

College of Marin

# Distance Education Plan

2023-2026

DRAFT

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## Introduction to the DE Plan

The Distance Education (DE) Plan was written to align with College of Marin's mission and the goals of the Strategic Plan and the Educational Master Plan. This plan will guide online instruction for academic years 2023-2026. The purpose of the DE Plan is to identify areas of improvement and implement strategies that include:

- A continued focus on course quality and student support services that promotes student success
- Exploration of future learning modalities and technologies to improve and promote student access to equitable learning experiences; and
- Faculty engagement in professional learning opportunities to improve the quality of instruction and course design.

The DE plan comprises sets of goals and objectives for:

- Instructional Program Development
- Course Quality and Faculty Professional Learning
- Student Success, Support, and Equity
- Technology, Modalities, and Infrastructure

This DE Plan was informed by numerous data sources, including but not limited to:

- Surveys and analysis collected by PRIE
- Analysis of previous plans

The DE Plan is written collaboratively by members of the Distance Education Committee (DEC), reviewed by the COM Academic Senate, and submitted to the College Board of Trustees for approval.

## COM Mission Statement

College of Marin's commitment to educational excellence is rooted in providing equitable opportunities and fostering success for all members of our diverse community by offering:

- preparation for transfer to four-year colleges and universities
- associate degrees and certificates
- career technical education
- basic skills improvement
- English as a Second Language
- lifelong learning
- community and cultural enrichment

College of Marin responds to community needs by offering student-centered programs and services in a supportive, innovative learning environment that promotes social and environmental responsibility.

## DE Mission Statement

In support of the mission, vision and values of College of Marin, the Distance Education Program offers students access to quality instruction and support in online, hybrid, and web-enhanced environments.

## DE Program Outcomes

- Faculty are provided training and professional learning to meet the standards and utilize best and emerging practices of online teaching and learning.
- Distance Education students will use the basic features of the course management system (CMS) at a proficiency level sufficient to access course materials, actively interact with the instructor and fellow students, complete course assignments and assessments, and monitor learning and grades during the semester.
- Distance Education students will be aware of student academic and support services [via](#) direct access to links to those services available on the College of Marin CMS course sites and/or the Distance Education website.

## Distance Education Committee

The Academic Senate voted at its September 23, 2010, meeting to approve the formation of a Distance Education Committee (DEC) as a subcommittee of the Academic Senate that oversees the development and implementation of distance education offerings at College of Marin. Reports are given periodically to the Academic Senate and are included in the Academic Senate minutes.

The DE Committee is chaired by the Distance Education Faculty Coordinator, Instructional Designer, and AVP of Instruction. The committee includes faculty, classified staff, and management.

## DE Committee Charge

The Distance Education Committee will:

- Develop long-term strategies for the development of distance education at College of Marin.
- [Research](#) and make recommendations regarding distance education platforms and applications.
- Provide guidelines and training in use of the District Learning Management System (LMS) platform.
- Develop protocols and consistent procedures for all faculty to use for Distance Education classes.
- Develop and implement a method for ensuring academic integrity and student authentication.
- Research and develop policies regarding regular and substantive interaction in distance education classes.
- Research and make recommendations to the Curriculum Committee on course outlines for distance education courses including ADA and Title 5 Compliance
- Provide guidance on best practices in student support including tutoring, technical support, counseling, and library services.
- Research and publish best practices for student success and retention in distance education classes.
- Make recommendations to the professional development committee for flex workshops.
- Provide recommendations on selection and evaluation procedures for DE offerings.
- Work closely with the Curriculum Committee to review proposals for new and revised DE courses. All DE courses are vetted by the Distance Education Committee (DEC).

## DE Program Policy and Initiatives

College of Marin is a small, suburban community college with a modest Distance Education program in comparison to other California Community Colleges. Currently, the college enrolls over 4200 students in credit courses. Through the Distance Education program, COM strives to provide access to quality instruction and support in online and hybrid courses to ensure students can complete their educational goals.

With the assistance of the Improving Online CTE Pathways Grant in 2019, COM adopted the CVC-OEI Peer Online Course Review (POCR) and the Online Education Initiative (OEI) Course Design Rubric as processes for vetting new and existing online courses for quality course design. POCR and the Course Design Rubric were incorporated into COM's AP 4105 Distance Education policy in May 2021, along with required faculty professional learning training.

As the college was preparing to meet the requirements of the CTE grant and implement the POCR process, the college abruptly shifted to emergency remote instruction due to the COVID-19 global pandemic. For this reason, much of the data used to inform this DE plan compares enrollment, retention, and student success data from Fall of 2019 to Fall of 2022. At the height of the pandemic from the Spring 2020 through the Spring 2021 semester, most of the teaching and learning continued to take place under emergency remote instruction in courses that were not previously available online and with instructors who had limited online teaching experience and training.

### Impact of COVID-19 on Distance Education

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the shift to emergency remote instruction provided opportunities in the distance education realm that had not previously existed. To prepare to teach effectively online, all COM faculty were provided two weeks of professional learning to develop foundational skills in online instruction. Based on an agreement between the UPM, Academic Senate, and the District, between 2020 and 2021, approximately 300 instructors completed the internal professional learning program that was developed.

With the exposure to online teaching, previously hesitant faculty demonstrated an interest in pursuing more extensive professional learning to expand their online teaching knowledge and skills. Several faculty members brought courses through the POCR process. As a result, IGETC and CSU GE-Breadth online offerings expanded. As an institution, we are also better prepared to maintain continuity of instruction through power outages, floods, smoke days, etc., because more faculty are using Canvas and are able to shift instruction online on an emergency basis.

### Accomplishments and Forward Momentum

While the COVID pandemic caused delay to many of our previous 2016-2020 DE Plan initiatives, several DE initiatives were completed and/or restructured. This section outlines the initiatives completed or revised.

#### Online CTE Pathways Grant and POCR

In July 2019, College of Marin was awarded the CVC-OEI Improving Online CTE Pathways Grant. The primary goal was to bring CTE certificates and degrees fully-online into well-designed pathways while also filling gaps in online courses required for IGETC and CSU transfer. The pathways would allow more students to complete their goals now that we are

diversifying the delivery modes in our CTE programs. Fewer barriers now exist due to more responsive offerings being put into place.

