

SRJC DE Strategic Plan 2018-2021

Overview:

Distance Education offers students the opportunity to choose the educational modality that best fits their lifestyle, schedule and learning style. The Distance Education (DE) program at Santa Rosa Junior College (SRJC) works to ensure that courses offered in a distance modality foster successful completion of their educational path. The purpose of this plan (2018-2021) is to frame a strategic vision and guide for resource allocation for the Distance Education program.

The scope of distance education spans all of the Sonoma County Junior College District's Strategic Plan's broad goals and objectives which encompass student success, academic excellence, serving the diverse needs of the community, improving facilities and technology, establishing a strong culture of sustainability, cultivating a healthy organization, developing financial resources, and improving institutional effectiveness (<https://strategic-planning.santarosa.edu/>). The Educational Master Plan translates and aligns these institutional objectives into strategic goals specific to the DE program (<https://accreditation.santarosa.edu/files/EducationPlansCombined.pdf>).

This DE Strategic Plan puts institutional goals and objectives into action via the delivery of high quality online, hybrid, and blended courses. The plan also documents growth areas to inform SRJC of the possibilities for online instruction and the resources required to fulfill those possibilities.

Review

The Strategic Plan will be reviewed annually and revised every three years.

Distance Education Mission, Vision and Purpose

As an academic support service, DE defines its purpose through SRJC's 2014-2017 Education Master Plan (p.12. <https://accreditation.santarosa.edu/files/EducationPlansCombined.pdf>). That plan aligns DE's strategic goals with the institutional mission, vision, and core values. Although DE is not included as a department in SRJC's Student Services Master Plan, it is of key importance for these departments to include a DE purpose as they provide services to all students.

Mission

The Distance Education Department is committed to providing high quality, student-centered, interactive learning experiences in online, hybrid, and blended courses.

Vision

1. For students to take classes anytime, anywhere
2. To have the necessary staff and resources to truly support online learning at SRJC
3. To provide faculty with a high-quality CMS that meets their instructional needs

Purpose

Board policy 3.28 (<http://www.boarddocs.com/ca/santarosa/Board.nsf/goto?open&id=A67VBK78D2AF>) makes clear the strong commitment of SRJC online instruction programs to student learning and student success.

The purpose of Distance Education is to support the overall mission of the District and its strong commitment to student learning and success by providing:

- Flexible course scheduling to meet student needs.
- Delivery formats which equip students to be successful in an ever-changing technological environment.
- Comprehensive support services that are appropriately funded to promote student success.
- Commitment to ongoing professional development, including assessment and review of new learning opportunities afforded by new technologies.
- Course content, communications tools, gradebooks, and other components that adhere to all laws, regulations, requirements, and procedures with regard to authentication of students, tracking and reporting student activity data, privacy and security issues, and accessibility compliance.
- Focus on regular and effective student contact as a core component of all online and hybrid classes.

Goals

The goals for the Distance Education Department for the next 3 years have been identified and are listed below with the associated objectives.

Goal 1: Increase Faculty Support

Overview

In order for faculty to meet the mission, vision and purpose listed above, they need to be provided with appropriate training and support. The Distance Education Department is committed to continually offering these professional development and support resources, and to solicit feedback through the District Online Committee in order to make necessary changes and improvements.

Alignment with Institutional Goals

- SRJC Strategic Plan Goal B: Foster Learning and Academic Excellence
 - Objective: Support and promote teaching excellence across all disciplines
- SRJC Strategic Plan Goal C: Serve our Diverse Communities
 - Objective: Serve our diverse communities and strengthen our connections through engagement, collaboration, partnerships, innovation, and leadership.
- SRJC Strategic Plan Goal D: Improve Facilities and Technology
 - Objective: Provide effective facilities and technology technical training for all employees to ensure operational effectiveness

Alignment with Board Policy for Distance Education

- Policy 3.28: DE Purpose
 - Commitment to ongoing professional development, including assessment and review of new learning opportunities afforded by new technologies
- Policy 3.28 DE Resources
 - Providing support for Distance Education and online instruction including all necessary and complementary support services for students and faculty
 - Providing resources and support for recruitment and mentoring of faculty for online instruction

- Providing regular training and ongoing professional development to faculty for online instruction.

