

Issues of Online Education at Solano Community College

**A Position Paper of the Academic Senate Subcommittee
On Distance Education
(11/05--3/06)**

Final: 3.10.06

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Timeline of Position Paper Composition

7 November 2005: Academic Senate President Gail Kropp appoints representative faculty to an ad hoc subcommittee of the Academic Senate to draft a position paper on concerns of the Academic Senate regarding Distance Education at Solano Community College, specifically in reaction to the rapid growth of online course offerings. Committee members are Mary Gotch-Posta, AS Fine and Applied Arts Representative, Charlene Snow, AS Mathematics and Science Representative, and Michael Wyly, AS Humanities Representative (chair).

16 November 2005: At its first meeting, the subcommittee performed a cursory review of materials from state Academic Senate presented to the committee by AS President Gail Kropp and Erin Farmer, Curriculum Chair.

21 November 2005: At its initial report to the Academic Senate, the subcommittee presented initial concerns, including failures on the part of the Academic Senate and the Curriculum Committee to institute proper procedures for approving online courses at Solano College. Concerns addressed included a failure to adhere to mandates regarding Distance Education in Title 5, notably, section 55213 which requires a process for separate course approval for Distance Education courses.

The subcommittee announced its desire to solicit input/concerns from the campus community before proceeding with a formal paper. The subcommittee also asked the Senate to consider imposing a moratorium on future course approvals for online courses until Title 5 issues were addressed. At this same meeting (and again at the following meeting), the subcommittee requested all senators to solicit input from appropriate constituencies with the understanding that these questions could be forwarded to any member of the subcommittee or President Kropp.

December, 2005: President Gail Kropp, in cooperation with the Academic Senate and the subcommittee, arranged for the forum on distance education at the January Flex-Cal in which to air initial questions/concerns received and to solicit input on perceived positives and negatives of online/distance education at Solano College.

17 January, 2006: The Academic Senate Online Forum was held on January 17 as an optional Flex-Cal activity. Approximately 90 faculty and administrators attended; Board Trustee President Jerry Wilkerson was also in attendance. Twenty-seven questions submitted by faculty campus-wide were aired and reviewed in small groups. Faculty prioritized the questions—or elements thereof—and provided input regarding the perceived-responsible academic and institutions groups. Faculty also shared perceived strengths and challenges of online education at Solano College.

Facilitators: Dorothy Hawks (Mathematics), Janene Whitesell (Speech Communications), Chris McBride (English).

January 2006 and February 2006: The subcommittee met on successive Wednesdays to review materials and compose a report to the Academic Senate and Faculty-at-Large with the goal of completing said report by approximately the end of February.

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Purpose

The purpose of this report is to highlight positives and concerns about the processes or lack thereof regarding distance education with a focus on online course offerings at Solano Community College as per our commission by the Academic Senate. We have also included recommendations to the Academic Senate as to how to proceed given the concerns we have highlighted.

Notably, most of the recommendations concern the adherence to already instituted processes or the institution of new processes where appropriate. The few recommendations which are not process-oriented are meant to serve as examples of possible directions/outcomes of the recommended processes, not as definitive answers.

Most of the failings of process cited below are due to oversights on the part of the Academic Senate and/or its standing committee, Curriculum. We hope the Academic Senate will review our findings and opinions closely as we believe Solano College not to be in accordance with both the recommended Distance Education guidelines of the Chancellor's Office and relevant sections of Title 5 of the California Education Code.

In addition, we recommend some concerns be referred to the SCC chapter of CTA as they are issues of contract. These concerns have been noted where appropriate. We encourage the Academic Senate to work closely with faculty representatives to CTA to solve jointly these issues if appropriate.

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Introduction

By far, the most cited positive aspect of online education at Solano College is the increasing of accessibility to students who may not otherwise be able to attend classes. Stay-at-home parents, members of the military, students with disabilities, working students, students from regions other than Solano County—all were cited as representative of the type of student who is able to engage in a successful collegiate career as a result of online/distance educational offerings. This accessibility is attributed to the flexibility of course access with respect to both time and place and methods of content delivery inherent to online interfaces.

Also cited were the benefits of asynchronous discussions emphasized by electronic methods of communication. These discussions/postings—and related methods—emphasize more in-depth responses than might otherwise occur in a temporal-bound, traditional classroom. Further, related positives include the engagement of every student equally as participation is more easily monitored as it is an inherent mandatory practice to sound online education.

Also cited were opportunities for course depth and innovation which might be more difficult to attain in a traditional classroom environment. While the committee was not comfortable arguing along these lines, we do recognize that online education may offer disciplines new approaches to their material and its delivery; some instructors may find these new approaches reinvigorate their presentation/instruction in their disciplines.

Also cited was student demand for online course offerings. While the committee advises caution as we do not believe that student demand alone should or could necessarily guide sound pedagogy, we believe some students truly benefit from online course offerings for diverse reasons worth highlighting and investigating.

We would also like to recognize that some faculty voiced their preference for the flexibility online instruction gives instructors. Examples varied, but the committee acknowledges the empowerment which schedule flexibility may offer individual faculty.

The committee emphasizes these points as we believe in the necessity of an online program at Solano College. Contrary to faculty who do not view any aspect of online education as positive, we argue there must be a place at Solano College for pedagogically sound online/distance instruction.

However, the committee feels that there are a number of disparate issues which need to be addressed if we are to develop/maintain an effective distance education program of consistent high quality. Based on faculty feedback at the January forum, a look at Title 5, the California State Academic Senate Curriculum Guidelines on Distance Education and the Guidelines issued by the Chancellor's Office and acknowledgment of past practice for Shared Governance institutions at Solano College, the committee has identified five key issues which we argue need to be addressed by the campus-at-large. The committee has also included its recommendations where deemed appropriate.

1: Existing Ad Hoc “Online Committee”

The “online committee” is an ad hoc committee comprised primarily of motivated online instructors and some administrators. Formed initially in conjunction with the first online course offerings at Solano College five years ago, the initial online course offerings were largely the result of faculty initiative coupled with some administrative support under then Vice President of Academic Affairs, Armond Philips. With the growth of the online program and the increased pressure from administration to put more and more sections of current and new courses online, the role of the online committee has become more prominent as online education impacts the campus community as a whole. The offerings have grown from a very small number five years ago to over 100 offerings per semester with an enrollment of 3,000+ students. (3,451 students were uploaded for Spring 2006.)

Currently, the ad hoc online committee is the only on-campus faculty group which wholly focuses on the online course offerings at Solano. Yet, the committee is not beholden to any of the governance structures in place at Solano College. As a result, the committee has no clear institutional purpose or mandate; instead, the committee relies on its members’ shared support of online education at Solano.

The committee members are neither appointed to positions nor are they elected. Committee members regularly vote on applications submitted by faculty who seek to teach a course online. The Online Coordinator has stated that such votes are non-binding. Yet, more and more, administration has vested this committee with certain authorities which affect the governance of the college. Until Fall 2005, the committee was co-chaired by the Vice-President of Academic Affairs and the Online Coordinator, a faculty member hired by administration. According to the online coordinator, more recently the committee was chaired by a single administrative representative. Currently, it seems that the committee is once again chaired by the online coordinator and an additional administrative representative.