At the time of the grant application, the college was not yet approved to offer online programs. Online courses could be delivered if the number of courses taken by students comprised less than 50% of their degree program. As part of the OL-CTE Grant, COM submitted a substantive change to the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC). In December 2019, the ACCJC approved the District to offer Distance Education Online Career and Academic Pathways. To ensure the quality of the courses the grant stakeholders adopted the POCR and CVC-OEI Course Design Rubric. Faculty mentors participating in the OL-CTE grant were required to become [certified POCR reviewers](#) by taking the CVC-OEI's three-week professional development course.

## Professional Learning

The COVID pandemic took hold in the middle of crucial course development and the POCR review timeline in the Spring of 2020. To prepare faculty for remote instruction, the Distance Education Coordinator, Instructional Designer, and Accessibility Specialist adapted the 12-week CVC-OEI Online Teaching and Design (OTD) course available in the Canvas Commons. Course development began in early April. Approximately 300 full and part-time faculty participated in at least two weeks of training that provided foundational skills in teaching online.

While the increased workload during remote instructions caused delays in our grant work, the development and adaption of the OTD course simultaneously supported our grant efforts and goals regarding quality course design and peer online course review. Mandatory participation in the OTD course assisted us in further institutionalizing our distance education policies by requiring faculty to receive online teaching and course design training and having their deliverables reviewed by a peer mentor.

Due to the distance education experience during the pandemic through remote instruction, the number of faculty moving into online learning increased after years of push back. This expansion helped increase the number of IGETC and CSU GE-Breadth areas with distance education offerings. Faculty previously teaching in-person gained new regard for what DE offers in relation to student access to education. However, there were various misconceptions about synchronous online learning and, specifically, what constitutes quality in a synchronous online course.

To address some of the misconceptions, DEC invited David Rhoads, Director of Teaching Excellence and Digital Pedagogy at Vanguard University, to facilitate a training session with faculty during the Spring 2022 Flex Week and focused on the concept of hyflex instruction. The workshop provided an introductory overview to faculty as we transitioned from the pandemic.

The professional learning activities that manifested under remote instruction helped to prioritize and set the standards for ongoing professional learning in quality course design and delivery, regular and substantive contact, accessibility, and evaluation of teaching and learning.

## Completed Goals from Previous Plan

The following outcomes have been achieved (and, in some cases, ongoing) with the [last](#) Distance Education Plan (2016-2019):



TABLE 1: PREVIOUS DE PLAN GOALS

Initiative/Goal	Action Taken	Status
Improve Accessibility 508 Compliance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Integrated Ally in Canvas</li> <li>• Integrated PopeTech Accessibility tool into Canvas</li> <li>• Provided Flex PL to staff and faculty</li> </ul>	Completed /On-going
Continued monitoring of academic integrity, student authentication, and last date of attendance issues		Ongoing
Ongoing training of faculty, with an emphasis on pedagogy, on quality course design and delivery, regular and effective contact, accessibility, evaluation of teaching and learning, and professional development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implementation of POCR process                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ POCR passed senate and Board</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Regular DE faculty during flex week</li> <li>• PL offerings during Flex week</li> <li>• Addition of OEI course rubric to faculty evaluations</li> </ul>	Ongoing
Providing students access to equivalent services including enrollment, accessibility services, tutoring, and counseling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Virtual Services now offered and institutionalized</li> <li>• Analyzing courses to determine gaps in program and course offerings</li> </ul>	Ongoing
Implement the OEI readiness modules and online orientation course	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quest Online Learning readiness course developed as self-enroll course for students. The course is updated yearly.</li> </ul>	Completed Spring 2017
Revise and update outdated DE language in the Online Course Schedule and AP 4105	<p>The updates to AP 4105 included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Revised definitions of online and hybrid DE courses</li> <li>• Requirements for mandatory training of faculty before they are assigned a DE course</li> <li>• Best practices for establishing regular, effective, and substantive faculty-initiated contact</li> <li>• Detailed requirements for accessibility compliance</li> <li>• Specifics on enrollment, attendance, and participation in DE courses</li> </ul>	Board approved Sept 2018, 2021, 2022, 20223.
Prepare students to use the current LMS with hands-on workshops and by updating and improving the DE website FAQs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Genius Bar is held at the beginning of the semester hosted by IT and Library</li> <li>• DE FAQs and Canvas courses updated with current information.</li> </ul>	Ongoing

Provide technical support in DE courses using the Canvas 24/7 ticketing system, and DE website		Ongoing
Provide academic support through the OWC		Ongoing
Implement options for effective online tutoring such as Net Tutor or dedicated TLC tutors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adopted NetTutor for 24/7 tutoring</li> <li>• Evaluated Pisces platform. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The tutoring centers opted not to use the Pisces system as they felt it was too difficult to navigate.</li> <li>○ Tutors opted to continue using Zoom.</li> <li>○ TLC, MathLab, and CS Lab continue to offer virtual appts post-pandemic</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Completed 2017/ Ongoing
Adopt Proctorio to ensure academic honesty in online exams	Integrated to Canvas in fall 2017. However, due to push back from students during remote instruction, its use is minimized.	Completed Fall 2017
Offer a one-unit orientation course for students taking distance education courses	A student hub has not been created but was implemented, Quest Online Orientation is provided in all DE courses and the Student Hub. Additionally, the DE counselors provide an intro to online learning.	Incomplete
Provide a dedicated DE Counselor	All DE counselors provide online services and 4 counselors completed 12-week OTD and now teach 3-week courses online.	Completed

## DE Plan Data, Methodology, Analysis, and Gaps

For the 2023-2026 plan, DEC compared and analyzed enrollment data from the Fall 2019 and Fall 2022 semesters. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the College shifted to full or partial remote instruction between Spring 2020-Fall 2021. During this period, all courses were designated as online. It is the Distance Education Committee’s position that data during this period does not accurately reflect typical enrollment and success data in online learning courses during nonemergency circumstances.