Objectives

1. Increase awareness of and attendance in the Online Special Expertise Certificate course
2. Increase dialog with academic departments regarding their training requirements for online instructors
3. Attend department meetings in order to answer questions, offer training and advice in matters related to distance education
4. Approach departments to offer assistance in the creation of shared content repositories in order to streamline accessibility compliance and shorten the start-up time for new faculty
5. Offer support, training and integration of new, pedagogically sound educational technology tools and software

Goal 2: Strengthen Student Support

Overview

In order for the District to offer the same support to students, regardless of the modality in which they attend classes, the Distance Education Department is committed to working with the Director of Student Success Technology to provide information and resources to online students, and to solicit feedback through the District Online Committee in order to make necessary changes and improvements.

Alignment with Institutional Goals

- SRJC Strategic Plan Goal A: Support Student Success
 - Expand and sustain access by eliminating barriers, expanding strategic outreach efforts, and delivering services effectively through current technologies
 - Increase retention and academic progress through student engagement with: academic and student services, faculty and staff, and campus and community activities
 - Increase the number of students who complete their educational plans and goals
- SRJC Strategic Plan Goal B: Foster Learning and Academic Excellence
 - Engage students and spark intellectual curiosity in learner-centered environments
 - Integrate academic and student support services across the college
- SRJC Strategic Plan Goal B: Foster Learning and Academic Excellence
 - Identify the educational needs of our changing demographics and develop appropriate and innovative programs and services with a focus on the increasing Latino/a population
 - Meet the lifelong educational and career needs of our communities (e.g. seniors, emerging populations, veterans, re-entry students)
 - Provide relevant career and technical education that meets the needs of the region and sustains economic vitality

Alignment with Board Policy for Distance Education

- Policy 3.28: DE Purpose
 - Comprehensive support services that are appropriately funded to promote student success
- Policy 3.28: DE Resources
 - Providing support for Distance Education and online instruction including all necessary and complementary support services for students and faculty

Objectives

1. Work with IT to create a fully-integrated support system for online students with technical questions/problems
2. Create Quick Reference sheets with answers to commonly asked questions regarding online learning and distribute them to campus support centers such as libraries, A&R, and student information desks
3. Work with Student Services to provide student training in areas of online learning
4. Offer instructional plug-ins that faculty can use in their online courses to assist students in identifying and locating online student services
5. Offer workshops and online instruction in Universal Design for Learning in order to improve the learning experience for all students

Goal 3: Comply with National, State and Accreditation Standards

Overview

In order for the District to ensure compliance with all national, state and accreditation standards, the Distance Education Department is committed to remaining current with all related requirements and regulations, to offering resources and training options to help faculty and staff understand and maintain compliance, and to solicit feedback through the District Online Committee in order to make necessary changes and improvements.

Alignment with Institutional Goals

- SRJC Strategic Plan Goal A: Support Student Success
 - Objective: Expand and sustain access by eliminating barriers, expanding strategic outreach efforts, and delivering services effectively through current technologies
- SRJC Strategic Plan Goal B: Foster Learning and Academic Excellence
 - Objective: Engage students and spark intellectual curiosity in learner-centered environments
- SRJC Strategic Plan Goal H: Improve Institutional Effectiveness
 - Objective: Fully implement continuous quality improvement strategies to achieve greater transparency, effectiveness, efficiency, and participation

Alignment with Board Policy for Distance Education

- Policy 3.28: DE Purpose
 - Course content, communications tools, gradebooks, and other components that adhere to all laws, regulations, requirements, and procedures with regard to authentication of students, tracking and reporting student activity data, privacy and security issues, and accessibility compliance.
 - Focus on regular and effective student contact as a core component of all online and hybrid classes
- Policy 3.28: DE Resources
 - Providing all resources for the review and improvement of course components to ensure that they adhere to all state and federal regulations.
 - The District shall monitor the Distance Education program to insure the integrity of student work and the credibility of the degrees and credits it awards.

