staffing and fiscal resources to address various needs to support a robust distance learning department. The DE Department would currently benefit from the items listed below. While this is not an exhaustive list, it would meet some of the most immediate needs.

**ADA/504 Compliance** –The DE Department relies heavily on the expertise of Disabled Student Services High Tech Training Center to address and support accessibility requirements in an online environment. However, it has become apparent over the years, this type of support requires a specialized skillset to support the DE community. The DE department relied on one faculty member from the High Tech Training Center with this expertise to vet the LTI requests and also address the expansion of online courses over the years. However, we learned this was not the primary responsibility of this employee and upon his resignation, we have been unable to receive the same support from the center. However, we were able retain the services of this former employee via the CVC-OEI Improving Online CTE Pathways grant, as a part-time faculty member to conduct accessibility reviews of existing and new DE courses and also assist the DE department with LTI accessibility reviews. This is currently not a sustainable model and the center is undergoing an adjustment period due to recent retirements. However, this is a critical need for the campus community and needs to be addressed.

**Robust and Sustainable DE Program** – In Spring 2020, a 20-21 DPAC Action Plan along with a budget proposal was submitted in efforts to ensure a sustainable and robust experience for the online community of SMC faculty and students (Student Equity Plan #2 & #3, Guided Pathways Redesign Goals #3, 4, 5, 6,7, 8). The plan included a preliminary plan to ensure the long-term integrity of new and continuing online programs, with a sustained focus on closing racial equity gaps. Unfortunately, due to budgetary concerns, the plan did not receive the significant votes to send the SMC Online Education Annual Action Plan Budget Information Form to DPAC. Fortunately, while many of these items were covered via CARES and SEAP funding, this is a temporary solution and not a sustainable funding source for the future.

**Software Licenses**- The DE Department has a limited budget provided by the District and must seek other funding sources to continue services such as Turnitin, Respondus, and any additional licenses each year. Most of the licenses currently offered to faculty are funded by the Chancellor's Office. However, as more faculty become familiar with online teaching and would like to explore different software to enhance the online learning experience for students, we are unable to fulfill these requests. We have seen an increase in requests for certain products (Canvas Studio, Pronto, Otter AI, etc.) that would be useful to faculty and students in an online learning environment. Due to the current budget constraints, we have refrained from opting into any trial periods for certain licenses. Consequently, as more educational tools become available to enhance online course content, we will not be able to stay current and meet the needs of our community without proper investment.

**Dedicated Canvas Programmer** - While we are fortunate to be assigned to MIS staff member, Fai Fong, who has been integral in the support and success of Canvas and the migration; it is apparent that her time must be split with other campus priorities. With the increase of Canvas use, more special programs and departments have contacted the DE department to assist with their needs. Often times, these requests require special coding and we are not always able to fulfill these requests depending on pressing priorities at the moment. The DE Department has been successful with offering workaround solutions to departments/special programs, but this is not always the most efficient process. Furthermore, a dedicated canvas programmer would also have the responsibility to design and develop complex reports using multiple data sources and third-party APIs and other related duties. It would benefit the program to have a designated programmer that is able to dedicate the majority of their time and effort to the programming needs of the CMS and SIS.

**Instructional Designer** – The need for an instructional designer is a standard for most distance education programs. The instructional designer position has been discussed for many years among the DE Committee and the need has amplified with the increase in DE course offerings. While faculty are subject matter experts, many do not have the skillset of a course designer and would benefit from collaboration with an instructional designer before offering their course online. The DE program currently is unable to offer this service to departments and/or faculty who would benefit from a professional course design expert with ADA/504 compliance knowledge. In spring 2019, 78.1% of DE faculty indicated they were at least somewhat likely to use an online/hybrid course design expert in the future.

**Online Support for Online Students** – Our accreditation visits in the past highlighted the need to better coordinate and support our tutoring programs, including online tutoring. Smarthinking is the tutoring service chosen by SMC to provide tutoring to our online/hybrid students, whose usage has increased by 61% this year. The number of hours of allotted to each student has been restricted to conserve hours, but despite that, this year's allotment is nearly depleted due to increased usage by 61% this year. We have been successful with receiving approval from our PBAR to increase in the DE department's budget in 2018-19 to sustain the service, but we will continue to rely on more institutional support for funding to support students in future semesters, especially while the campus relies on online instruction during COVID-19.

In addition, there is a sense of isolation and need of community for online students. After a visit to ASU, we learned of the success of Online Success Coaching for their online student population. It is more apparent that students may benefit from this type of support and connection with a peer or staff member dedicated to assisting students through their online educational journey. The DE program would like to explore this model in the future, as indicated in the DPAC Action Plan.

**2. If applicable, list additional capital resources (facilities, technology, equipment) that are needed to support the program as it currently exists. [This information will be reviewed and considered in institutional planning processes but does not supplant the need to request resources through established channels and processes].**

-Software licenses as indicated above.

-As with the entire campus, staff must rely on their own equipment or Chromebooks while working at home. While this is sufficient for a majority of the staff, there are staff members that would benefit from a laptop with more bandwidth and monitors to withstand the day-to-day tasks that are normally performed in the office.

- The CVC-OEI will no longer fund phone support for CCCs effective January 2021. It is imperative that we maintain the 24/7/365 technical support Canvas helpdesk. While chat support will still be funded, phone support service cannot be replicated in-house with current staffing restrictions.