Demographic, success, and retention data was extracted from the PRIE data warehouse by the Director of Institutional Effectiveness and staff during the Spring 2022 semester. Data was also

obtained from two online surveys administered by the Office of Institutional Effectiveness to all currently enrolled students. The [Fall 2021 COM Student Course Delivery Survey](#) was designed to inform the post-pandemic return of in-person learning and the College's master schedule. The survey was administered to all COM students registered in any Fall 2021 credit or noncredit courses as of October 3, 2021. A total of 5,017 students (4,210 credit students and 807 noncredit students) received survey invitations via email and SMS (text message); 1,268 students completed the survey, for a response rate of 25%.

The [College of Marin Spring 2022 Student Survey](#) was administered to all currently enrolled students. The purpose of the survey was to assess students' experience returning to campus, their learning experiences during their in-person courses, and to provide students the opportunity to give feedback and suggestions for improving their return to campus.

Data collection took place between April 25 and May 13. The survey was sent via COM email and SMS (text) message to 5,289 students enrolled in at least one credit or noncredit course at COM as of April 25, 2022. 807 students completed the survey, for a response rate of 15%.

## DE Course Offerings

COM offers approximately 40 distance education (online) courses that meet CSU GE-Breadth and/or IGETC requirements (see list of courses in appendix). With the Improving Online CTE Pathways Grant that concluded in 2020, Business, Multimedia, and Hospitality certificates and degrees now have an online pathway completion option.

**TABLE 2 DE COURSES BY DIVISION AND SUBJECT, FALL 2019, SPRING 2020, SPRING 2022, FALL 2022**

<b>Arts &amp; Humanities</b>	<b>Career Workforce Development</b>	<b>Math &amp; Sciences</b>	<b>Student Services</b>
American Sign Language		Anthropology	Counseling
	Auto Collision Repair Tech	Astronomy	Health Education
Communication	Automotive Technology	Behavioral Sciences	Kinesiology
Dance	Business	Biology	
Drama	Computer Information Systems	Business	
English	Court Reporting	Chemistry	
Film			
French	Early Childhood Education	Computer Science	
Humanities		Economics	
Music	Graphic Design	Engineering	
Philosophy	Hospitality	Ethnic Studies	
Spanish	Multimedia Studies	Geography	
	Real Estate	Geology	
	Work Experience	History	
		Hospitality	

	Mathematics
	Political Science
	Psychology
	Sociology

## Distance Education Enrollment

In Fall 2022, 38 percent of registered students enrolled in at least one distance education course compared to 21.5 percent in Fall 2019.

TABLE 3 CREDIT ENROLLMENT AND HEADCOUNT BY MODALITY, 2022-23 AY

Modality	Fall 2022		Spring 2023		Total Enrollments	Total Headcount
	Enrollments	Headcount	Enrollments	Headcount		
Distance ed.	2,903	1,732	3,159	1,856	6,062	2,715
In person	9,049	3,697	8,298	3,732	17,347	5,045
<b>Overall</b>	<b>11,952</b>	<b>4,366</b>	<b>11,457</b>	<b>4,459</b>	<b>23,409</b>	<b>5,934</b>

TABLE 4 ENROLLMENTS IN DE COURSES BY RACE/ETHNICITY

Race/Ethnicity	Fall 2019	Spring 2020	Spring 2022	Fall 2022	Total
American Indian or Alaska Native	6	4	1	4	15
Asian	122	133	224	247	726
Black or African American	85	98	103	141	427
Hispanic	451	546	920	1,097	3,014
Multi-Racial	102	129	187	230	648
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	8	9	8	8	33
White	584	676	1,109	1,132	3,501
Unknown/Not reported	58	62	63	63	246
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,416</b>	<b>1,657</b>	<b>2,615</b>	<b>2,922</b>	

The majority of students enrolled in distance education courses are part-time and took 1-2 online courses.

TABLE 5 HEADCOUNT IN DE COURSES BY COUNT OF DE COURSES ENROLLED

Count of courses	Fall 2022		Spring 2023		Total Headcount	Total % Headcount
	Headcount	%	Headcount	%		
1 course	1,009	58.3%	1,062	57.2%	1,825	67.2%
2 courses	434	25.1%	448	24.1%	801	29.5%
3 courses	173	10.0%	217	11.7%	368	13.6%
4 or more courses	116	6.7%	129	7.0%	224	8.3%
<b>Overall</b>	<b>1,732</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>1,856</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>2,715</b>	<b>100%</b>

While [student headcount at the college](#) is down 7.2%, DE course enrollments increased from 12-15% in 2019 to 23-26% of course enrollments in Fall 2022-Spring 2023. According to the [Fall 2022 Student survey](#), 30% students took either online asynchronous (27%) or hybrid (6%) courses. Of the students surveyed, 30% indicated they preferred to enroll in a combination of online and in-person courses and 18% preferred online courses only. Students cited transportation and schedule convenience, responsibilities outside of class and work schedule as reasons for taking online courses.

With the increase in DE enrollment, it is evident that those students who are enrolling in the college need online courses to complete their educational goals. However, this also means there is a greater need for trained distance education faculty, strategic scheduling that allows for adequate IGETC/CSU GE-Breadth online course offerings and sections, online support services and staffing, and additional faculty reviewers to participate in peer course review.

## Faculty Demographics

The Distance Education program faculty has doubled in size since 2017. Forty-five full- and part-time faculty have either fully completed the POCR process **or** are on track to bring their DE courses through POCR by December 2025.

The majority of faculty are age 50 or older, 52% identified their gender as male, 52% reported their ethnicity as white, and 29% declined to report their ethnicity.

**TABLE 6 HEADCOUNT OF DE FACULTY BY AGE GROUP**

Age Group	Fall 2019	Spring 2020	Spring 2022	Fall 2022	Total
30-39			4	3	7
40-49	10	10	14	18	52
50 or older	23	26	28	34	111
<b>Total</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>170</b>

**TABLE 7 UNDUPLICATED HEADCOUNT OF DE FACULTY BY RACE/ETHNICITY**

Race/Ethnicity	Fall 2019	Spring 2020	Spring 2022	Fall 2022	Total
Asian			2	1	3
Black or African American	1	1	3	4	9
Hispanic	1	1	1	2	5
Multi-Racial	1	2	1	3	7

White	22	23	26	29	<b>100</b>
Unknown/Not reported	8	9	13	16	<b>46</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>170</b>

**TABLE 8 UNDUPLICATED HEADCOUNT OF DE FACULTY BY GENDER**

Gender	Fall 2019	Spring 2020	Spring 2022	Fall 2022	Total
Female	17	17	19	26	<b>79</b>
Male	16	19	27	29	<b>91</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>170</b>

Only 18% of DE faculty identified as people of color, which is problematic given the diversity of COM's student population.