The current makeup and management of the ad hoc online committee has resulted in negative perceptions for the faculty-at-large, especially those faculty who do not teach online but who continue to be responsible for curriculum taught in their departments. Further, we find it near impossible to ascertain if all of these perceptions are false as a result of a clear lack of accountability and transparency.

These perceptions include:

1. Perceived unwillingness to address issues which affect the campus-at-large.
2. Perceived unwillingness to question current practice or to engage in critical dialogues of current and proposed practices.
3. Perceived representation of a minority of instructors and administrators.

4. Perceived reticence/unwillingness to engage and empower the faculty-at-large through appropriate and established channels which guard faculty control over instruction, notably the Academic Senate. The perception is further hampered by the sudden shift of the Online Committee reports away from “sub-committee of the Academic Senate” as soon as the Academic Senate sought to formalize the relationship.
5. Perceived empowerment of administrators over concerns of pedagogy which is the purview of the faculty. This perception is further hampered by the appointment of an administrator to chair the online committee.
6. Perceived unwillingness of online committee members to address concerns regarding representation of the campus as a whole.
7. Perceived unwillingness to address lack of adherence to Title 5 requirements and correlating recommendations by the Chancellor’s Office regarding distance education such as the role of the Academic Senate and its standing committee, Curriculum.
8. Perceived unwillingness to question modality and pedagogical appropriateness of online education, including integrity issues inherent to distance education.

It is the belief of this committee that a subcommittee dedicated to Distance Education, including online course offerings, is necessary given the accelerated growth of online course offerings, the likelihood for more growth in the future and the related pedagogical/instructional concerns. Further, we also believe that such a committee would be necessary to help address many of the concerns outlined in this paper.

However, it is our opinion that the current ad hoc online committee is untenable. It is also our opinion that any future committee dedicated to Distance Education must be affiliated with the Academic Senate as a standing committee and must work closely with Curriculum. Our reasons follow:

1. Foremost is the current ad hoc committee’s lack of transparency/accountability. As a consequence of its ad hoc status, the online committee holds no affiliation with any of the governance groups on campus. The committee therefore has neither a clear mandate nor purpose. As a result, there are no mandated reports, minutes, or processes for deciding on issues of consequence.
2. Perhaps most importantly for the Academic Senate, there is no accountability to any faculty constituency as committee members are neither elected nor appointed by elected leadership. Faculty-at-large therefore have no direct input. We find that the response typically provided by some of the current online committee members to the Academic Senate, “Anyone can attend these meetings,” to be insufficient for several reasons:

- a. Scheduling conflicts with class times, office hours or other on-campus committees may prohibit faculty interested in having input on online educational matters.
 - b. It is unreasonable to expect a faculty member to attend every committee meeting which concerns his/her interests/disciplines as this is likely true of most—if not all—committees on campus.
 - c. Faculty who sit on committees have a responsibility to colleagues not in attendance; indeed, this is their primary function.
3. Further, there is consequent confusion as to what decisions are made and empowered by administration, how the faculty-at-large are consulted regarding these decisions, and whether or not the ad hoc online committee is performing functions which fall under Title 5, section 53200 and therefore Academic Senate purview. The committee feels that the Academic Senate must uphold its mandate and **not** accede authority: pedagogical and instructional concerns for Distance Education must be the purview of the Academic Senate.

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2: Work-load and Overload Issues

Many faculty members have voiced concerns over the overloads some online faculty carry; in some cases, these loads are in excess of 200%. Given the stringent requirements regarding student-instructor contact hours as per Title 5, the subcommittee believes that the Academic Senate should work with CTA to study and address this issue in a joint subcommittee. We advise the following direction of inquiry:

1. As the perception of quality is understandably hindered by a faculty member who teaches gross overloads, study should begin in cooperation with the on-campus divisions.
2. Questions asked of the divisions might include:
 - a. Would such an overload be possible in the traditional classroom equivalents?
 - b. If not, what would a reasonable maximum overload be in face-to-face courses?
 - c. If so, and if not in other divisions, do we believe a larger problem of equity and workload exists? (For example, if an instructor in one division can comfortably teach 200% and an instructor in another discipline cannot, this conflict is likely a problem with how workload is assigned to specific disciplines or even specific courses. While it is an unpleasant task to revisit activity points, is this something faculty should take on in the name of equity?)
 - d. What mechanisms would departments like to see in place to assure themselves that all courses, across the board, are being taught in accordance with Title 5 and the Section K?
 - e. What percentage of courses should a faculty member be allowed to teach to guarantee contact and involvement within the campus community so as not to burden unfairly select faculty?
3. Input should be shared and discussed by the committee with the faculty-at-large via a faculty forum/fora.
4. Based on the input of the community, the committee, working closely with CTA and the Academic Senate, should develop a process for finding/negotiating solutions with the twin priorities of faculty equity and quality, student-driven pedagogy.

We anticipate these issues to change as load is an issue already slated to be discussed as part of the next round of contract negotiations. (Evaluation of online faculty is currently

being negotiated via CTA/District study committee on evaluations that has been developed as part of the recently ratified collective bargaining agreement.) However, we believe that the issue of load and online education has been overlooked at SCC until now. Further, we argue that an online course when properly taught according to Title 5 mandates regarding regular-effective student-teacher contact actually demands more time of the instructor, and will need to be addressed as a separate issue. Lastly, we acknowledge that load is a complicated and difficult issue to navigate, yet, without such a discussion, the perceived problems will only worsen with time. In the end, a failure to look carefully at this issue only hurts faculty and students.

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3: Title 5 Issues

Title 5 regarding Distance Education

The subcommittee remains concerned that SCC is neither in compliance with Title 5 nor with the corresponding recommendations by the State Academic Senate, State Curriculum and the Chancellor's Office. We view this lack of compliance as a failure of process which can only be remedied by the Academic Senate and its standing subcommittees. We urge the Academic Senate to work with its subcommittees to develop a coherent representative process for the approval of distance education courses and the maintenance of quality within these courses.

It is the opinion of the subcommittee that the Academic Senate should instruct the Curriculum Committee to impose a moratorium on the approval of all new distance education courses at SCC until these issues are addressed. Further, we argue that all courses already approved undergo additional approval according to the developed process, perhaps as each division undergoes its curriculum review. Lastly, as per our most recent accreditation report, we recommend integrating the development of SLOs into this process.

Definition of Distance Education (Section 55205)

Representatives of the current ad hoc online committee have debated at the Academic Senate table and elsewhere that online education at SCC is **not** distance education and is therefore not subject to Title 5 or Academic Senate guidelines.

In fact, Title 5 specifically states that online classes are considered distance education and guidelines for online classes are published under Distance Education Guidelines, March 2004, 2nd edition. All distance education is subject to the general requirements of this chapter as well as the specific requirements of this article. In addition, instruction provided via distance education modalities is subject to the requirements imposed by the Americans with Disabilities Act.

