



2012-2013 Annual Distance Education Report to the CLPCCD Board of Trustees

Chabot College

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What Chabot Students Say about Online Learning

(Quotes from Fall 2013 Chabot Students taking an online class.)

"I have tried to finish college several times in the past. I now feel that I have the flexibility, with online learning, to be a student, mother, employee, and do them all successfully."

"As a working adult with a small child to raise I have no time to waste. I enjoy the flexibility of taking online courses because it allows me to pursue my education in my free time (in the evenings after work) while still allowing me to spend quality time with my daughter. In a traditional classroom setting that would be highly unlikely to obtain, and as a single parent without support I couldn't have it any other way."

"Due to my military service connected disabilities I have few options, and have a greater need to only take online courses, due to physical and mental limitations."

"I didn't plan to be a single parent, but now that I am, I feel I have a greater responsibility to be the best example that I can be for my son. Being educated and career oriented are main factors in achieving this good example. I am actually quite grateful that online learning is an option. As a working adult, I would have had to choose between working and providing for my family or going to school. Now I can do both and that is wonderful!"



Introduction

The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of the strides and changes in the effort to provide high-quality Distance Education courses as well as support for online learners at Chabot College during the 2012-2013 academic year. Online Learning offers a way to meet the changing needs of the students in the community, by providing flexible learning options and access to education. The Online Learning staff provide students, faculty, and staff support for online teaching and learning needs including Blackboard and related tools used for teaching online. We foster the development of quality online and hybrid courses, as well as encouraging the use of online learning technology in face-to-face classes.

Over the past few years, staffing for Online Learning has been drastically reduced with only two positions currently existing: the Distance Education Coordinator (Minta Winsor) and the Instructional Designer (Lisa Ulibarri). We are responsible for providing all aspects of support for online learning (Students) and online teaching (Faculty) needs throughout the campus.

The information & updates covered in this report include a detailed summary of Distance Education course offerings (online and hybrid courses), changes and updates with the supported learning management system (Blackboard) and faculty/student support, as well as other projects and resources currently in place or in development. Finally, the report provides current status of federal and state issues affecting Distance Education, as well as ongoing support services to meet the needs of online learning students.

Distance Education (Online/Hybrid) Course Offerings

During the 2012-2013 year, Chabot College Distance Education courses consisted of fully online courses as well as a blend of hybrid courses (online courses with a varied number of required meetings). These instructor-led courses function through the assistance of technology, primarily through the Blackboard Learning Management System, as well as several other supplementary and supportive technologies. With the passage of Prop 30, Chabot College was able to restore many of the classes that were previously cut from the schedule. As a result, we saw a slight rise in the number of online courses from the Fall 2012 to the Spring 2013 semesters due to the ability to add online courses without impacting classroom scheduling.

In Fall 2012, Chabot offered 55 hybrid courses and 96 online courses. In Spring 2013, Chabot is offering 55 hybrid courses and 111 online courses. The increase of online classes this term, vs. hybrid, can most-likely be attributed to the last-minute addition of sections to the Spring 2013 schedule. Online & hybrid learning remains a prominent segment of Chabot College, with approximately 15% of all



course offerings offered at the college, currently being taught in online or hybrid format.

The prominence of online and hybrid courses also reinforces the need to ensure quality instruction. Therefore, each semester we work with the Faculty Association (FA), evaluators, and the faculty being evaluated to help ensure that evaluations of online/hybrid courses are conducted as dictated in August 2012 in the *MOU: Evaluation of Distance Education Instructional Faculty* (available at http://www.clpccd.org/HR/documents/FAMOUArticle10F.3.kEvaluationofDistanceEducationInstructionalFaculty_000.pdf). As the evaluation of DE courses requires the implementation of the Student Response to instruction Survey as well as access to the evaluated courses in Blackboard, we worked closely with the LPC Distance Education Coordinator to assist the Faculty Association with both the creation of this MOU and the training of evaluators in this process.

The Blackboard Learning Management System: Usage & Updates

Since the implementation of Blackboard, Chabot College has continually experienced an increase in the number of Blackboard course site requests by faculty (whether for fully online, hybrid, or as a web-enhancement to regular courses) with each full semester. For example, for summer 2012, 82% of all Chabot courses offered had Blackboard course sites. In addition, instructors requested the setup of 611 Spring 2013 Blackboard course sites (compared to 575 sites in Fall 2012). Moreover, for spring 2013, Blackboard course sites accounted for 52% of all course sections offered at the college. The number of courses using Blackboard has remained steady, and even increasing, over the past few years, despite course cutbacks in previous semesters.