## DE Student Enrollment Demographics

The Fall 2022 headcount and enrollment data was calculated using standard definition for enrollment (enrolled at first census, end of term, or receiving a grade).

The majority of students who enrolled in COM DE courses are white (41.9%) and Hispanic/Latinx (35.1%), identify as female, and are between the ages of 18-24 (75.2%)

**TABLE 9 UNDUPLICATED HEADCOUNT IN DE COURSES BY RACE/ETHNICITY FALL 2019, SPRING 2020, SPRING 2022, FALL 2022**

Race/Ethnicity	Headcount	Percent Headcount
American Indian or Alaska Native	8	0.2%
Asian	387	8.5%
Black or African American	185	4.0%
Hispanic	1,608	35.1%
Multi-Racial	342	7.5%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	20	0.4%
White	1,920	41.9%
Unknown/Not reported	108	2.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,578</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

**TABLE 10 ENROLLMENTS IN DE COURSES BY RACE/ETHNICITY**

Race/Ethnicity	Fall 2019	Spring 2020	Spring 2022	Fall 2022	Total
American Indian or Alaska Native	6	4	1	4	<b>15</b>
Asian	122	133	224	247	<b>726</b>

Black or African American	85	98	103	141	<b>427</b>
Hispanic	451	546	920	1,097	<b>3,014</b>
Multi-Racial	102	129	187	230	<b>648</b>
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	8	9	8	8	<b>33</b>
White	584	676	1,109	1,132	<b>3,501</b>
Unknown/Not reported	58	62	63	63	<b>246</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,416</b>	<b>1,657</b>	<b>2,615</b>	<b>2,922</b>	<b>8,610</b>

**TABLE 11 HEADCOUNT IN DE COURSES BY GENDER FALL 2019, SPRING 2020, SPRING 2022, FALL 2022**

<b>Gender</b>	<b>Headcount</b>	<b>Percent Headcount</b>
Female	2,656	58.0%
Male	1,862	40.7%
Unknown/Not reported	60	1.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,578</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

**TABLE 12 ENROLLMENTS IN DE COURSES BY GENDER**

<b>Gender</b>	<b>Fall 2019</b>	<b>Spring 2020</b>	<b>Spring 2022</b>	<b>Fall 2022</b>	<b>Total</b>
Female	865	1,018	1,524	1,653	<b>5,060</b>
Male	539	619	1,046	1,214	<b>3,418</b>
Unknown/Not reported	12	20	45	55	<b>132</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,416</b>	<b>1,657</b>	<b>2,615</b>	<b>2,922</b>	<b>8,610</b>

**TABLE 13 UNDUPLICATED HEADCOUNT IN DE COURSES BY AGE GROUP FALL 2019, SPRING 2020, SPRING 2022, FALL 2022**

<b>Age Group</b>	<b>Headcount</b>	<b>Percent Headcount</b>
Under 18	327	7.1%
18-19	1,146	25.0%
20-24	1,383	30.2%
25-29	558	12.2%
30-39	568	12.4%
40-49	314	6.9%
50 or older	282	6.2%

<b>Total</b>	<b>4,578</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
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**TABLE 14 ENROLLMENTS IN DE COURSES BY AGE GROUP**

<b>Age Group</b>	<b>Fall 2019</b>	<b>Spring 2020</b>	<b>Spring 2022</b>	<b>Fall 2022</b>	<b>Total</b>
Under 18	57	93	144	156	<b>450</b>
18-19	291	345	772	807	<b>2,215</b>
20-24	472	581	655	933	<b>2,641</b>
25-29	215	221	325	324	<b>1,085</b>
30-39	201	211	342	332	<b>1,086</b>
40-49	85	84	210	215	<b>594</b>
50 or older	95	122	167	155	<b>539</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,416</b>	<b>1,657</b>	<b>2,615</b>	<b>2,922</b>	<b>8,610</b>

### Enrollment by Educational Goal

Students enrolling in DE courses between 2019-2022 had an educational goal of completing a degree (10.9%), completing career education (12.5%) or transferring to a four-year university (56.2%).

**TABLE 15 HEADCOUNT IN DE COURSES BY EDUCATION GOAL FALL 2019, SPRING 2020, SPRING 2022, FALL 2022**

<b>Education Goal</b>	<b>Headcount</b>	<b>Percent Headcount</b>
Basic Skills/HS Diploma	176	3.8%
Career Education	573	12.5%
Certificate	107	2.3%
Degree Only (no Transfer)	501	10.9%
Educational Development	274	6.0%
Meet 4-Yr Req	347	7.6%
Transfer to 4-Yr	2,572	56.2%
Unknown/Not reported	28	0.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,578</b>	<b>100.0%</b>



## Data Analysis and Gaps

In summary, there has been a significant increase in the diversity of COM students taking DE courses since Fall 2019, including the Latinx population in DE courses, which has doubled. While the student diversity is increasing in DE courses, faculty diversity is not keeping pace with the student demographics. With over 56% of students planning to transfer to a four-year college, it is critical that DE courses offered meet transfer requirements and the academic rigor necessary for articulation.

