

Standard 2.G – Continuing Education and Special Learning Activities

The changing nature of the demands placed upon individuals in today's society requires many of them to engage in life-long education. Many higher education institutions have incorporated into their missions an extension and public service component to provide for life-long learning opportunities. These opportunities are referred to as continuing education, professional development, extension education, outreach, special program, public and community service programs. Such programs may be for either undergraduate or graduate credit, or non-credit, may be offered on and off campus, and may be offered through a variety of instructional formats.

2.G.1

The institution provides evidence that all off-campus, continuing education (credit and noncredit), and other special programs are compatible with the institution's mission and goals, and are designed, approved, administered, and periodically evaluated under established institutional procedures.

Courses, workshops, and programs offered through TMCC's office of Continuing Education and Workforce Development fulfill a central component of the College's role and mission. These courses and programs focus directly on enriching the social, cultural, and economic well-being of the community served by the College. The wide variety of course, workshop, and program offerings supporting this mission are displayed in the fall 2004 Class Schedule pp. 82-101. The learning and skill development opportunities offered through this Division are self-supporting; they receive no funding support from state allocated funds. Certain administrative and operations costs do receive state funding support. Credit earned through the majority of the courses, programs, and workshops generated through this Division does not apply to TMCC associate degrees or certificates of achievement except in special circumstances approved by the Vice President for Academic Affairs. The Division functions autonomously without direct linkages to TMCC's academic divisions or departments. Criteria for selecting faculty and designing course content are developed according to the Division's policies and procedures as approved by TMCC's administration. Evaluation and assessment procedures implemented by the Division accord with standards established through approved institutional procedures (Appendix __). The LERN organization reviewed, evaluated, and certified the Division's operations and offerings, attesting to the quality of the contributions the Division makes to the institution and to the community it serves (Report, dated March 2004--Exhibit).

Adult Basic Education (ABE) fulfills a vital role of the college mission, providing continuing education opportunities and developmental education programming. ABE contributes to the strategic goal of diversity by providing access to more than 2000 "underserved" students. Within the mission of workforce development, primary goals of the program include job attainment and retained employment, achievement in employability skills, and postsecondary matriculation. An assessment and review is

conducted for the ABE education program in the Spring of each year. Additional monitoring is conducted by the state department of education, grantor of utilized federal funding. Program assessment is based on the national standards established by the United States Department of Education. The State Department of Education meets annually with college representatives to discuss its findings and review recommendations.

Every adult basic education student is assessed prior to their learning experience using the Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment system (CASAS)- Employability Skills assessment series as mandated in the Nevada Adult Education Five-Year Plan, <http://literacynet.org/nevada/manageadmin.html>, and as described in the National Reporting System Guidelines, <http://www.nrsweb.org/>.

2.G.2

The institution is solely responsible for the academic and fiscal elements of all instructional programs it offers. The institution conforms to Policy A-6 Contractual Relationships with Organizations Not Regionally Accredited.

The learning and skill development opportunities designed and developed through the Division are not subject to the curriculum and course approval process required for new or revised academic programs and courses. The Division can respond quickly to community needs or business requests without sacrificing efficiency in developing new programs to meet unique needs. Fiscal operations are integrated with the Institution's budget management procedures through the Self-supporting Budget function (Appendix ___). The institution assumes final responsibility for the fiscal management and quality control of all aspects of the Division's operation and management.

The Community Services Division offers a wide array of Enrichment classes, which enhance the quality of life for community participants. 180 to 200 classes are offered, all of which are supported through student fees which depend on the duration of the course, the materials or supplies required, and the instructor's background. Topics for enrichment classes, workshops, certificates or special trainings include

- Recreation
- Arts and Crafts
- Fitness and Sports
- Languages
- Home and Garden
- Online Classes
- Career Development Courses
- Special Events and Conferences
- Training Programs (Florist Fundamentals Certificate, Cosmetology, Grant Writing, Judicial Reporting, Massage)
- Silver College
- General Studies (Program Review in Appendix)
- Workforce Development

<http://www.tmcc.edu/commserv>

In every TMCC semester class schedule on the reverse side of the Application for Admission form, a listing of the classes, workshops, certificate and training programs can be found (p110 in fall 2004 schedule).