Between the spring and summer semesters in 2012, the district-wide Blackboard server (<https://clpccd.blackboard.com>) had a minor upgrade from version 9.1 Service Pack 5 to version 9.1 Service Pack 7. This Service Pack upgrade included just a handful of new features and enhancements, namely, interactive rubrics, auto-submission of timed assessments, and additional assignment activities in Needs Grading. Faculty were notified of these upcoming changes well in advance, and were provided details, instructions, and videos on each new enhancement and tool, along with the opportunity to “test-drive” the new features within the Blackboard Test Server.

After the Spring 2013 semester, the Blackboard server underwent another minor upgrade, from service pack 7 to 9 (still version 9.1). This minor upgrade included a handful of new features and enhancements, including an updated design and style, themes, course-to-course navigation, and the option to automatically re-grade exams for edited assessments. Faculty look forward to the use of these new functions.



Blackboard Mobile

A frequent topic in both the Committee On Online Learning and the Technology Committee is the increasing number of students and faculty using mobile devices (iPhones/iPads, Kindles, other smart phones and tablets) for online learning and teaching. The Blackboard Mobile Learn App is a mobile device application which provides students and instructors with limited access to their Blackboard courses and content using their smart phone, iPod, or iPad. Blackboard Mobile Learn provides easy access to Announcements, grades, Discussion Board, Blogs, and Journals. Depending on the course design, students may even be able to view content such as PowerPoint presentations, multimedia files, and PDFs posted by their instructor. As of August 2012, as many as 320 faculty and students are accessing their online/hybrid courses by way of the Blackboard Mobile App. And while this App is student-centered, faculty are also making use of this mobile capability. They enjoy the convenience of engaging with students in a more convenient method. And, with the help of a work-around through their mobile browser, instructors can now grade exams/assignments and manage the Grade Center of the course on their mobile devices.

The popularity of this mobile app has encouraged both the Committee On Online Learning and the Technology Committee to discuss the need for optimizing other web-based campus resources for mobile viewing. While our focus is online learning needs, we also realize the importance of providing mobile-friendly access to college information such as the college homepage and essential student pages.

Support for Online Learning Students

We are dedicated to providing support for online & hybrid students place the highest priority on providing comprehensive and prompt assistance, available to any student with internet access at any given time. As providing a high level of appropriate, helpful, and timely support to students is of utmost priority, most requests are typically answered within a matter of hours. During the Fall 2012, over 316 support requests were submitted by students to Online Learning Student Support by way of an interactive online help form. For Spring 2013 over 300 support requests were received. Such requests include getting assistance with logging into Blackboard, technical issues, as well as instructional support for using Blackboard to complete assignments and tests.

Using the value of peer-to-peer support, we have found that assistance to online/hybrid students is often best met by other experienced online students. Therefore, we also currently employ two Federal Work Study Assistants who serve as Online Learning Assistants. The Online Learning Assistants are experienced online students and provide in-person peer guidance to all Chabot students taking online/hybrid courses. Students have the option to sit down with the experienced online student where they can receive an orientation to online learning or assistance with logging



into Blackboard, navigating the course menu (specific to each course), accessing or modifying their email account for Blackboard, using major Blackboard tools, as well as tips for succeeding in an online course. While the majority of support needs are address online through the Help Form, the intent for this student-assistant position is to provide students an on-campus place to seek advice and coaching for online learning. This is especially intended to assist online/hybrid students with getting started and learning how to succeed in their online and hybrid classes. We've had very positive feedback from students, most remarking that having an experienced peer available to help with online learning questions is an invaluable resource.

In addition to the Online Learning website, the online Help Form, and the Online Learning Assistant available on-campus, we also directly email students enrolled in online or hybrid courses an introductory list of startup resources at the beginning of the term by way of the SARS Call communication system. This "Getting Started" email sent to students also includes information on how to get help with online learning needs and on-campus assistance availability. The email also contains a link to the Online Learning Orientation which is available on-demand via the Online Learning website to best meet the needs (and schedule) of online students. This Online Learning Orientation also includes information for getting starting in an online/hybrid class, using Blackboard, as well as tips for succeeding in an online/hybrid class. In addition to the Online Learning Orientation, many support resources including success tips, guides, along with methods for requesting assistance can be found on the Online Learning website, located at <http://www.chabotcollege.edu/online/>.