## Student Retention, Success, Satisfaction, and Support

Student retention rates remain high in DE courses, averaging 81.6% from Fall 2019-Fall 2022. Historically, the COM DE Program has set a benchmark for retention rates at 80% or higher and success rates at 70% or higher.<sup>1</sup>

**TABLE 16 RETENTION IN DE COURSES BY RACE/ETHNICITY**

Race/Ethnicity	Fall 2019	Spring 2020	Spring 2022	Fall 2022	Total
American Indian or Alaska Native	100.0%	75.0%	0.0%	75.0%	80.0%
Asian	90.2%	80.5%	82.6%	81.4%	83.1%
Black or African American	72.9%	73.5%	82.5%	87.2%	80.1%
Hispanic	79.6%	77.3%	79.7%	81.5%	79.9%
Multi-Racial	80.4%	76.0%	79.7%	83.9%	80.6%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	75.0%	88.9%	50.0%	87.5%	75.8%
White	83.7%	81.5%	83.2%	84.3%	83.3%
Unknown/Not reported	74.1%	83.9%	82.5%	82.5%	80.9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>81.7%</b>	<b>79.2%</b>	<b>81.5%</b>	<b>83.1%</b>	<b>81.6%</b>

Student success rates averaged 73.79% from Fall 2019-Fall 2022. However, success rates are lower for students who identified as Black or African American (66.9%), Hispanic (69.2%), and Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander (58.6%).

**TABLE 17 SUCCESS IN DE COURSES BY RACE/ETHNICITY**

Race/Ethnicity	Fall 2019	Spring 2020	Spring 2022	Fall 2022	Total
American Indian or Alaska Native	100.0	100.0%	0.0%	50.0%	78.6

<sup>1</sup> Public Policy Institute of California.(2015). [Successful Online Courses in California's Community Colleges](#) defines an online course as “highly successful if at least 70 percent of its students earn a passing grade, and if student performance is at least as good as in traditional versions of the same course.”

	%				%
Asian	79.7%	79.8%	81.2%	78.2%	<b>79.7%</b>
Black or African American	64.3%	56.3%	68.1%	75.0%	<b>66.9%</b>
Hispanic	66.6%	78.4%	66.7%	67.8%	<b>69.2%</b>
Multi-Racial	69.5%	75.4%	76.7%	67.7%	<b>72.1%</b>
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	71.4%	87.5%	33.3%	37.5%	<b>58.6%</b>
White	77.8%	85.5%	76.6%	75.3%	<b>78.0%</b>
Unknown/Not reported	65.4%	79.7%	70.5%	78.8%	<b>73.7%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>72.6%</b>	<b>80.0%</b>	<b>72.9%</b>	<b>72.0%</b>	<b>73.9%</b>

According to the data collected, male students have higher retention rates than female students and students whose gender was unknown/Not Reported. While, male retention rates were higher, their success rates were lower – dropping below 70% in Fall 2022.

**TABLE 18 RETENTION IN DE COURSES BY GENDER**

Gender	Fall 2019	Spring 2020	Spring 2022	Fall 2022	Total
Female	81.0%	77.6%	81.4%	82.7%	<b>81.0%</b>
Male	82.6%	82.1%	81.7%	83.4%	<b>82.5%</b>
Unknown/Not reported	91.7%	75.0%	77.8%	85.5%	<b>81.8%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>81.7%</b>	<b>79.2%</b>	<b>81.5%</b>	<b>83.1%</b>	<b>81.6%</b>

**TABLE 19 SUCCESS IN DE COURSES BY GENDER**

Gender	Fall 2019	Spring 2020	Spring 2022	Fall 2022	Total
Female	72.1%	79.2%	74.3%	73.5%	<b>74.6%</b>
Male	73.0%	81.2%	70.9%	69.8%	<b>72.7%</b>
Unknown/Not reported	83.3%	88.2%	72.5%	77.6%	<b>78.0%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>72.6%</b>	<b>80.0%</b>	<b>72.9%</b>	<b>72.0%</b>	<b>73.9%</b>

Retention and success rates according to Education Goal remain high averaging 81.6% and 73.9% respectively.

**TABLE 20 RETENTION IN DE COURSES BY EDUCATION GOAL**

Education Goal	Fall 2019	Spring 2020	Spring 2022	Fall 2022	Total
Basic Skills/HS Diploma	90.9%	82.0%	74.0%	84.8%	<b>81.7%</b>

Career Education	86.9%	74.4%	78.2%	85.1%	<b>81.0%</b>
Certificate	85.1%	87.5%	76.4%	80.5%	<b>81.5%</b>
Degree Only (no Transfer)	84.8%	76.4%	83.3%	82.3%	<b>81.9%</b>
Educational Development	81.6%	72.6%	73.2%	82.0%	<b>77.1%</b>
Meet 4-Yr Req	80.8%	74.2%	78.5%	86.3%	<b>80.7%</b>
Transfer to 4-Yr	79.8%	81.0%	83.7%	82.6%	<b>82.1%</b>
Unknown/Not reported	71.4%	92.9%	100.0%	66.7%	<b>87.9%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>81.7%</b>	<b>79.2%</b>	<b>81.5%</b>	<b>83.1%</b>	<b>81.6%</b>

**TABLE 21 SUCCESS IN DE COURSES BY EDUCATION GOAL**

<b>Education Goal</b>	<b>Fall 2019</b>	<b>Spring 2020</b>	<b>Spring 2022</b>	<b>Fall 2022</b>	<b>Total</b>
Basic Skills/HS Diploma	86.7%	82.2%	62.7%	76.4%	<b>74.8%</b>
Career Education	73.8%	76.7%	72.6%	73.1%	<b>73.7%</b>
Certificate	93.0%	90.7%	76.9%	77.1%	<b>82.8%</b>
Degree Only (no Transfer)	65.2%	71.8%	77.6%	71.8%	<b>72.2%</b>
Educational Development	72.9%	75.0%	72.8%	72.6%	<b>73.1%</b>
Meet 4-Yr Req	72.3%	77.3%	68.6%	70.1%	<b>71.4%</b>
Transfer to 4-Yr	72.7%	82.1%	72.8%	71.7%	<b>74.2%</b>
Unknown/Not reported	42.9%	100.0%	88.9%	50.0%	<b>80.6%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>72.6%</b>	<b>80.0%</b>	<b>72.9%</b>	<b>72.0%</b>	<b>73.9%</b>

## Online Student Support Services

COM strives to provide Distance Education students with support services equivalent to those offered on campus.