Community Services offers classes in two 15 week semesters (fall and spring) plus two 5-week summer sessions. Flexible scheduling allows classes to meet from just a few hours to all 15 weeks of the semester. Classes meet in a variety of locations throughout the Reno-Sparks area (exhibit/locations). Online classes are also available.

Continuing Education enrollment figures (spring 2000 through fall 2003) for Non-State Supported Classes, Workshops, and number of Certificates issued in this time period, show that the number of workshops has greatly increased while the number of classes has recently decreased. (Exhibit: Continuing Education at TMCC or http://www.tmcc.edu/inst_research/selfstudy/Standard2/ContinuingEducation.pdf)

In 2004 the Institute for Business and Industry was integrated with the Community Service Division to form the Division of Continuing Education and Workforce Development. Workforce Development continues to fulfill a strategic role in TMCC's professional/technical education and business partnering mission. The entrepreneurial nature of this operation and its commitment to quick response fit well with the rapidly changing business and economic environment of the service region.

The Division's Workforce Development mission fulfills a central mandate in the UCCSN's Master Plan and to the mission of TMCC to play a vital role in the economic and business life of the community. The Workforce Development staff develops linkages with business and industry, as well as non-profit entities in the region, to provide educational opportunities; for example, providing interns to businesses in return for instruction, collaborating with business experts to develop curriculum, working with businesses to award credit to employees and inspire them to set goals (partnerships, partnership goals, description of *Contractual Service Relationships with Employers* at http://www.tmcc.edu/inst_research/selfstudy/Standard2/ContinuingEducation.pdf and <http://www.tmcc.edu/wdce/Cont.Ed: FAQ's> at <http://www.tmcc.edu/wdce/faqs.asp>) Customized training programs serving specific personnel training needs are also designed, including a wide variety of programs ranging from topics such as workplace safety, forklift operations, and supervisory skills to training in state of the art information technology. Funds generated through student fees and contracts with business entities support the development and instruction for these customized programs.

2.G.3

Full-time faculty representing the appropriate disciplines and fields of work are involved in the planning and evaluation of the institution's continuing education and special learning activities.

Program planning, design, and development for continuing education and workforce development activities are not integrated with traditional academic planning and program development funded through state appropriations. Full-time faculty sometimes participate in continuing education and workforce development programs as consultants or facilitators working outside their regular contracted duties. For example, when offering parenting classes, the Community Services Division has checked with the Counseling Department about subject areas to be covered and any knowledge about possible teachers. The administrative staff and operations staff do not hold tenure track faculty appointments; they fulfill a mission requiring the utmost in flexibility and responsiveness free of the restrictions and policies governing traditional academic programs. (Exhibit__: Organizational Chart)

Assessment of part-time faculty who teach the community service courses and assessment of the courses themselves are based on student evaluations as well as evaluations by administrative staff. Each semester administrators conduct classroom evaluations of new instructors, problem instructors, and beyond that, as many instructors as possible, according to the Community Services Assistant Dean. Clear procedural guidelines on the filling out of student and course evaluations are provided to all instructors (exhibit: Class Packets #3). Students return assessments to the Community Services Office in self-addressed envelopes (exhibits: Faculty and Course Evaluation Forms & sample evaluations). Classified staff members summarize evaluations, and administrators review them. The student and course evaluations are used for future course/program planning.

Adult Basic Education has no full-time faculty. Staff consists of four full-time administrators, one full-time administrative assistant, 39 part-time support staff and 40-60 community volunteers. Planning and evaluation is accomplished through the ABE advisement board and through the ABE consortium.