In addition, guidelines have been issued by the Chancellor's Office and State Curriculum. Some faculty members have stated that guidelines are suggestions to be used if desired. However, since the purpose of the guidelines is quality, the committee argues that if SCC is to deviate from standard and recommended practices observed throughout the state, a reasonable and convincing argument for how the change will result in even greater course quality must be presented to and approved by the Academic Senate.

Indeed, while some of the guidelines issued by the Chancellor's Office are not legally binding, the district and college observance of the guidelines play an important part in the community college system's continued review and evaluation of distance education regulations. Moreover, our adherence to these guidelines will likely play an important role in maintaining matriculation agreements to four-year schools.

Districts which follow the guidelines are assured that the Chancellor's Office will be likely to find they are in compliance with all regulatory requirements. If SCC and the Academic Senate ignore the guidelines, there is no guarantee that Solano will be determined to be in compliance with Title 5.

Course Quality Determination (55209)

Title 5 states that all faculty must be fully involved in the establishment of some monitoring procedure or evaluation mechanism for online courses to guarantee quality:

The same standards of course quality shall be applied to distance education as are applied to traditional classroom courses. Determinations and judgments about the quality of distance education under the course quality standards shall be made with the full involvement of faculty.

Currently, while mechanisms have not been brought through the CTA bargaining process, evaluation of online faculty is being negotiated via a CTA/District study committee on evaluations which has been developed as part of the recently ratified collective bargaining agreement.

It is the position of the subcommittee that all determinations must be established, approved and maintained by the appropriate representative body of the campus community through CTA, the Academic Senate and their respective standing subcommittees (e.g. Curriculum). The committee believes that this determination of quality is the responsibility of faculty and that some mechanism should be established to facilitate the review of online courses by the Academic Senate in cooperation with CTA.

Instructor Contact (55211)

Online instructors at SCC are not required to verify that "effective contact" hours are maintained or what methods are used in each specific course to achieve regular contact hours. Indeed, there is no mechanism for doing so. The subcommittee finds this lack of confirmation to be a gross failing on the part of the Academic Senate and the Curriculum Committee as Title 5 requires that the instructor of record have mechanisms in place which initiate contact while also providing a procedure to students to ask questions of the instructor of record. Title 5 is emphatic about regular effective student-instructor contact. This is a matter that cannot be taken lightly.

The Academic Senate and Curriculum need to develop a process to confirm that online instructors have the mechanisms in-place to maintain regular instructor contact hours and that these mechanisms are regularly and actively used as required by Title 5. Such a mechanism would include:

1. The responsibility of the instructor in a distance education course to initiate regular contact with enrolled students to verify their participation and

performance status as “all approved courses offered as distance education include regular effective contact between instructor and students, through group or individual meetings, orientation and review sessions, supplemental seminar or study sessions, field trips, library workshops, telephone contact, correspondence, voice mail, e-mail, or other activities.”

2. The principle that there are a number of acceptable interactions between instructor and student, not all of which may require in-person contact. Thus, districts, in collegial consultation with the Academic Senate, need to define “effective contact,” including how often, and in what manner instructor-student contact is achieved. All distance education courses delivered should be consistent with guidelines issued by the Chancellor pursuant to section 409 of the Procedures and Standing Orders of the Board of Governors. Regular effective contact is an academic and professional matter pursuant to Title 5, section 53200.

Section 55213. Separate Course Approval

Further, the way in which the Curriculum Committee has approved online courses in the past is neither in accordance with Title 5 nor with the accepted practices issued by State Curriculum and the Chancellor’s Office. SCC current practice is to regard the addition of an online course as a consent-agenda item change to the course Section K under Methods of Instruction. Further, there is no review of the online adaptation for the online course nor is there any established process for doing so.

In fact, Title 5 requires a separate approval process for courses taught as distance education. In making use of existing local curriculum approval process, there must be documentation of “regular effective contact” as described in 55211. For this reason, a course/section or session must be separately reviewed the first time it is offered in a technology mediated mode, and subsequently reviewed again when the technology changes sufficiently to alter the answers to how regular effective contact is achieved.

Consequently, it is the responsibility of the Academic Senate to develop a process for the Curriculum Committee to follow. Further, it is erroneously assumed here at SCC that once a course has been approved for online classes that the approval process for that course is over. In fact, the course **can** be taught again using the exact program or materials used when the course was first approved, but should another instructor develop his or her own online material for the same course, the new online course must be separately reviewed and approved. Each time, it is important to establish that “regular effective contact” will be achieved.

Section 55215. Faculty Selection

A number of faculty have voiced concerns that online instructors are arbitrarily assigned to teach online courses in a subject area while circumventing normal hiring procedures

and criteria normally used to hire an instructor for the same course in a classroom-based course. In fact, faculty delivering distance education courses/sections should have the same minimum qualifications and should be selected by the same process as those faculty teaching all other assignments:

Instructors of sections delivered via distance education technology shall be selected by the same procedures used to determine all instructional assignments. Instructors shall possess the minimum qualifications for the discipline into which the course's subject matter most appropriately falls.

That said, it is worth noting that many forms of distance education delivery require technical knowledge on the part of the faculty in addition to the requirements of the discipline. The subcommittee feels strongly that it is the responsibility of the district to finance and provide distance education faculty training in how to teach effectively in a distance education environment to enhance student learning.

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4: Pedagogical and Integrity Concerns about Online Courses

The following items constitute main areas of concern for the campus community relative to the structure and quality of distance learning at SCC, especially through online delivery methods. The current AS subcommittee compiled the following list through a detailed examination of Academic Senate minutes of Fall 2005, as well as the data generated by the January 2006 Flex presentation and workshop.

1) Evaluation: A clear need exists to develop a comprehensive, systematic protocol for fair and proper evaluation procedures of faculty teaching online courses in accordance with the CTA contract. According to the current contract, faculty can only be evaluated by an area dean and not by other faculty members. Current online evaluation mechanisms have not been brought through the CTA bargaining process.

2) Student Orientation and Training: An Academic Senate Subcommittee is needed to examine the link between student preparedness, tutorial preparation and support, student performance, student failure analysis, and coherent remediation protocols. The current subcommittee recommends that a future committee of the AS:

- a) *investigate* the essential computer skills necessary for students to succeed in online classes over a range of disciplines;
- b) *determine* the effective reading level of students enrolling in online classes and determine if a prerequisite reading class is necessary given the extra-emphasis on multiple modes of reading required by the online interface;
- c) *develop* either mandatory or optional orientation and training as a prerequisite for students taking online classes (modeled after the Mt San Antonio College training protocols); it is recommended that such orientation should measure more than general interest level and motivation—especially, it must measure specific, verifiable technical skills needed for success in an online class, reading level and time-management skills;
- d) *explore* development of a course within the counseling program to teach students study skills required for success in an online course.

3) Reading Skill: Given that students need to read well to gain the maximum benefit from web-site driven coursework, there is a strong need for reading assessment for students and placement of students, in consultation with SCC reading experts and enabling counseling. Such an assessment should support current reading remediation programs available at SCC.