Students receive online academic support through the following services:

- Online Writing Center
- Tutoring and Learning Center
- Online counseling services
- Online library services through "Ask the Librarian"

Students have access to technical support through the following services:

- Canvas 24/7 support
- FAQ located on the DE Website: <http://www.marin.edu/DE/faq.html>
- IT Service Desk (MyCOM Portal)
- Student Support Hub
- Quest Introduction to Online Learning (self-paced course in Canvas)

In Fall 2022, 41% of DE students were taking their first DE course at COM. Of the 700 students who were new to DE at COM, 133 took the Quest Online Learning Orientation. Only 28 of those students received course completion badges. This means that most new DE students likely did not participate or complete the learning modules designed to equip them to be prepared and successful online learning.

In this area, we see opportunity for improvement. By working with students and faculty to become aware of the orientation resource, our goal increase the number of students who successfully complete the online learning orientation.

## Data Analysis and Gaps

Overall student retention and success average rates remain at or above the 80% and 70% benchmarks. Black or African American, Hispanic, and Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander students are performing below the 70% success benchmark. The DE Plan goals should focus on equitable course design practices and professional learning opportunities for faculty aimed at these student groups' success. The online support services offered to students should also be evaluated for their effectiveness in preparing students for online learning and ability to meet all student support and academic needs.

## DE Strategic Plan Goals

The DE Plan goals for 2023-2026 align with the [2022-2025 Strategic Plan](#). The DE Plan comprises sets of goals and objectives for:

- Instructional Program Development
- Course Quality and Faculty Professional Learning
- Student Success, Support, and Equity
- Learning Technology, Modalities, and Infrastructure

The following sections outline the goals and action steps required to meet them.

## Instructional Program Development

Goals related to Instructional Program Development are informed by Strategic Plan:

*IP Goal 4: Develop innovative offerings, scheduling, and delivery methods for student success and equity.*

Our goals identified in this area include:

- Continue to scale the DE program course offerings to support transfer, graduation, and major requirements based on data/feedback collected from student registration patterns
- Investigate effective hyflex/dual delivery models and best practices

Our action steps for meeting and acquiring data to achieve these goals include:

- Explore instructional design and delivery methods across the CCC system that provide equitable student experiences with the potential for expansion into new instructional modalities in the post-pandemic learning environment
- Survey and disaggregate data to determine student registration patterns and characteristics
- Analyze the impact of changes and additions to course delivery modes on student success
- Pilot a dual-delivery course
- Use information from above action steps to inform professional learning

## Course Quality and Faculty Professional Learning

Our course quality and faculty professional learning goals are informed by:

*IP Goal 5 Create opportunities for faculty to collaborate and share effective teaching methodologies.*

*Objective 5.2 Open the Teaching and Learning Center for faculty and staff professional learning.*

Our goals identified in this area include:

- Provide professional learning opportunities that prioritize open, UDL, and anti-racist pedagogy.
- Increase the effectiveness of the Peer Online Course Review (POCR) process

Our action items related to this area include:

Professional Learning action items:

- Continued emphasis on Universal Design for Learning (UDL) and open pedagogy
- Explore AI and large language models that can enhance online teaching
- Promote student engagement and interaction with CMS, learning technologies
- POCR all legacy DE courses by Fall 2025

POCR action items:

- Employ a POCR Coordinator
- Create a professional learning course to guide faculty through the POCR process
- Evaluate the POCR process by surveying new and legacy DE Faculty about their experiences

## Student Success, Support, and Equity

Goals related to Student Success, Support, and Equity are informed by:

**EQ GOAL 1** Decrease toward elimination of existing racial equity gaps at the College, with the goal of eliminating gaps by the conclusion of the EMP in 2025.

**Objective EQ1.2** Data-informed, equity-minded, ongoing professional development expands faculty, staff, and administrator capacity and capability to meet Equity Goal 1.

Our goals student success, support, and equity include:

- Increase the number of students who successfully complete the online learning orientation
- Provide ongoing professional learning opportunities on current best practices in online learning for open and anti-racist pedagogy

Our action items include:

- Assess and revise the OEI readiness modules and online orientation module to improve student access, readiness, and completion

- Analyze the effectiveness of online services such as tutoring and Canvas Support
- Increase DE and/or IT staffing to support faculty and student technology needs

Professional learning efforts are focused on quality course design, including universal design for learning principles. By 2024, all DE faculty will have received baseline online teaching and design training and brought their courses through POCR. This means that all DE offerings at COM will have been through the peer online course review process. From that baseline, we will be able to move into other areas of professional learning related to equity and online instruction. Activities related to this goal will be developed after further analysis of the data provided by PRIE.

## Learning Technology, Modalities, and Infrastructure

### Canvas and Integrated Applications

All distance education courses are hosted in Canvas, the College District's Learning Management System (LMS). Access to Canvas is provided through the MyCOM Portal, where student authentication occurs. Within the portal, students use a single sign on link to access Canvas.

To ensure student access to technology applications and software required by DE and face-to-face faculty as part of their course curriculum, COM will work to integrate available plugins and LTIs to provide single sign on between the LMS and applications such as publisher tools and eBooks, and provide student services support pages and tools that mirror the on-ground campus experience in a "meet-them-where-they-are" online learning model.

COM also funds the use of Ally by Anthology, NetTutor, Turnitin, Pronto, Cidilabs Course Design Tool, and Proctorio. All faculty and students have access to these applications in Canvas.

A process for vetting new educational technology applications and LTI integrations was added to AP 4105 in May 2022. However, the current process does not provide clear direction for budget obligations. The Distance Education budget has historically paid for the adoption and integration of educational technology tools. As the use of these tools and software has increased across modalities and noninstructional departments, the cost exceeds the DE budget. DEC proposes an institutional approach to the funding of District-wide tools (i.e. NameCoach, Pronto, Turnitin) that involves input from PRAC regarding available funding including grants, state initiatives, and supplemental from college departments.

### Learning Modalities

To explore the evolution of emerging delivery modes such synchronous online learning, the DE Committee is partnering with the Academic Senate to gather a working group of interested faculty who can start piloting modalities such as hyflex and dual delivery. By doing so, we will also be able to assess the professional learning needs for faculty to effectively teach in these modes and the support required by District including: Technology equipment requirement, IT staff support, DE staffing, and other resources associated with scaling additional modalities.