Along with services provided directly through Online Learning, we also keep pulse on the campus-wide needs of online students. The Student Learning Programs and Services section of Accreditation Standard II, states that each institution "assures equitable access to all of its students by providing appropriate, comprehensive, and reliable services to students regardless of service location or delivery method." We will strive to make progress in offering students college services in an online environment to provide convenient access to student resources. Two main needs for online students at Chabot are online access to tutoring and counseling services. While there was a pilot to explore possible methods for online tutoring, it remains unavailable to students. We hope to explore cost-effective methods for online tutoring and online counseling needs and work collaboratively with those areas in the effort to offer these essential services. As online learning at Chabot is reshaped and developed, we are continually faced with the pressing need to provide access to college services to our online learners.



Updates on Instructional Technologies for Online & Hybrid Learning

As a supplement to learning management systems, Chabot faculty also utilize a number of Blackboard-integrated and web-based programs. While the most-widely used are the Respondus test converter/publisher and the SafeAssign plagiarism prevention service, instructors are also using EduStream (a California Community College funded streaming server and library of closed-captioned videos) and YouTube to integrate video into their course sites. YouTube can be easily integrated into Blackboard through a “mash-up” in the Blackboard text-box editor. EduStream also provides an embed code to use within a Blackboard course site.

Instructors are also exploring various ways to communicate and collaborate with students in real-time. The use of both CCC Confer and Skype for online and hybrid courses has increased in the past year. Instructors are not only using CCC Confer and Skype for synchronous communication, but also for class presentations, office hours, and recording videos. CCC Confer is also integrated with Blackboard through a tool called Blackboard Collaborate, which makes it easier for faculty to initiate a session within a content area. Blackboard Collaborate also allows students to easily access a CCC Confer session within their course sites.

We have also worked with the Committee On Online Learning, and several other innovative online instructors to explore the use of free Google Apps. Google Apps have been used in the form of Google Docs for sharing and collaborative needs, Google sites for faculty websites, and GChat/GTalk for live communication with students. And as Zonemail (a Gmail provided Chabot-Las Positas email system), also boasts the Google Apps, it has become increasingly convenient for students and instructors to utilize these free tools for classroom needs. We look forward to exploring the use of Google Apps for more widespread campus purposes.

Faculty Training & Support

Throughout the year, faculty express interest in integrating web-based instructional technologies, especially the Blackboard Learning Management System, into their classroom setting as well as developing an online or hybrid course, and therefore submit requests for information, training, and assistance. These inquiries have generally come from the use of our online help form or direct email, which provides a convenient method for instructors to seek assistance at any time.

In Spring 2013, 205 Chabot instructors (both full-time and part-time) used Blackboard for their courses, which represents 46% of all faculty at the college. And while we provide faculty training on utilizing online methods for online or hybrid courses, we also assist faculty in providing quality online instruction for any Chabot course. Each semester, we see growth in the use of Blackboard for



non-DE courses.

In addition to faculty using Blackboard for the first time, we also receive support requests from all faculty using Blackboard. Over the course of the 2012 - 2013 year, we received 813 support requests from faculty ranging from technical support issues to instructional assistance such as providing the basic steps for content building. During the Fall 2012 semester, 433 support requests were received and resolved. In Spring 2013, approximately 380 support requests were received and resolved. In our responses to faculty, we strive to provide them with information that they can reference for future need. Therefore, we take pride in providing clear, detailed instructions which often include screenshots or links to other resources.

Faculty Support Requests Received/Resolved:

Fall 2012 - 433

Spring 2013 - 380

New Blackboard Faculty for 2012-2013 year:

Fall 2012 - 11

Spring 2013 - 12

Institutional Research: Satisfaction Survey of Chabot Faculty/Staff:

92% Satisfaction rate of those that used "Online Teaching/Blackboard Support"

In addition to the training occurring year-round, we collaborated with members of the Committee On Online Learning (COOL) on a Flex day workshop in Fall 2012 titled "Online & Blended Learning Beyond Infinity." As part of the workshop, presenters (including the 2012-2013 Chair of the COOL Ramona Silver) presented a variety of technology tools, many of which are available online and/or as an app, which can be used to help promote engagement in the online learning environment. The tools demonstrated and discussed at this Flex Day presentation include, Google Apps, CCC Confer, iBooks, and Pages. Faculty attendees were engaged in the use of these tools for to increase online success and several followed up with us regarding implementation of what they had learned.