4) Course Repetitions: An investigation structure is needed to map the efficacy of students repeating courses through on-line (i.e., what causes un-successful repeats? Should students who fail face-to-face classes be allowed to take online classes without additional assessment or counseling?).

5) Faculty Online Preparation and Training: A clear, fair, and appropriate protocol for the certification of digital-systems skills and pedagogical skills of online faculty is needed, with testing at completion of certification (modeled after Mt. San Antonio College's protocols). Such preparation and training must have institutional support and financing if it is to be successful.

6) Counseling Support: An in-house training program is needed to help faculty and counselors in assessing whether particular students have the requisite skills and specific academic traits needed to succeed in an online class.

7) Modes of Learning at SCC: A broad and formal discussion should be had by the faculty-at-large concerning the primacy and integrity of face-to-face teaching at SCC. Such a discussion, organized by the Academic Senate, should detail how online course offerings fit into a coherent Distance Learning paradigm and how that paradigm stands in reference to SCC's strong tradition of face-to-face teaching, counseling, testing, tutoring, remediation, and faculty-to-student academic advisement.

8) Issues of Academic Integrity: Distance education as a modality demands new attention to be given to issues of integrity at the student, counselor, instructor, administrator and institutional levels. These issues need to be addressed directly by the Academic Senate in cooperation with its standing committees, the faculty-at-large, administration and the Board of Trustees where appropriate.

- a. **Academic Dishonesty and Student Integrity**: New attention, conversations and trainings need to be developed to confront how distance education may alter instructors' and students' understandings of integrity including ways in which instructors can effectively guard against the potential for rampant academic dishonesty. For example, trainings in course, exam and test construction, how to conduct successfully proctored exams using distance education, and the like are methods which should be considered. Also, student training may include instruction in how students might successfully navigate a distance education course without resorting to academic dishonesty thereby jeopardizing their academic careers.
- b. **Counselor, Instructor and Administrative Integrity**: The Academic Senate must engage issues of integrity. Appropriate counseling and placement, sound instruction via distance education, and administrative support, including financial, is how we can guarantee as an institution the integrity and consistency of our distance education course offerings. Despite the best of intentions on the part of individual instructors, without set processes created in cooperation with the Academic Senate and the accountability such processes create, SCC is vulnerable on the issue of integrity.
- c. **Institutional Integrity**: In addition, the integrity of SCC is reliant on its adherence to the accreditation report as per the accreditation team visit in Fall 2005. The

report emphasizes the role of the Academic Senate and its standing committee, Curriculum:

It goes without saying, however, that courses taught on-line need to develop student learning outcomes, assessment measures and methods, and demonstrate that these assessments are used to improve student learning. The size of the on-line offerings and enrollments reveal that the College needs to determine the place in its structure and relationship to the Academic Senate and Curriculum Committee of the on-line courses and offerings. Methods of evaluation of faculty and course content also need to be determined. Other issues include faculty load for on-line classes and intellectual property rights. All of these issues need to be addressed, perhaps some of them through the collective bargaining process, and there needs to be a more clearly defined program of distance education.

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5: Hiring and Departmental/ Division Control Issues

The Academic Senate subcommittee summarized the following faculty concerns about Division and department based program-control issues as they are raised by the current configuration of online course offerings at SCC. Section 55215 of Title 5 also addresses these issues.

1. Assurance that Online faculty will be limited to individuals who are already faculty members in that department and have gone through the same hiring procedures as other faculty members (application, interview, and significant teaching demonstration). Recruitment from outside the department should not occur as it endangers the integrity of existing division/departmental, faculty-generated and maintained program goals, processes, and requirements.
2. Recruitment of adjunct faculty for teaching online courses should be done by directly and significantly consulting the department and division first. The department or division would then approach its own adjunct faculty first, before going outside the campus community.
3. Department faculty should have clear and significant input into the development of new online courses. This input pathway would be no different than the development of other courses where an individual faculty member writes up a new course proposal and has the department faculty review that proposal, offer constructive and substantive critical review, and then sign in favor of the new proposal.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Index Cards of Faculty Responses from 1/06 Flex-Cal Forum
(Set 1: Concerns. Set 2: Positive Impressions.)

Appendix B: Faculty-submitted Questions and Priority Rating in
workshop portion of 1/06 Flex-Cal Form (Response Sheets A-K)

Appendix C: Ed Code Title V and Distance Learning Policy

Appendix A: Index Card Set 1--Concerns

What Concerns me **most** about on-line classes is:

1. I don't like the concern that online will take away from in-classroom student count.
2. The impact on what it means to be human—culturally, socially, psychologically, spiritually, and physically:
 - a. the meaning of participatory democracy
 - b. emotional and social intelligence
 - c. driving education with a business, corporate, material purpose
 - d. not applying evidence-based scientific research to the value and structure of on-line learning
 - e. devaluing the person in learning and education
3.
 - a. The integrity of academic exercise—who is on the other side doing the work?
 - b. Foreign language: how can we recreate the face to face exchange?
 - c. Quick expansion is dangerous—all courses should go to curriculum committee
 - d. Departments lose control of courses and on-line committee gets control
 - e. How do we evaluate the class or instructor?
 - f. Outsourcing of on-line class and interface of faculty/administration.
 - g. Some subjects—foreign language, English, PE—any skill-oriented class requires speech, face-to-face interaction.
4.
 - a. Integrity of tests, homework
 - b. Student interaction with instructors.
 - c. Over-saturation of courses
5.
 - a. The classes will take students away from on-campus classes.
 - b. The instructors of on-line classes should be limited to the number of classes they can teach/ or would they?
6. Not being able to “read” students and see if they understand material.
7. Students having more capable significant person write for them.
8. Learning-disabled students with significant language arts skill problems not having multi-modal learning approaches.
9. Students stop coming to lectures because they think that they can just do the on-line assignments to get a grade. They end up missing what I feel is the most important part

of the course and end up not learning and understanding the material as well as they could/should. Some fail.