The research and recommendations of the working group will inform the revision of the next iteration of the Distance Education policy.

Each year, the retention and success data are reviewed by the DE team to identify gaps in student success rates. As we expand the number of courses offered in a DE modality, the ongoing assessment of success rates will be crucial to evaluating the efficacy and expansion of the DE program at COM.

Faculty professional learning in online and web-enhanced courses is ongoing and tailored to keep current instructional best practices, accreditation requirements, and accessibility standards.

The goals for learning technology, modalities, and infrastructure are informed by:

*CS Goal 6 Execute and support existing and evolving technology initiatives.*

*Objective CS 6.1 Adapt and improve instructional technology for student success and post-pandemic requirements.*

Our goals for this area include:

- Explore instructional design and delivery modes that ensure equitable student experiences including a focus in Open Educational Resources and anti-racist pedagogy
- Develop a rubric and formal process for integrating, vetting, and adopting new educational technologies
- Provide ongoing training and professional learning to support Title 5, WCAG, and ADA compliance in online course content

Our action items for this area include:

- Analyze the impact of changes to course delivery modes on course success
- Perform a financial audit, inventory, and evaluate current instructional tools for DE and web-enhanced courses (Pronto, Cidilabs, Ally, PlayPosit, Turnitin, etc).
- Identify and resolve articulation issues related to course transfer and the include Articulation Officer in discussions regarding modalities
  - To meet this action item DEC recommends the Articulation Officer serve as a resource on the Committee
- Staff and train DE and IT departments to support faculty and students with new learning modalities and technologies
- Participate in the CVC-OEI Home college initiative by providing etranscripts, contributing to the online course exchange, etc.

## Budget and Infrastructure

That DE Program employs:

- One full-time instructional designer (salary)
- One faculty coordinator (three units/semester)
- One POCR Lead (hourly)
- One administrator (salary)

The DE Program is also supported by

- Distance Education Committee (DEC; subcommittee of the Academic Senate)
- One accessibility specialist from SAS
- The IT Service Desk
- One IT Systems Analyst for LMS administration

### Staffing and Facility Needs

Due to the increased growth of the DE program and increase in the use of educational technologies in in-person courses, there is a subsequent need for faculty professional learning and training in the following areas:

- Online learning policy and ADA compliance
- Adoption and use of educational technology integrations and software
- Best practices in course design for online and in-person instruction

The DEC has determined the following staffing and facility needs to accommodate the growth of the DE department and meet the needs of students and faculty,

- Provide additional IT and help desk support so the instructional designer can focus on effective educational technology implementation and faculty training
- Provide an improved physical space for the Distance Education Center that is conducive to faculty professional development and student learning

### Budget and Programmatic Needs

The following table itemizes the current funding required for the DE program.

TABLE 22 DE BUDGET

Budget Category	Amount	Description
1000 and 2000 (nondiscretionary)	\$148,507	Distance Education Coordinator/Instructional Designer/POCR faculty
3000 (nondiscretionary)	\$58,959	Benefits
4000 (discretionary)	\$990	Supplies and Materials; Flex; Professional Development; Meetings
5000 (discretionary)	\$27,450	Travel; Software; Contracts
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$235,906</b>	



### Additional Required Funding Considerations

As mentioned in the action items, a financial audit, inventory, and evaluation of the software and applications in use is required to determine the financial impact to the DE budget. It is the DEC's recommendation that a formal process for funding and adopting educational technology include PRAC's input.

### Potential Challenges and Pitfalls

Many of the goals and action items set forth in this DE Plan rely upon faculty participation in professional learning. The DEC has a long standing of providing professional learning opportunities focused on UDL and accessibility which are poorly attended. Without an intentional approach and faculty professional learning requirement on accessibility, it is our contention that student access in online components of their courses – regardless of modality will continue to be problematic by creating barriers to student learning and success.

Additionally, without a formal process for tool adoption, increased staffing, and budget constraints, the Distance Education Department will be limited in the educational tools, professional learning, and support it can provide faculty and students.

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## Appendix I Strategic Planning Objectives

### IP Goal 4: Develop innovative offerings, scheduling, and delivery methods for student success and equity.

#### Objective 4.1

Develop student-centered, data informed course offerings that consider scheduling (time of day / late start) and delivery methods that enable student success and equity.

#### Tasks/Action Steps:

- Explore instructional design and delivery methods that ensure equitable student experiences with the potential for expansion into new instructional modalities in the post-pandemic learning environment.
- Conduct regular assessment of student and college community needs with regard to modalities and instructional rigor to inform offerings.
- Analyze the impact of changes to course delivery modes on course success
- Identify and resolve articulation issues related to transfer and include Articulation Officer in discussions regarding modalities.
- Use findings to inform professional learning

### IP Goal 5: Create opportunities for faculty to collaborate and share effective teaching methodologies.

#### Objective 5.1

Embed equity principles and practices in the classroom

#### Tasks/Action Steps:

- Engage faculty in creating working definitions and naming critical practices that address continued focus on equity in the classroom.
- Provide professional development based on universal design for learning principles and transformative practices, including specific focus on decolonialization of the curriculum and anti-racist practices in the classroom (emphasis on course design, teaching methodologies and materials for courses, grading practices, leveraging learning management system)
- Provide faculty with new opportunities to increase skills to effectively use technology and diverse instructional delivery modalities following the principles of anti-racism and universal design for learning.
- Provide Flextime for collaborative, discipline-centered/driven investigation and evaluation of programs with regards to equity principles and practices.

#### Objective 5.2

Open the Teaching and Learning Center for faculty and staff professional learning.

#### Tasks/Action Steps:

- Convene professional learning stakeholders to work towards the creation of a Teaching and Learning Center that promotes inquiry, innovation, collaboration, and the embodiment of COM's vision of powerful learning across the district.
- Identify current College initiatives, such as the faculty mentor program and UMOJA Equity Institute, that already embody this work and how this space can amplify and support this work.
- Devise the vision and goals of the Teaching and Learning Center and develop infrastructure, including staffing and space design, to connect and scale professional learning activities described in Objective 5.1.