Objectives

1. State and Federal Requirements
 - a. Accessibility
 - i. Ensure that faculty are aware of both the responsibilities and the resources available to ensure that all instructional materials meet accessibility compliance
 - ii. Provide regularly scheduled reviews of all online course materials to ensure compliance with state and federal accessibility requirements
 - iii. Whenever possible, provide staff/student support for the remediation of accessibility errors
 - b. Regular and substantive interaction
 - i. Include information, guidelines and resources to assist faculty in their ability to understand and comply with the need for regular and substantive interactions with their students in online classes
 - c. FERPA
 - i. Communicate the need for compliance with student information privacy laws, and track completion of training for all non-faculty added to Canvas courses
 - d. Student Authentication
 - i. Communicate the need for student interactions to occur within SRJC's authenticated learning management system in order to promote the authentication of student identities
2. Accreditation Standards
 - a. Disaggregation of data
 - i. Work with the Information Technology Department to create new reports and modify existing ones to provide a variety of metrics by which the Distance Education program can be evaluated and improved
 - b. Regular and substantive interaction
 - i. See 1b above

Goal 4: Support Faculty in the Development of New Online Courses

Overview

In order to support faculty in their efforts to create new online courses, the Distance Education Department will develop and deliver ongoing training and support options, and will solicit feedback through the District Online Committee in order to make necessary changes and improvements.

Alignment with Institutional Goals

- SRJC Strategic Plan Goal A: Support Student Success
 - Objective: Expand and sustain access by eliminating barriers, expanding strategic outreach efforts, and delivering services effectively through current technologies
- SRJC Strategic Plan Goal B: Foster Learning and Academic Excellence
 - Objective: Engage students and spark intellectual curiosity in learner-centered environment
 - Objective: Identify and implement responsive instructional practices that increase the learning and success of our diverse students

Alignment with Board Policy for Distance Education

- Policy 3.28: DE Purpose
 - Course content, communications tools, gradebooks, and other components that adhere to all laws, regulations, requirements, and procedures with regard to authentication of students, tracking and reporting student activity data, privacy and security issues, and accessibility compliance.
 - Focus on regular and effective student contact as a core component of all online and hybrid classes

Objectives

1. Support
 - a. Provide assistance with all components of the District's current course management system, including correction of course details, integration of 3rd-party applications, and liaison with CMS Support Staff
 - b. Provide instructional design support to faculty who would like assistance or guidance in the design and creation of course content
 - c. Provide assistance with the process for proposing new online courses through the Curriculum Office
2. Online College Project
 - a. Whenever funds are provided, offer Online College Project contracts that provide compensation for the creation of new online courses, and assist faculty in the completion of all contract requirements
3. Training
 - a. Offer regular and ongoing training opportunities in all aspects of online teaching and learning, including the use of the District's current course management system, awareness of current pedagogical research in online learning, alignment with the principles of Universal Design for Learning, and tools for the creation of engaging multimedia course content

Goal 5: Expand Technology Resources and Digital Infrastructure

Overview

In order to offer students the best chance for success in their online classes, the Distance Education Department is committed to giving faculty the tools, training, and resources they need to create high-quality, engaging online course content, and to solicit feedback through the District Online Committee in order to make necessary changes and improvements.

Alignment with Institutional Goals

- SRJC Strategic Plan Goal D: Improve Facilities and Technology
 - Objective: Improve and sustain infrastructure, facilities, and technology to proactively support our diverse learning community
 - Objective: Provide, enhance, integrate, and continuously improve facilities and Objective: technology to support learning and innovation
 - Objective: Improve and sustain infrastructure, facilities, and technology to Objective: proactively support our diverse learning community

- Objective: Increase District-wide coordination and collaboration to improve facilities and technology access, efficiency, and effectiveness

Alignment with Board Policy for Distance Education

- Policy 3.28: DE Resources
 - Providing all resources required for the hosting and delivery of online content

Objectives

1. Advocacy
 - a. Whenever possible, determine which tools and resources faculty would like to use and advocate for the allocation of funds to support the purchase, maintenance, and staff necessary to offer them
2. Training
 - a. When new tools and resources for online content creation are added to the department, the Distance Education staff will develop and deliver trainings on them, and/or to hire additional staff with those skills
3. Support
 - a. When new tools and resources for online content creation are added to the department, the Distance Education staff will work to acquire the skills necessary to operate, maintain, and document them, and/or to hire additional staff with those skills