2.G.4

The responsibility for the administration of continuing education and special learning activities is clearly defined and an integral component of the institution's organization

The administration and leadership responsibilities for Continuing Education and Workforce Development are clearly defined and form an integral component of the institution's organizational structure. The Dean for this Division meets regularly with other Division Deans to conduct the ongoing business of the institution.

Re-entry Center: This program is primarily funded by TMCC as well as by federal, state, and private grants. (Exhibit: Organizational Chart)

More information is to be provided.

2.G.5

Programs and courses offered through electronically-mediated or other distance delivery systems provide ready access to appropriate learning resources and provide

sufficient time and opportunities (electronic and others) for students to interact with faculty. (Also see policy 2.6)

Distance Education (DE) is traditionally defined as a planned teaching/learning experience that uses one or more of a wide spectrum of electronic technologies to reach learners at a distance. Web-based instruction, cable-based instruction, and interactive video are the delivery formats used at TMCC.

The vision of TMCC's DE programs is to foster greater access to higher education, especially for Nevadans, through the provision of electronically delivered education. This type of learning environment offers greater opportunity and flexibility for our students and encourages a foundation for the use of technology in everyday life. Although it may be viewed as a "leading edge," the program is in fact a response to student interest and exists to serve the needs of our students.

The e-learning program is responsible for TMCC's Distance Education (DE) courses. Throughout this section, DE will be used to denote all Distance Education courses.

Historical Perspective

TMCC has offered some type of electronic delivery of courses since 1988. Distance Education was not addressed in the 1995 Evaluation Committee Report of the Northwest Association of Schools and College, the 2000 Regular Interim Report, or 2003 Accreditation Progress Report.

The Distance Education Program at TMCC dates from 1988 when the Community Services Department of the College began offering four Public Broadcasting Services (PBS) telecourses in psychology and economics. These telecourses were continued until 1997.

TMCC's Distance Education Program was borne out of two rounds of special legislative funding by the Nevada State Legislature. SB 204 in 1995 and AB 606 in 1997 financed the development of the statewide NevadaNet Compressed Video Network. *(Copies of these documents are available for reviewers)* Both SB 204 and AB 606 required compressed video partnerships, especially with K-12. The first Interactive Video (ITV) classes were offered in 1996 when three compressed video classrooms were developed and connections to the statewide network were made in cooperation with the University of Nevada, Reno's Distance Education Department.

In 1997 TMCC expanded its distribution of classes to include cable offerings on Sierra Nevada Community Access Television (SNCAT).

Distance Education is compatible with the institution's mission and goals

In 1996, Distance Education was identified as TMCC's #1 goal during the campus Future Search Conference. *(Need document)*. In 1998, interest in web-based instructional

delivery emerged as the priority of a special Internet Design Team comprised of 29 faculty and campus administrators which forwarded eleven recommendations. *(Copy of this document is available for reviewers).*

Distance Education was identified as one of nine annual goals for the TMCC 2001-2002 Academic Year, specifically the goal to “improve Distance Education operations to increase instructional efficiency.” *(Copy of this document is available for reviewers).*

The University and Community College System of Nevada (UCCSN) Master Plan adopted in 2002 provided three mandates related to Distance Education: colleges were to provide technology-mediated instruction to prepare students for the world of adult learning, expand distance education offerings, and pursue distance education consortiums with out-of-state institutions to provide more choices for non-traditional students.
<http://system.nevada.edu/News/Publicatio/UCCSN-Mast/Building-Nevada-s-Future.pdf>

Distance Education supports the following strategic goals as identified in the TMCC’s 2004 Mission Statement: Achieving Academic Excellence, Diversity, Facilities, Technology and Welcoming and Supportive Environment.
<http://www.tmcc.edu/planningcouncil/final.asp>

Methods of Delivery of Distance Education Classes

TMCC offers multiple formats for technology-based instruction in compliance with UCCSN code requirements; the primary method of delivery of distance education classes is web-based instruction.

