

Foothill College
2017-2020
Distance Education Plan

Approved by Committee on Online Learning on May 15, 2017

Foothill College: 2017-2020 Distance Education Plan

Summary

The Foothill College Distance Education Plan describes how the distance education program is integrated with college-wide planning and decision-making in support of student success.

The distance education goals for 2017 - 2020 are:

1. Meet all legal requirements for distance education delivery.
2. Ensure adequate student preparation for success in online courses.
3. Support faculty development of high-quality online course sites that are openly licensed for remix and reuse and in compliance with requirements for accessibility, regular and effective contact, student authentication, documentation of attendance, FERPA, and fair use.
4. Collaborate with other campus groups such as Student Equity Workgroup and Committee on Online Learning (COOL) to address disparity in student success rates for targeted groups.
5. Position Foothill College to take full advantage of Online Education Initiative opportunities (such as online tutoring services; readiness assessment and tutorials; remote proctoring services; professional development) to improve online learning.
6. Use a course management system that meets the needs of Foothill College students and faculty.
7. Promote and support use of division quality standards for fully and hybrid online courses.
8. Ensure parity for support of online students, faculty, and courses with on-campus students, faculty, and courses.
9. Integrate emerging technologies with distance education delivery.
10. Support inclusion of best practices for online student success, course completion and retention.

Introduction, Contributors, and Reviewers

The distance education program at Foothill College is administered by Foothill Online Learning (FOL). FOL provides support that enables students to take selected classes, complete associate degrees, achieve certifications, and obtain associate degrees in the online learning environment. This plan is intended to delineate the focus and direction of distance education at Foothill College. Ongoing analysis and future planning for distance education programs and services are provided through Foothill's college wide master planning process including the Educational Master Plan, the Technology Master Plan and the Equity Plan.

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Relationship of DE Plan to the Mission of Foothill College

This Distance Education Plan aligns with the college Mission by emphasizing educational access and providing students

with the scheduling and logistical flexibility they need to overcome barriers to success.

Foothill College on-campus facilities reach capacity at peak hours such as 9 a.m. and 12 pm. Distance learning delivery of instruction provides Foothill College with a means to expand enrollment without impacting facilities on campus. The college's well-developed and successful FOL distance learning program, which has continued to expand, offers courses via the Internet using the Canvas course management system.

To increase access to education, Foothill College has offered internet-based distance education courses for nearly 20 years. Online course delivery began in 1996- 97 and has grown steadily over the past twenty years which is consistent with Foothill's mission to provide "...access to outstanding educational opportunities for all of our students." (2016-17 Foothill Catalog). In addition, it has built and maintained comprehensive instructional and student support services available for distance education students. Faculty and staff engage in iterative processes to monitor, evaluate, and improve the quality of distance education instruction and services. Foothill College's distance learning program is called Foothill Online Learning (FOL). It offers a wide complement of services in support of faculty and students engaged with distance education courses. In particular, distance education scheduling provides working adults, single parents, and students with physical disabilities with greater access to education

Committees

Three college-level committees are instrumental to distance education program functioning: Distance Education Advisory Committee; Committee on Online Learning; and Curriculum Committee. Campus decision-making about course delivery methods and scheduling is generally made at the academic division level and based primarily on the needs of Foothill's student population, the pedagogical issues associated with delivering high-quality online instruction, and the availability of quality online faculty.

Foothill College Curriculum Committee procedures ensure that learning outcomes and academic quality of courses and programs offered via distance education and on-campus meet the same standards. The purpose of the College Curriculum Committee is to establish and approve educational curriculum policy campus wide. This committee approves new programs, degrees, and certificates; approves the recommended general education requirements; provides college-wide curriculum direction; approves divisional curriculum processes; and provides conflict resolution regarding curriculum issues. Specifically, in accordance with California administrative code and regulation (Title 5), the Foothill College Curriculum Committee separately reviews and approves each course proposed for distance education delivery to ensure that regular effective contact is maintained between instructor and students.

Foothill College established the Distance Education Advisory Committee (DEAC) in 2008 which is comprised of faculty and staff who have expertise in distance education. The DEAC is the advisory group with primary oversight of the delivery of Foothill's distance education programs. This group provides college-wide direction and leadership for distance education and online learning. It meets on a regular basis through-out the academic year. Faculty, staff, and student representatives serve on the DEAC, which is responsible for developing the comprehensive Distance Education Plan and ensuring compliance with state and federal regulations. The DEAC has been involved in review of the Substantive Change Request Proposal and the Distance Education Plan. The DEAC exists as a tandem group with the COOL.

Practices to ensure quality online instruction and student services in areas of faculty primacy are addressed in the COOL. It is a committee of the Academic Senate and engages faculty in monthly or bi-monthly discussions about pedagogy of online courses, ensuring course quality, and course evaluations. The Academic Senate appoints the chair and faculty members to serve on the COOL.

The Dean of FOL co-chairs the Distance Education Advisory Committee and the Technology Committee with a faculty member appointed by the Academic Senate in addition to serving as a tri-chair for the Professional Development Committee. The involvement of the dean in Foothill College governance is instrumental in coordinating institutional