The Online Learning Link

Over the 2012-2013 academic year, we have continued the release of *the Online Learning Link*, a monthly newsletter for Chabot College faculty about Online Learning at the college. Sent to all faculty, the newsletter has not only provided an efficient means of sharing information with faculty, but it has also served as a great way to focus resources on faculty need. We assess the support requests received each month to determine common topics or themes in the needs of faculty. These specific needs, while also addressed immediately in response to a support request, are also



addressed *The Online Learning Link* articles and tips. We've found that faculty respond well to this type of informal guidance and enjoy the learning new methods with each edition of the newsletter.

In addition to being sent directly to all Chabot Faculty, *The Online Learning Link* is also sent to Administrators and Administrative Assistants, so that they are able to note the resources available to faculty. Some Administrators choose to re-send this newsletter to their faculty, highlighting what they feel are important resources particular to the needs of their division. We appreciate this effort to distribute and emphasize our newsletter to division faculty.

All published editions of the newsletter can be found at the following link:
http://www.chabotcollege.edu/cws/newsletter/default_conv.asp .

The Committee On Online Learning (COOL)

It is the charge of the Committee On Online Learning (COOL) to support faculty in online/hybrid course delivery ventures and development of their online course delivery plan proposals and demonstrations. All faculty who wish to teach a distance education course at Chabot College must first complete the Online Course Approval Process as required. This in-depth process includes background research, obtaining input from colleagues and administrators, explaining student benefits, a description of how the course content will be delivered, the nature of instructor-student and student-student interactions, how student learning will be assessed, how technology will be utilized, how students with disabilities will be accommodated, as well as a demonstration of course content (a requirement of instructors teaching online for the first time).

The Online Course Approval Process is discussed at length in the Committee On Online Learning (COOL) meetings as the committee is responsible for reviewing both proposals and course demonstrations to ensure quality of our online classes. While this kind of involvement in the process is very time-consuming for each member of the COOL, along with the Online Learning staff, it ensures that we maintain a high-standard for our online classes and meet the learning needs of our students. A detailed overview of the Chabot Online Course Approval process is available at <http://www.chabotcollege.edu/cool/process/>.

During the 2012-2013 academic year, the COOL (chaired by adjunct instructor Ramona Silver for the 4th year in a row) reviewed and facilitated a total of 11 courses: 7 fully online courses; 4 hybrid courses (online courses with on-campus meetings) through the online course approval process.

Below is the complete list of the proposals reviewed over the 2012-2013 academic year:



Online Courses:

- Business 7, Jaswinder Bhangal
- Business 14, Catherine Pinkas
- Business 40, Nouredine Lalami
- Business 92, Nazjit Bhangal
- French 1B, Caren Parrish
- PAD 1, Ken Grace
- Sociology 5, Susan Tong

Hybrid Courses (online courses with required on-campus meetings):

- Business 14, Melissa Patterson
- Computer Application Systems 58, Wayne Phillips
- Library Skills 1, Pedro Reynoso
- Nutrition 1, Begona Cirera

In addition to online & hybrid course proposal review (and demonstrations), the COOL discussed a wide variety of issues impacting Online Learning in the 2012-2013 year:

- Statewide issues impacting DE
- Use of Mobile devices for Online Learning
- Wait List emails and documentation
- CLASS-Web page to inform students after they register in an online/hybrid class
- Instructional technologies to enhance online learning
- Online course evaluations/ updated MOU from the Faculty Association
- Blackboard upgrades and features
- Flex Day sessions for online/hybrid faculty

Detailed minutes of the COOL for the 2011-2012 year can be found at the following link:
<http://www.chabotcollege.edu/cool/meetings/201213/>.

Near the end of the Spring 2013, Wanda Wong (Business Instructor) and Minta Winsor (Distance Education Coordinator) were elected the new Co-Chairs for the 2013-2014 year. Goals intended for the 2013-2014 year include clarifying schedule information for students. While we continuously try to provide clear and adequate information to our online students, there are several areas that could be improved upon in regards to the clarity of course information. Other goals include exploring and demonstrating effective tools and teaching strategies to enhance student learning in online and hybrid courses, streamlining committee processes using technology, and working towards ensuring that the college is providing equivalent online access to services.