TMCC primarily uses the WebCT instructional platform to provide online instruction. Web courses reside on a UNIX server in cooperation with System Computing Services (SCS), located on the University of Nevada, Reno, campus. Three other instructional platforms were used in the fall 2003 semester: Moodle and LON/CAPA, which are open-source solutions, and Blackboard.

TMCC offered instruction on Charter Cable Systems in cooperation with the Media Center (Sierra Nevada Community Access Television) to more than 130,000 subscribers in the immediate Reno-Sparks area. The courses taught via public access television are for the most part broadcast live and students watching at home can call the instructor during the class should they have a question or comment. This type of class appeals to students who do not have a computer or who prefer something closer to the traditional class environment. Testing is often conducted on campus but otherwise, the students have the convenience of taping the class or viewing the tapes on the TMCC campus in the library. In the fall of 2003 TMCC offered 10 cable classes.

Enrollments in cablecast classes have remained steady over the past few years. The campus has been limited by the number of hours available for broadcast. This situation will be changing; TMCC is a consortium member of a new dedicated education channel scheduled to be activated in January 2005 and as a result of a recent franchise renewal

will be given a direct insertion point into SNCAT; these will allow for growth of the cable courses offered.

TMCC has provided two courses to Great Basin College in Elko, Nevada: ECE 204: Early Childhood Education and PSC 250: International Terrorism. These courses would not otherwise have been available to the college. In return Great Basin College provided occupational courses in construction and safety training by their faculty; such exchanges demonstrate the value of distance education and reaffirm the strategic directions of UCCSN.

TMCC has five compressed video sites as part of the statewide UCCSN Nevada Compressed Video Network of more than 100 education sites. (*Copy of this document is available for reviewers*) TMCC currently partners with the Paiute Tribe and Sierra Nevada Job Corps to provide greater access to instruction and provides four classes to the Job Corps and 2 to the Paiute Tribe in Nixon, Nevada. The college also hosts interactive conferences to organizations and state agencies.

Current Situation and Enrollment Trends

According to data compiled by the Office of Institutional Development, the DE program has experienced significant enrollment demand from students. Since 2000, TMCC's DE headcount has grown by 247%, FTE's by 284% and the number of DE courses has increased by 173%.

<http://www.tmcc.edu/inst%5Fresearch/selfstudy/Standard2/DEdata.pdf>

In the fall semester 2003, 88 courses at TMCC provided 133 sections of DE classes. The unduplicated headcount was 2184 with an FTE of 659. Students taking web, cable and ITV classes account for 19.2% of the overall campus headcount.

The preliminary fall 2004 data indicates an unduplicated headcount of 2640 in 179 sections and an FTE of 866, and number of courses offered grew from 88 to 115.

<http://www.tmcc.edu/inst%5Fresearch/selfstudy/Standard2/DEGrowth.pdf>

According to statistics available from the Distance Education Department, in the spring semester 2004 there were also more than 4000 unduplicated attempts to register; this represents the unsatisfied student demand for TMCC's e-learning classes. This indicates the unsatisfied student demand for TMCC's e-learning classes. Historically, there has been a one-to-one ratio for enrollments versus unduplicated attempts to register.

Percentage of Nevada vs. out of state students taking DE (online) courses?

Course Offerings:

TMCC offers the classes needed for an AA degree online:

http://www.tmcc.edu/admissions/catalog/pdf/worksheets/transfer_degree_aa.pdf

Need information about the online business degree.

TMCC and UNLV have established a partnership to provide additional online learning and degree opportunities; beginning in 2001 UNLV offered the online classes needed to complete a Social Sciences BA degree. <http://distance.ed.unlv.edu/>

Course Development and Faculty Issues

Since its inception, student demand and faculty interest guided program growth. Department chairs play the largest role in curriculum development of DE courses which are offered only with the approval of the chair who assigns faculty to courses and develops the fall, spring, and summer schedules. The Distance Education Department provides feedback to the chairs regarding full sections and student demand so additional sections can be opened to accommodate students as needed.