**Equity Goal 1: Decrease toward elimination of existing racial equity gaps at the College, with the goal of eliminating gaps by the conclusion of the EMP in 2025.**

**Objective 1.2**

Data-informed, equity-minded, ongoing professional development expands faculty, staff, and administrator capacity and capability to meet Equity Goal 1.

**Tasks/Action Steps:**

- Assess current capacity/capability and equity-mindset of employees (assuming growth based on flex/professional development offerings to date) through survey, focus groups, and analysis of equity-related trends across performance review materials.
- Create ‘training for implementation’, beyond just professional development, at all levels and in all areas, focusing on institutional definitions of equity, equity-mindedness, and anti-racism and connecting them to concrete issues and actions.
- Further catalogue and disseminate efforts and intended outcomes related to eliminating educational inequities to reinforce within the culture of the College equity is central to our mission and values

**CS Goal 6: Execute and support existing and evolving technology initiatives**

**Objective 6.1**

Adapt and improve instructional technology for student success and post-pandemic requirements

**Tasks/Action Steps:**

- Install enhanced audio/Visual equipment in 2 classrooms per year
- Review and adopt all lab applications for conversion to user-based software licenses

**Objective 6.2**

Improve direct technology support for users

**Tasks/Action Steps:**

- Explore with the Executive Management after-hours extended IT support
- Develop and schedule engagement meetings with functional user groups (at least 2 meetings per semester)

**Objective 6.3**

Improve the availability and usability of institutional data

**Tasks/Action Steps:**

- Action Step: Enable data-driven decision-making through implementation of District-wide data analytics tools
- Action Step: Establish an institutional data governance team to collaborate on standards.

**Objective 6.4**

Modernize college-wide applications, functions, services deliveries, and communications

**Tasks/Action Steps:**

- Adopt relevant and available cloud-based applications for service optimizing
- Adopt an SMS tool for communication and engagement with the student population

**Objective 6.5**

Modernize the technology infrastructure

**Tasks/Action Steps:**

- Invest in physical data network and cloud infrastructure
- Review, revise, and improve processes related to data security using existing guidelines and requirements and invest in necessary tools

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## Appendix II DE Definitions

**Distance Education:** Per Title 5 Section 55200, distance education is defined as instruction in which the instructor and student are separated by distance and interact through the assistance of communication technology. All distance education is subject to the general requirements under Title 5 as well as the specific requirements of articles 55200 and 55204. In addition, instruction provided as distance education is subject to the requirements that may be imposed by the Americans with Disabilities Act (42 U.S.C. § 12100 et seq.) and section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended (29 U.S.C. § 794d).

**Online Asynchronous Course:** a course in which 100% of instruction takes place online. No mandatory in-person or online synchronous meetings occur. (AP 4105, 2023).

**Hybrid Course:** a course in which instruction occurs both online and in-person with a minimum of one mandatory on-campus meeting during the semester. The required on-campus and/or synchronous online meetings dates and times must be published in the College of Marin Class Schedule. A hybrid class cannot have some students attending in-person and others in Zoom simultaneously. (AP 4105, 2023).

**Hyflex:** a course that incorporates three modalities allowing students to attend in-person synchronous class sessions, synchronous participation online through conferencing software (i.e. Zoom) or fully asynchronously. (Beatty, B. 2015)

**Dual-Delivery:** a course that allows students to attend either in-person synchronous class sessions or synchronous participation online through conferencing software (i.e. Zoom) (Coulson, M., Lince, S. 2023).

**Correspondence/Self-Paced Course:** a course provided by an institution under which the institution provides instructional materials, by mail or electronic transmission, including examinations on the materials, to students who are separated from the instructor. Interaction between the instructor and student is limited, is not regular and substantive, and is primarily initiated by the student. Correspondence courses are typically self-paced and not considered distance education courses (U.S Dept. of Ed 34 [C.F.R. § 602.3](#)).

**Web-Enhanced Course:** A web-enhanced course (or blended course) is not considered to be an online course, but uses online activities to compliment class sessions without reducing the number of required class meetings. This may be any course tied to the traditional classroom but involving some sort of computer usage, such as a software simulation, or online design software for art, or engineering applications. Traditional courses and web-enhanced courses are very similar, indistinguishable in most cases, and therefore not designated differently in college publications.

## Appendix III List of DE Transfer Courses (Fall 2022) DE Courses Meeting CSU GE-Breadth and/or IGETC Requirements

ASL 101	Elementary Sign Language I
ASL 102	Elementary Sign Language II
ANTH 101	Intro to Phys/Bio Anthropology

ANTH 102	Intro to Cultural Anthropology
ASTR 101	Introduction to Astronomy
ASTR 117L	Introduction to Astronomy Lab
BEHS 103/BIOL 108A	Human Sexuality
BIOL 120	Human Anatomy
BIOL 224	Human Physiology
CHEM 105	Chemistry/Human Environment
COMM 100	Introduction to Communication and Speech
COMM 103	Public Speaking
DANC 101	African American Dance History
DANC 108	Dance History: Art of Movement
DRAM 110	Introduction to the Theatre
ENGL 150	Read & Composition (1A)
ENGL 151	Read & Composition (1B)
ENGL 155	Critical Thinking and Composition
ETST 110	Introduction to Ethnic Studies
ETST 112	History of African Americans (B)
GEOG 100	World Regional Geography
GEOG 101	The Physical Environment
GEOG 101L	The Physical Environment Laboratory
GEOG 102	Human Environment
GEOL 120	Physical Geology
HIST 100	American History Trends/Topics
HIST 102	World History II: Evolution of the Modern World
HUM 118	Intro to World Religions
MATH 115	Probability and Statistics
MATH 121	Calculus I with Applications
MUS 105	Rock, Pop, and Jazz
PHIL 110	Introduction to Philosophy
PHIL 117	History of Philosophy: Late Modern to Contemporary
POLS 101	Introduction to the Government of the United States
PSY 110	Intro to Psychology
PSY 114	Psych of Human Dev: Lifespan
SOC 110	Introduction to Sociology
SPAN 101	Elementary Spanish I
SPAN 102	Elementary Spanish II