State & Federal Issues Impacting Distance Education

There are several state and federal issues currently impacting or having the potential to impact Distance Education at Chabot College, many of which are already addressed by current policies and practices and/or are currently being addressed by way of accreditation requirements. Current Statewide and Federal issues relating to DE include:

- Online Instructional Materials Fee and Open Educational Resources
- State Authorization
- Last Day of Attendance
- Student Authentication
- Regular Effective Contact

While obtaining the most recent updates by way of monthly webinars as provided by the Dean of Academic Affairs of the state Chancellor's Office, we will continue to work collaboratively with Las Positas College's (LPC's) online learning support staff, LPC's Distance Education Committee, the Committee On Online Learning (COOL), and ITS to meet the regulations, standards, and guidelines. As part of working collaboratively, we hold monthly calls with the Las Positas DE Coordinator and the faculty co-chairs of both the Chabot COOL and LPC's DE Committee. These calls cover a variety of topics including any Learning Management System needs, state regulations, new policies, and any district-wide issues concerning online learning.

Accreditation

In August of 2012, the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC) released its latest edition of the *Substantive Change Manual*, which included several more accreditation requirements for Distance Education. Just a few of the requirements include demonstrating evidence of the inclusion of Distance Education in college/district policies in terms of quality and integrity, regular effective contact, authentication, and student readiness. A more comprehensive guide to accreditation requirements for DE can be found in the *Guide to Evaluating Distance Education and Correspondence Education*, also published by the ACCJC.

Two of the ACCJC DE guidelines state that we must have:

1. Evidence that the board has taken the quality of the institution's DE into consideration in the development of the relevant policies
2. Examples of board statements on DE program quality and integrity.

As district-wide policies impact both Chabot and LPC, Chabot's COOL and LPC's Distance Education



committee worked collaboratively in producing draft policies for DE, put forward as “Distance Education Quality,” and “Distance Education - Authentication and Verification of Student Identity.”

The policy on DE quality states that DE in the District will include attributes such as instructional quality standards, comparable student support services, regular effective contact between instructor and students, adherence to Title 5 regulations, adherence to the CCCC’s DE guidelines, faculty oversight of curriculum issues, evaluation of instruction, instructor & student access to training and support, student adherence to the academic honesty statements, adherence to the CCCC’s DE Accessibility Guidelines, and adherence to federal copyright law .

The policy on authentication and verification includes reference to the secure web-based student verification processes which have already been in place for various district-wide systems for a number of years, but also reiterates who students must be made aware of and comply with college and district regulations related to authentication & academic honesty. In addition, the policy advises faculty to include a statement on academic integrity and employ various instructional strategies and technologies to promote student verification of student identity.

Both drafts on DE are currently being reviewed by the appropriate groups and will ultimately be reviewed by the Board of Trustees.

In attempt to meet the requirements of addressing student readiness and ensuring that that students are made aware of college and district regulations related to authentication & academic honesty, Chabot’s COOL and LPC’s DE Committee worked collaboratively with District ITS to create a new page in CLASS-Web specific to DE. Upon enrollment into an online or hybrid course each semester, a student would be presented with a page titled “Student Acknowledgement of Requirements for Online & Hybrid Courses” and be asked to acknowledge a list of statements referencing computer readiness & course expectations, student authentication, as well as the District’s Student Conduct and Due Process policy. Upon final approval by both committees, we hope to have this project implemented in time for the Spring 2014 registration period.

As new information is presented, we will continue to work with our Chabot colleagues and LPC’s DE Committee to ensure that we meet accreditation mandates for DE.

Conclusion & Future Plans

As displayed in the student quotes at the beginning of the report, Online Learning is essential to the academic progress of Chabot students. In many cases, our students could not otherwise attend college if they did not have access to education online. Online Learning has continued to be in high demand from students and steadily represents approximately 15% of our overall sections at the



college each semester.

There are a number of projects that are planned for the 2013-2014 year to benefit online learners. We plan to clarify online & hybrid course information within the course schedule, along with providing clear definitions of an online and a hybrid course. In this effort, there are also several campus policies that we would like to make more clear for online learners. We also strive to ensure that equivalent services are available to online students. This effort takes the cooperation of the entire campus as it involves students service areas such as Counseling, Tutoring, and Admissions & Records.

Along with the improvements to assist online students, we hope to provide online faculty with opportunities to share successful teaching strategies for online learning. This kind of community amongst online faculty is currently present through the Committee On Online Learning. However, we'd like to provide opportunities for the online and hybrid faculty as a whole to discuss issues, share ideas, and have a sense of community to foster innovation in online learning.

It is through continued research, dedication, innovation and a creative thinking that we can continue to fully support the changing dynamics of online learning.

We sincerely appreciate your time and attention to learning more about the state of Distance Education at Chabot College.

Thank you,

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