DE faculty are hired under the same criteria as other on-campus hires. TMCC requires a master's degree related to the assigned discipline as an entry requisite for academic faculty. Class enrollments are default set at 30; individual department can adjust this number. The overall enrollment efficiency for e-learning classes has been 24:1 which is statistically above the overall campus average (18:1).

The 24:1 ratio is higher than the average class size for DE instruction system-wide which was 19.9 in fall, 2003. (Source: UCCSN Student Data Warehouse)

DE was included in the campus workload policy, and stipends were created to encourage the development of targeted web-based class development in high-need areas by full time and part-time faculty.

Working with the Professional Standards Committee, an evaluation form for web-based classes was developed and approved by the Faculty Senate. This new form will be implemented during the fall, 2004 semester with the evaluation to be conducted by the appropriate department chair. This observation form is the equivalent of the classroom observation form and is modified for distance education classes. (*Copy of the form available to reviewers*).

The TMCC Instructional Center for Innovation (ICI) was created in 2000 through a grant from Nevada Bell. The goal of the ICI is to provide technical support and training to faculty. A faculty website was created by the ICI to provide a variety of resources for faculty interested in developing online content services and resources related to instructional technology and online teaching.

Distance Education provides individualized training and workshops to prepare faculty to teach distance education courses and assist with course improvement. Two DE summer

institutes training more than 60 full-time and part-time faculty were held in 2003 and 2004, and a part-time trainer was hired on a letter of appointment in order to offer additional training to supplement the work of the ICI.

Faculty interaction with DE students in online classes include the posting of virtual office hours, on-campus orientation sessions, chat rooms, use of the asynchronous discussion board, on-campus testing, feedback on writing assignments and tests, streamed video of a welcome or lecture, and involvement in online group activities.

Some faculty require exams for online courses be taken on campus where student identity can be verified. The Accuplacer lab at TMCC makes the lab available for DE testing at specific times for this purpose. If a student cannot travel to campus for a test, arrangements are made with another institution, public library, or in the case of the military, the base administration, to proctor exams and verify identity.

A pedagogical shift has occurred in many online classes to more critical thinking, use of the discussion board and more lower threshold assignments with a corresponding de-emphasis of the midterm and the final as means of assessment.

TMCC recognizes the need to prevent plagiarism and other forms of cheating in the web-based learning environment. The college has used Turnitin® since fall, 2003 <http://www.turnitin.com/static/home.html> to assist in preventing on-line students from successfully submitting plagiarized materials as their own.

Faculty issues that have been identified and that need to be addressed include:

- An external faculty committee should be established to review the quality and approve content and delivery methods of DE courses.
- Recruitment – greater effort will need to be directed at identifying faculty, including part-timers, to teach web-based classes as the number of online sections grow.
- Work-for-hire and content ownership issues: a policy is needed to clarify.
- Workload – there are currently no restrictions on the number of web classes a full-time instructor should be able to teach.
- Assessment in web-based instruction: the DE program is working with faculty to devise assessment tools for web-based classes, an assessment tool is being piloted in PSC 103.
- Training: more comprehensive, on-going training would benefit faculty teaching distance education courses; all faculty should receive training before teaching a class.

Student Profile

A comparison of student statistics from the fall, 2003 semester from the Office of Institutional Research reveals the following:

There is a higher percentage of females taking DE courses than (68.1 %) compared to 54.0 % of the general student population. Anecdotal evidence is that DE courses have been particularly popular with working and stay at home mothers and this may account for the greater number of women in DE courses.

DE students reflect a slightly older population. In fall, 2003, 53.6 % of the DE students were ages 18-24 and 25.4% were 25-34, compared to the general student population of 49.4 % and 21.4 % respectively. These slightly higher percentages for 18 to 34 year olds reflect that online courses appeal especially to students who work and attend TMCC and women who can attend classes from home while caring for children.

In reviewing statistics related to ethnicity, 9.9 % of the overall student population was Hispanic, compared to 5.9 % of the DE students.