10. We have not developed a system of evaluation of either the materials or the instructors of online courses.
11. Lack of adequate student preparation to use computers, applications, and internet protocols.
12. The limited number of courses we offer degree-seeking students who are working, single mothers, or other students who are pursuing a degree in higher ed who do not have time to complete the education in the traditional face to face format.
13.
 - a. Are enough courses being offered on-line?
 - b. Do we offer a wide enough variety
 - c. Do we teach across all disciplines on-line
14. Academic integrity (cheating)
15.
 - a. Student/teacher interaction in a visual lecture format is (could) be lost.
 - b. Ability of students to successfully complete the course at a level similar to lectures.
 - c. Quality of on-line courses.
16. Academic integrity.
17. Honesty, test taking, that they cover the same exact material.
18. The lack of knowledge that people who don't teach online have.
19. Contact.
20. We need online evaluations in our contract that require the SCC-23 Quality Standards.
21. Students taking the class solely due to perception of it being easier and/or to avoid responsibilities of face to face.
22.
 - a. Academic Integrity
 - b. Similar quality of instruction as face-to-face course lost
 - c. Workload issues
 - d. Lose personal touch
 - e. Lose college experience

23. The morality involved teaching at 240%.
24.
 - a. Limited instructor involvement in courses
 - b. Separate course approval in curriculum
25.
 - a. Lack of interpersonal (human) connection
 - b. I teach teachers of young children. I'm very concerned about them learning how to interact positively with young children on-line.
26. Lack of contact with students
27. My inability to use the technology to create an adequate course.
28. Teachers living out of state not meeting needs of our community.
29. Student honesty/academic integrity
30. Scheduling classes online that cannot be taught successfully online.
31.
 - a. Agreement on good practice
 - b. Testing
32. Nothing concerns me! It's a great way to teach classes!
33. The number of students we lose by not being able to offer a full degree program.
34. Training for online instructors is lacking. It barely exceeds that of face-to-face.
35. That we cannot grow fast enough to meet student demand/needs (we are losing students to other colleges)
36. My first semester—almost everything.
37. That we have no educational plan for our online program.
38. We have little institutional support for faculty—pedagogy and instructional research.
39.
 - a. The amount of time it takes to set it up and prepare.
 - b. The amount of time it takes to run it (?)
40. The inability to deter cheating with exam. The students can print out exams currently.

41.
 - a. The contract issues involved
 - b. The need for policy and procedures protections
 - c. How is it pedagogically sound when the teaching load goes beyond 120%
42. Student/ teacher contact—will there be enough contact between students and teachers?
43.
 - a. Academic integrity—how to ensure it, how to safeguard it
 - b. How to safeguard faculty prep time for each on-line course.

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Appendix A: Index Card Set 2—Positive Impressions

What excites me **most** about online classes is:

1.
 - a. The ability to reach a larger, more diverse student population.
 - b. More robust discussion including those who won't speak in the classroom.
 - c. The creativity required to make a great class.
 - d. Facilitation rather than traditional [sic]
 - e. The freedom-location, teaching techniques, teaching styles [sic]
2.
 - a. Reaching new students.
 - b. Innovative teaching.
 - c. Hybrid where appropriate.
 - d. Online where appropriate.
3.
 - a. The flexibility of time available to students and faculty.
 - b. Not having to drive, park, etc. [sic]
4.
 - a. Creates opportunity for students who can't come to campus on a regular basis.
 - b. Opportunity to expand the college's horizons.
 - c. Taking advantage of technology.
 - d. Nothing—3 responses [sic]
 - e. Doing it from home not having to commute.
 - f. Teaching an overload and earning more money.
5.
 - a. Diversity of students and ability to reach students who might not participate otherwise.
 - b. Accessibility for students who would not otherwise be able to take classes (military, disabled, mothers, etc).
 - c. Discussions are more robust.
6. The convenience and access we provide to students who might otherwise be unable to attend college.
7.
 - a. The potential to go into greater depth in subject matter than in short lecture classes.
 - b. The ability to reach a student population which may never come to a college campus.

8.
 - a. The opportunity to develop my own online skills of all kinds. [sic]
 - b. More students can take classes!
 - c. Students can utilize technology more.
9. I can't think of anything.
10.
 - a. Documenting collaboration and learning interactions.
 - b. Thinking out-loud on paper (screen).
11. They drive development and utilization of new techniques/technologies that may better engage alternative learners or students with varied style preferences.
12.
 - a. Meets the needs of many students.
 - b. Time effective for both students and faculty.
 - c. Can offer more sections of particular courses without spaces on campus.
13. The chance to make more money.
14.
 - a. Flexibility.
 - b. Required response/involvement.
15. Nothing.
16. Nothing—without the true “hybrid” of the original intent—I think the classes are often antithetical to what we're trying to promote at Solano—in terms of learning and teaching.
17. Provides access to students who would not otherwise be able to attend school.
18. Provides new base outlet for learning.
19. The student and what they get from the experience.
20.
 - a. Nothing.
 - b. Access of a group of students that may not have been able to do otherwise.
 - c. Opens your classroom to technology.
21. Educational accessibility.
22.
 - a. Ability to address the needs of non-traditional students.

- b. New way to teach.
- 23.
- a. Convenience for students and teachers.
 - b. Potential resources online.
- 24.
- a. Time-effective.
 - b. Meets the needs of more students.
25. The opportunity for students nationwide to interact with other students of diverse cultural backgrounds.
26. Helping students obtain their education that normally could not attend.
- 27.
- a. Versatile form of instruction/learning.
 - b. Ability to increase student numbers and interest.
- 28.
- a. The additional access it provides to students.
 - b. Opens classes to more students.
 - c. Unlimited potential.
29. That students who can't attend regular on-campus classes can still achieve college classes.
- 30.
- a. Fulfills the legislative mandate to provides access and success (Ed Code Mission Statement for community colleges).
 - b. Uses "Guide on the Side" rather than "Sage on the Stage" approach to learning.
31. The potential to connect students to and immerse them in material beyond the classroom.
32. To allow students to take classes that otherwise they couldn't take.

*

Appendix B: Forum Questions (All)

SCC Senate-sponsored Forum on Distance Education Flex Cal, January 17, 2006 Faculty-submitted Questions regarding Online Practices at SCC

Please note: people submitted these items as questions and not as statements of fact and we did not alter their questions. Moreover, the point of the second forum is to respond to the issues raised including inaccuracies and biases contained therein.

- 1) Why are we rushing forward with online expansion? Why force disciplines to go rapidly online instead of engaging in a gradual, voluntary, well-planned, phased-in approach to online expansion?
- 2) What proportion of our online students are Solano County residents? Do out-of-state students pay the differential fee? How do we verify that students are in fact residents?
- 3) Is it really possible for an instructor to teach a 200% load in your discipline (face-to-face, distance, or a combination of both) and still ensure regular effective student-teacher interaction and contact as mandated by Title 5 (55211)?
- 4) What are both the direct and indirect costs of online classes? What factors are included in indirect costs? What is the income to expense ratio per course? How do these costs compare to comparable face-to-face courses?
- 5) Are we decreasing the funding available for face-to-face courses by increasing the number of online courses offered? How are we measuring whether or not this is happening?
- 6) What pedagogical research, if any, has been conducted to demonstrate whether or not online learning is an effective delivery method for **our** students? How do we evaluate online courses – not faculty -- in terms of academic rigor and student success rates? What data do we have from this institution that addresses these questions? What classroom research is being conducted at Solano College to validate claims that online is as effective as face-to-face? Is anyone looking at retention rates and grade distribution in online classes? Is anyone looking at chat room interactions, emails, and the kinds of assignments made? What provisions are being made to ensure access for disabled students to de classes as mandated by the Americans with Disabilities Act?
- 7) Is the District working with CTA to develop faculty evaluation in accordance with the contract?
- 8) What measures, if any, are currently taken to assure that students in online classes are doing their own work and not perpetrating a fraud on the District, their instructors, and their fellow students?
- 9) Solano, like many other community colleges, is experiencing “growing pains” in terms of the expansion of online offerings into departments and areas of the curriculum that have not been involved in distance education prior to now. At present, it is unclear who is in charge of decision-making processes regarding distance education at SCC. Title 5 assigns responsibility for academic and professional matters to the Academic Senate. Should a distance education

committee be affiliated with the Senate and/or Curriculum Committee and have proportional elected or appointed representation as these bodies do? Should a distance education committee and the Senate be working with the union to address workload, evaluation, and intellectual property rights in the contract?