**3. If applicable, list additional human resources (staffing, professional development, staff training) needed to support the program as it currently exists. [This information will be reviewed and considered in institutional planning processes but does not supplant the need to request resources through established channels and processes].**

-It would benefit the District to implement a formalized method to support online faculty readiness

-An instructional designer would be beneficial

-A DE accessibility specialist would be beneficial

-Allocation of additional funds to reimburse faculty who participate in @ONE training

-The staff would benefit from ongoing training to stay abreast of the evolving nature of distance education and technology

**4. List all current positions assigned to the program.**

The Distance Education department staff consists of four people listed below. All participate in some form of committee work and/or institutional efforts. More details below:

Dr. Tammara Whitaker, Interim Associate Dean, Online Services & Support, Academic Affairs

Christine Miller, Instructional Media Specialist

\*Ashley Eutsey, Senior Online Learning Services Specialist

Willis Barton, Online Learning Services Specialist

\*Hired February 2020

### Future Planning and Recommendations

*The following items are intended to help programs identify, track, and document unit planning and actions and to assist the institution in broad planning efforts.*

**1. Projecting toward the future, what trends could potentially impact the program? What changes does the program anticipate in 5 years; 10 years? Where does the program want to be? How is the program planning for these changes?**

Given the current budget challenges, the future is uncertain. However, it is evident that online education will continue to expand and play an integral role in higher education. The DE program would like to not only continue to grow but also have the room to thrive and innovate. At this time, it is simply not possible with limited human and fiscal resources. It is also uncertain how the future migration to a new SIS will impact our workflow. We are hopeful that the new SIS will provide more options as it relates to Canvas.



It is also unclear what the future of DE will hold once the campus is able to transition back to on-ground services and courses. While some faculty and students have embraced online courses, others are having difficulty adapting. There is a concern that all the work that led up to improving the quality of the DE program over the years may be disrupted by faculty and students not having the choice in whether to select or enroll in an online course.

With the introduction of synchronous online courses, it is clear that some disciplines would like to continue this modality in this future. Consequently, this disrupts the traditional asynchronous online course model at SMC of "any time, any place learning". The DE Committee must grapple with best practices for synchronous online courses and camera-use recommendations. Additionally, while the certification courses are offered by the DE Department, these courses are optional, and it is unclear if they will be offered in future semester. DE faculty readiness has always been a concern of DE Committee and the DE Department, but it is even more of a concern without a requirement of some type of foundational knowledge and the potential negative impact on student success. While many faculty may wish to continue teaching online courses because of the perceived convenience it affords, we are concerned they may have not participated in the training necessary to outline best practices for online teaching and this will have a long-term effect on the program. In addition, the perception of online courses may be impacted due to the abrupt transition to online courses for most faculty and students.

Referencing previous entries, there are many federal and statewide initiatives which could impact the SMC DE program:

- Federal Mandate for State Authorization
- CVC-OEI Consortium & Student Course Exchange
- CMS & Course Delivery Technology Changes

**2. If applicable, list additional capital resources (facilities, technology, equipment) that will be needed to support proposed changes. [This information will be reviewed and considered in institutional planning processes but does not supplant the need to request resources through established channels and processes].**

We are unable to project at this time. However, if the District opts to migrate to another CMS in the future, there will be costs involved in terms of technology and staffing to support training and readiness of faculty.

**3. If applicable, list additional human resources (staffing, professional development, staff training) that will be needed to support proposed changes. [This information will be reviewed and considered in institutional planning processes but does not supplant the need to request resources through established channels and processes].**

As referenced in previous sections, one long-time missing piece for the DE program is an instructional designer. In addition, an accessibility expert that specializes in DE is necessary. The District will also need to look into a compliance officer type position and collaboration between MIS, Admissions, and Financial Aid to address out-of-state students enrolling in DE courses.

**4. If applicable, note particular challenges the program faces including those relating to categorical funding, budget, and staffing.**

As with most departments, District budgets were reduced. While there is a need for additional fiscal and human resources, it is unclear whether we will be able to address these needs in the near future.

**5. Summarize any conclusions and long term recommendations for the program resulting from the self evaluation process.**

Reflecting back on the past six-years, it is amazing how quickly technology has evolved and how much the DE department has accomplished considering the budgetary constraints and the need to stay as current as possible. While we are happy to support the entire campus during COVID-19, we are in need of sustainable (not one-time) resources and support.

**6. Please use this field to share any information the program feels is not covered under any other questions.**

N/A

### Evaluation of Process

**Please comment on the effectiveness of the Program Review process in focusing program planning.**

It was an interesting and valuable experience to reflect on the past six years. Although annual program reviews are somewhat helpful to reference, I recommend a more straightforward and scaffolded approach over the years to assist those responsible for these reports (especially newcomers). The formatting features in Curricunet could use improvement.

### Executive Summary

*These fields to be filled out by the Program Review committee. Reports will be sent to the program and will be available on-line to populate relevant fields in the annual report and the next 6 year report.*

**Narrative**

**Program Evaluation**

**Commendations**

**Recommendations for Program Strengthening**

**Recommendations for Institutional Support**

### Attached File Upload

**Attached Files**

DE Equity Success Rates	
Distance Education Figures	
Fall 2017 Smarthinking Online Tutoring	
Fall 2018 DE Fast Facts	
Six Years Online Student Trend	