10) Is the District authorizing and financing any additional evaluations of online courses and faculty as they did last year?

11) What sort of protocols and procedures concerning online courses is the College going to develop in order to assure that the bargaining unit, the Senate, FABPAC, and division and department faculty will not have their rightful authority in matters of contract and negotiations (e.g. workload, evaluations, intellectual property, scheduling), academic standards and integrity, faculty hiring, course approvals and modifications as well as budget and planning implications undermined or ignored by decisions made without their knowledge or input?

12) What assurance does the District offer that those who question the suitability of online education for our disciplines and our students or otherwise resist its imposition will not be subject to punitive or retaliatory actions?

13) On what basis was the decision to limit the 8-week fast-track courses added into the Fall 2005 schedule to online? This decision fails to take into account the frequent case where a student has dropped a course because it was too difficult and is looking to replace the dropped course with a midterm course yet lacks the independent studies skills online courses require.

14) How does the District respond to faculty concerns that only those who teach online courses are being provided with additional opportunities in the middle of the semester to augment their salaries by the teaching of fast-track courses?

15) How does the District reconcile authorizing faculty overloads, in some cases as high as 240%, with its commitment to academic quality and its current contract proposal to limit overloads to 160%? Does it seem reasonable to assume that teachers teaching multiple large online overloads are offering the same degree of support to students as those teaching face-to-face classes?

16) If an instructor were to teach 100% of his/her load online, how many hours, if any, would s/he be obliged to be on campus weekly? How are sick leave and office hours handled for online instructors?

17) Why does the District refuse to consider a less expensive alternative to eCollege? Why have we not done a study to determine what the cost would be if we ran our own online program instead of contracting with eCollege? Has the District taken care to determine that there are no possible conflicts of interest in the College's relationship with eCollege? For example, are any employees at Solano College investors or contractees with eCollege?

18) Why aren't we focusing on expanding our offerings at the two centers rather than increasing online offerings so rapidly?

19) How do we hire instructors for online classes? Are they required to go through the same rigorous hiring process including a teaching demonstration that faculty hired for face-to-face classes do? Has SCC considered a formalized certification process for faculty wishing to teach online? Many colleges require that faculty successfully complete such a certification process

before they are allowed to teach an online or hybrid course? Why are SCC administrators now teaching or asking to teach online?

20) Can someone teach a full load online and, therefore, not be required to be on campus to fulfill professional duties within the department, division, and campus-wide, avoiding committee responsibilities, division meeting responsibilities, etc.? If that is not the case, how many hours is the instructor obliged to be on campus weekly? How are sick leave and office hours handled for online instructors?

21) Should there be a limit for everybody, online and face-to-face, regarding overloads? Would it be better to compute (and limit) overloads in terms of activity points rather than units?

22) Should all online classes be considered "lecture" classes, i.e. worth 4.5 workload points per unit or should they be assigned (reassigned?) "lab" status (worth 3 workload points per unit). Workload credit should be based on the actual work involved. Instructors using "canned" courses should not be getting the same workload credit as labor-intensive courses. Instructors should have to justify to the Curriculum Committee the workload designation an online course receives.

23) Why do online classes have to open 7-10 days before the start of the regular semester? Who decides when they open? What are the criteria used for the decision? Why the 7-10 day advance? Why are these students given extra instructional time? Particularly in the period between the conclusion of fall semester and the start of spring semester, the early start for online classes works against changes and improvements in a course from fall to spring.

24) I have a concern that the push to expand online is simply a first step on the District's part to outsource teaching jobs. What is to prevent the District from declaring, during summer break for example, an "emergency" and then hiring instructors to teach online without following normal hiring procedures?

25) The lack of clarity over the role of the present Online Committee and where it fits in the campus governance structure means that existing policies and procedures regarding workload and scheduling and course approval/course modification are being circumvented, avoiding compliance with Title 5 and state DE Guidelines. What are the Senate, Online Committee, Curriculum Committee, and union going to do to stop this?

26) Are the deans currently evaluating online classes? Do they look at course shells, kinds of assignments made, view interactions in chat rooms or threaded discussions, email to determine the quality of student-teacher contact? If this is not occurring, why isn't it? Instructors in face-to-face classes are evaluated regularly.

27) Some people on this campus claim that our online classes are not "Distance Learning." To me, this is a bizarre idea. We used to have a Distance Learning category in our schedule with classes such as Coastal Redwoods, History of San Francisco, and Topics in California History. They had "98" numbers, were offered only CR/NC so they could not be used for GE or major requirements. We did have some credit/GE Distance Learning classes such as HuDv38 offered by video or broadcast. Are we looking at all types of distance learning together? To me, an expert authority on the topic of whether Online classes are Distance Learning is the "California Virtual Campus" which lists many forms of distance learning, from video to online courses. They refer to online classes as one form of distance learning on the following website:

<http://www.cvc.edu/catalog/content.asp?page=250>

Response Sheet A

SCC Senate-sponsored Forum on Distance Education Flex Cal, January 17, 2006 Faculty-submitted Questions regarding Online Practices at SCC

Please note: people submitted these items as questions and not as statements of fact and we did not alter their questions. Moreover, the point of the second forum is to respond to the issues raised including inaccuracies and biases contained therein.

Math, English, Sociology, Pharma.

1) Why are we rushing forward with online expansion? Why force disciplines to go rapidly online instead of engaging in a gradual, voluntary, well-planned, phased-in approach to online expansion?

Priority 5

Pro: growth, need a variety online

Con: expansion too rapid, not enough controls, hiring experienced teachers, no prep for new online teachers

2) What proportion of our online students are Solano County residents? Do out-of-state students pay the differential fee? How do we verify that students are in fact residents?

Priority 1

Need empirical evidence

3) Is it really possible for an instructor to teach a 200% load in your discipline (face-to-face, distance, or a combination of both) and still ensure regular effective student-teacher interaction and contact as mandated by Title 5 (55211)?

Priority 2

Interaction teacher/student

If you can't do it face-to-face, why can it be done online (should be equal time)

(curriculum, CTA)

Response Sheet B

SCC Senate-sponsored Forum on Distance Education Flex Cal, January 17, 2006 Faculty-submitted Questions regarding Online Practices at SCC

Please note: people submitted these items as questions and not as statements of fact and we did not alter their questions. Moreover, the point of the second forum is to respond to the issues raised including inaccuracies and biases contained therein.

4) What are both the direct and indirect costs of online classes? What factors are included in indirect costs? What is the income to expense ratio per course? How do these costs compare to comparable face-to-face courses?

Importance 3.5-4

VP Tech and Office of Academic Affairs

5) Are we decreasing the funding available for face-to-face courses by increasing the number of online courses offered? How are we measuring whether or not this is happening?

Importance 4

Facilities

Comment: Divisions with more online courses should relinquish classroom space to other divisions

6) What pedagogical research, if any, has been conducted to demonstrate whether or not online learning is an effective delivery method for **our** students? How do we evaluate online courses – not faculty -- in terms of academic rigor and student success rates? What data do we have from this institution that addresses these questions? What classroom research is being conducted at Solano College to validate claims that online is as effective as face-to-face? Is anyone looking at retention rates and grade distribution in online classes? Is anyone looking at chat room interactions, emails, and the kinds of assignments made? What provisions are being made to ensure access for disabled students to de classes as mandated by the Americans with Disabilities Act?

Importance 5 high

*Academic Senate
Curriculum Committee
Discipline*

*Comment: Trade final exams online lecture
Do online classes give multiple-choice exams*

Insure that online course content is just as rigorous as the lecture version

How to insure academic integrity

Response Sheet C

SCC Senate-sponsored Forum on Distance Education Flex Cal, January 17, 2006 Faculty-submitted Questions regarding Online Practices at SCC

Please note: people submitted these items as questions and not as statements of fact and we did not alter their questions. Moreover, the point of the second forum is to respond to the issues raised including inaccuracies and biases contained therein.

4) What are both the direct and indirect costs of online classes? What factors are included in indirect costs? What is the income to expense ratio per course? How do these costs compare to comparable face-to-face courses?

3

5) Are we decreasing the funding available for face-to-face courses by increasing the number of online courses offered? How are we measuring whether or not this is happening?

3

6) What pedagogical research, if any, has been conducted to demonstrate whether or not online learning is an effective delivery method for **our** students? How do we evaluate online courses – not faculty -- in terms of academic rigor and student success rates? What data do we have from this institution that addresses these questions? What classroom research is being conducted at Solano College to validate claims that online is as effective as face-to-face? Is anyone looking at retention rates and grade distribution in online classes? Is anyone looking at chat room interactions, emails, and the kinds of assignments made? What provisions are being made to ensure access for disabled students to de classes as mandated by the Americans with Disabilities Act?

5

Disability Issues

Response Sheet D

SCC Senate-sponsored Forum on Distance Education Flex Cal, January 17, 2006 Faculty-submitted Questions regarding Online Practices at SCC

Please note: people submitted these items as questions and not as statements of fact and we did not alter their questions. Moreover, the point of the second forum is to respond to the issues raised including inaccuracies and biases contained therein.

7) Is the District working with CTA to develop faculty evaluation in accordance with the contract?

3.5

Currently and item at the table

8) What measures, if any, are currently taken to assure that students in online classes are doing their own work and not perpetrating a fraud on the District, their instructors, and their fellow students?

5

Should include live classes

- 1) enforce honor code of academic integrity policy*
- 2) proctoring*

9) Solano, like many other community colleges, is experiencing “growing pains” in terms of the expansion of online offerings into departments and areas of the curriculum that have not been involved in distance education prior to now. At present, it is unclear who is in charge of decision-making processes regarding distance education at SCC. Title 5 assigns responsibility for academic and professional matters to the Academic Senate. Should a distance education committee be affiliated with the Senate and/or Curriculum Committee and have proportional elected or appointed representation as these bodies do? Should a distance education committee and the Senate be working with the union to address workload, evaluation, and intellectual property rights in the contract?

5

9A> Should a distance education committee be affiliated with the Senate and/or Curriculum Committee and have proportional elected or appointed representation as these bodies do?

9B> Should a distance education committee and the Senate be working with the union to address workload, evaluation, and intellectual property rights in the contract?

We interpret this question more generally as addressing the relationships among the Senate, CTA, and Online Committee need to be worked out among these groups.

Response Sheet E

**SCC Senate-sponsored Forum on Distance Education
Flex Cal, January 17, 2006
Faculty-submitted Questions regarding Online Practices at SCC**

Please note: people submitted these items as questions and not as statements of fact and we did not alter their questions. Moreover, the point of the second forum is to respond to the issues raised including inaccuracies and biases contained therein.

10) Is the District authorizing and financing any additional evaluations of online courses and faculty as they did last year?

3

11) What sort of protocols and procedures concerning online courses is the College going to develop in order to assure that the bargaining unit, the Senate, FABPAC, and division and department faculty will not have their rightful authority in matters of contract and negotiations (e.g. workload, evaluations, intellectual property, scheduling), academic standards and integrity, faculty hiring, course approvals and modifications as well as budget and planning implications undermined or ignored by decisions made without their knowledge or input?

Priority 5

12) What assurances does the District offer that those who question the suitability of online education for our disciplines and our students or otherwise resist its imposition will not be subject to punitive or retaliatory actions?

2

Response Sheet F

SCC Senate-sponsored Forum on Distance Education Flex Cal, January 17, 2006 Faculty-submitted Questions regarding Online Practices at SCC

Please note: people submitted these items as questions and not as statements of fact and we did not alter their questions. Moreover, the point of the second forum is to respond to the issues raised including inaccuracies and biases contained therein.

English, ECE, Astronomy

13) On what basis was the decision to limit the 8-week fast-track courses added into the Fall 2005 schedule to online? This decision fails to take into account the frequent case where a student has dropped a course because it was too difficult and is looking to replace the dropped course with a midterm course yet lacks the independent studies skills online courses require.

4

14) How does the District respond to faculty concerns that only those who teach online courses are being provided with additional opportunities in the middle of the semester to augment their salaries by the teaching of fast-track courses?

4

15) How does the District reconcile authorizing faculty overloads, in some cases as high as 240%, with its commitment to academic quality and its current contract proposal to limit overloads to 160%? Does it seem reasonable to assume that teachers teaching multiple large online overloads are offering the same degree of support to students as those teaching face-to-face classes?

5

How do the educational, personal, and professional outcomes of face-to-face classes compare to the online classes

[In Left Margin:]

- 1) We need empirical evidence on online classes to start with.*
- 2) We need rules and guidelines*
- 3) We need public forums to talk about these.*

Response Form G

**SCC Senate-sponsored Forum on Distance Education
Flex Cal, January 17, 2006
Faculty-submitted Questions regarding Online Practices at SCC**

Please note: people submitted these items as questions and not as statements of fact and we did not alter their questions. Moreover, the point of the second forum is to respond to the issues raised including inaccuracies and biases contained therein.

16) If an instructor were to teach 100% of his/her load online, how many hours, if any, would s/he be obliged to be on campus weekly? How are sick leave and office hours handled for online instructors?

5

CTA/Contract

How is the workload determined/

Evaluation

17) Why does the District refuse to consider a less expensive alternative to eCollege? Why have we not done a study to determine what the cost would be if we ran our own online program instead of contracting with eCollege? Has the District taken care to determine that there are no possible conflicts of interest in the College's relationship with eCollege? For example, are any employees at Solano College investors or contractees with eCollege?

3

Good question: should be investigated.

Other: Grand Jury, Taxpayers' Assoc, or other independent agency.

18) Why aren't we focusing on expanding our offerings at the two centers rather than increasing online offerings so rapidly?

2

Are these mutually exclusive?

Does online expansion necessarily inhibit expansion at the centers?

Office of Academic Affairs

Response Form H

SCC Senate-sponsored Forum on Distance Education Flex Cal, January 17, 2006 Faculty-submitted Questions regarding Online Practices at SCC

Please note: people submitted these items as questions and not as statements of fact and we did not alter their questions. Moreover, the point of the second forum is to respond to the issues raised including inaccuracies and biases contained therein.

19) How do we hire instructors for online classes? Are they required to go through the same rigorous hiring process including a teaching demonstration that faculty hired for face-to-face classes do? Has SCC considered a formalized certification process for faculty wishing to teach online? Many colleges require that faculty successfully complete such a certification process before they are allowed to teach an online or hybrid course? Why are SCC administrators now teaching or asking to teach online?

Certification/training = 5

Hiring should be the same = 5

AA/Online/ T + Cr = creation and training (Divisions)

Hiring/Certification = Contract Issue (CTA/Admin)

20) Can someone teach a full load online and, therefore, not be required to be on campus to fulfill professional duties within the department, division, and campus-wide, avoiding committee responsibilities, division meeting responsibilities, etc.? If that is not the case, how many hours is the instructor obliged to be on campus weekly? How are sick leave and office hours handled for online instructors?

21) Should there be a limit for everybody, online and face-to-face, regarding overloads? Would it be better to compute (and limit) overloads in terms of activity points rather than units?

Should have a limit – 3.5

Deans/ Contract

Response Form I

SCC Senate-sponsored Forum on Distance Education Flex Cal, January 17, 2006 Faculty-submitted Questions regarding Online Practices at SCC

Please note: people submitted these items as questions and not as statements of fact and we did not alter their questions. Moreover, the point of the second forum is to respond to the issues raised including inaccuracies and biases contained therein.

22) Should all online classes be considered “lecture” classes, i.e. worth 4.5 workload points per unit or should they be assigned (reassigned?) “lab” status (worth 3 workload points per unit). Workload credit should be based on the actual work involved. Instructors using “canned” courses should not be getting the same workload credit as labor-intensive courses. Instructors should have to justify to the Curriculum Committee the workload designation an online course receives.

Priority: 1

Solution: Instructors do not use “canned” courses. Courses are developed by the instructor.

It needs to be determined if online instruction requires a different commitment than face-to-face.

*CTA/Contract
District*

23) Why do online classes have to open 7-10 days before the start of the regular semester? Who decides when they open? What are the criteria used for the decision? Why the 7-10 day advance? Why are these students given extra instructional time? Particularly in the period between the conclusion of fall semester and the start of spring semester, the early start for online classes works against changes and improvements in a course from fall to spring.

Priority: 1

Solution: Semester schedules are set by calendar committee. The campus is open between semesters.

It needs to be determined if instructors are starting classes before the beginning of the semester.

Discipline/Dept. faculty, Division Dean

24) I have a concern that the push to expand online is simply a first step on the District’s part to outsource teaching jobs. What is to prevent the District from declaring, during summer break for example, an “emergency” and then hiring instructors to teach online without following normal hiring procedures?

Priority: 5

Solution: A Plan – shared governance needs to develop a plan to determine future enrollment management issues.

Shared governance.

Response Form J

SCC Senate-sponsored Forum on Distance Education Flex Cal, January 17, 2006 Faculty-submitted Questions regarding Online Practices at SCC

Please note: people submitted these items as questions and not as statements of fact and we did not alter their questions. Moreover, the point of the second forum is to respond to the issues raised including inaccuracies and biases contained therein.

25) The lack of clarity over the role of the present Online Committee and where it fits in the campus governance structure means that existing policies and procedures regarding workload and scheduling and course approval/course modification are being circumvented, avoiding compliance with Title 5 and state DE Guidelines. What are the Senate, Online Committee, Curriculum Committee, and union going to do to stop this?

Priority 5 > Compliance is a major issue.

Our idea > Online committee should be a curriculum subcommittee.

Assigned to: Academic Senate, curriculum committee, and online committee.

26) Are the deans currently evaluating online classes? Do they look at course shells, kinds of assignments made, view interactions in chat rooms or threaded discussions, email to determine the quality of student-teacher contact? If this is not occurring, why isn't it? Instructors in face-to-face classes are evaluated regularly.

Priority less than 5. Far less than #25

Assigned to: Division Dean/Faculty and Office of Academic Affairs

27) Some people on this campus claim that our online classes are not "Distance Learning." To me, this is a bizarre idea. We used to have a Distance Learning category in our schedule with classes such as Coastal Redwoods, History of San Francisco, and Topics in California History. They had "98" numbers, were offered only CR/NC so they could not be used for GE or major requirements. We did have some credit/GE Distance Learning classes such as HuDv38 offered by video or broadcast. Are we looking at all types of distance learning together? To me, an expert authority on the topic of whether Online classes are Distance Learning is the "California Virtual Campus" which lists many forms of distance learning, from video to online courses. They refer to online classes as one form of distance learning on the following website:
<http://www.cvc.edu/catalog/content.asp?page=250>

Not attempted

Response Form K

SCC Senate-sponsored Forum on Distance Education Flex Cal, January 17, 2006 Faculty-submitted Questions regarding Online Practices at SCC

Please note: people submitted these items as questions and not as statements of fact and we did not alter their questions. Moreover, the point of the second forum is to respond to the issues raised including inaccuracies and biases contained therein.

25) The lack of clarity over the role of the present Online Committee and where it fits in the campus governance structure means that existing policies and procedures regarding workload and scheduling and course approval/course modification are being circumvented, avoiding compliance with Title 5 and state DE Guidelines. What are the Senate, Online Committee, Curriculum Committee, and union going to do to stop this?

5

26) Are the deans currently evaluating online classes? Do they look at course shells, kinds of assignments made, view interactions in chat rooms or threaded discussions, email to determine the quality of student-teacher contact? If this is not occurring, why isn't it? Instructors in face-to-face classes are evaluated regularly.

5

27) Some people on this campus claim that our online classes are not "Distance Learning." To me, this is a bizarre idea. We used to have a Distance Learning category in our schedule with classes such as Coastal Redwoods, History of San Francisco, and Topics in California History. They had "98" numbers, were offered only CR/NC so they could not be used for GE or major requirements. We did have some credit/GE Distance Learning classes such as HuDv38 offered by video or broadcast. Are we looking at all types of distance learning together? To me, an expert authority on the topic of whether Online classes are Distance Learning is the "California Virtual Campus" which lists many forms of distance learning, from video to online courses. They refer to online classes as one form of distance learning on the following website:
<http://www.cvc.edu/catalog/content.asp?page=250>

5

9

Appendix C: *Ed Code Title 5 and Distance Education Guidelines*

(This 40 page document is available in full in the PDF version of this report.)