Fall, 2003 data for the college indicated that 16.3% of the overall student body were new students compared to 7.6 % of the DE students. Students at TMCC are advised not to take DE courses during their first semester of college.

A comparison of the average grade in regular classrooms vs. DE sections in fall, 2003 reveals the average G.P.A. in a course with a DE section to be 3.15, slightly higher than the average grade for students in a regular classroom.

<http://www.tmcc.edu/inst%5Fresearch/selfstudy/Standard2/DEdata.pdf>

Student Support

To help students determine if they are ready to be successful in distance learning courses, there is a self-assessment instrument available online.

<http://www.tmcc.edu/e-learning/quiz.asp> Any student admitted to the college can take distance education, although students are generally guided to traditional classes the first semester they are at TMCC.

Students receive information about distance education courses through the online and description in the college catalog. Whether a class is DE (web or cable) is indicated in the printed and online class schedules and a link is available from the e-learning website. <http://www.tmcc.edu/e-learning/quiz.asp> DE courses are not differentiated on a student's transcript.

Students can email or call the Distance Education Office prior to registration and during the semester if they have questions. Potential students can also reach an instructor directly via email or phone to obtain specific information about a course.

<http://www.tmcc.edu/e-learning/contact.asp>

Linkivity software allows for real-time interactive advising with a TMCC counselor and the chat room availability of advisement services is utilized by Distance Education students.

TMCC has implemented an array of equivalent online student services. For all students, TMCC provides a computer lab at its Dandini and Meadowood campuses that are open to students with extended hours. This lab improves access to online courses for students who might now have the correct equipment at home.

The college has created a series of web pages specifically for support of our distance education. <http://www.tmcc.edu/e-learning/contact.asp> DE students including an extensive online orientation and tutorial,

<http://www.tmcc.edu/ici/students/tutorials/webct/webct4xtutorial.htm>, access to a demonstration class, course requirements and registration instructions.

<http://www.tmcc.edu/ici/students/>

Prospective students can submit an online application for admission, register using WebReg, and check grades online. Students can apply for financial aid online and pay for classes with a credit card online. TMCC students are not limited to the web to obtain services; registration may take place in person, by mail or by touchtone phone.

Smartthinking software allowing for 24/7 tutoring assistance for all TMCC students including an online writing center, <http://www.tmcc.edu/writing/online.asp> and an online bookstore through <http://www.efollett.com>. Books for distance education classes are placed in specific sections in the TMCC bookstore.

In partnership with the Accuplacer lab, TMCC offers DE testing hours for faculty-required proctored exams.

In partnership with TMCC's ADA office, students can request appropriate assistance. WebCT is ADA compliant, and closed captioning of the cable courses is offered.

A student Helpdesk helpdesk@tmcc.edu offers online and phone support for students experiencing technical difficulties, students can also contact the e-learning department by telephone and email when they have trouble with access, technology, or learning issues.

Library services were recognized in 1999 for its pioneering efforts in offering online resources. The library can be linked into web courses and offers more than 3500 periodicals online. For students taking cable classes, videotaped copies of the class are placed on reserve in the library for student viewing.

Retention has been a concern in DE courses at TMCC. According to The Chronicle of Higher Education, 2000, (*citation for this?*) while “No national statistics exist yet about how many students complete distance programs or courses...anecdotal evidence and studies by individual institutions suggest that course-completion and program-retention rates are generally lower in distance education courses than in their face-to-face counterparts.” A comparison of TMCC data reveals that the overall retention rate for all classes in the fall of 2003 was 72.6% compared to 61.0% for DE classes. (Sources: Office of Institutional Research and Distance Education Department)

Students sometime come to DE courses perceiving they will be “easier.” If they are not confident in the DE learning process, do not feel connected with the course or the instructor, or do not see the relevance of the course, they may lose their motivation to learn.

In 2004, TMCC’s DE Department began working with the Retention Specialist to implement retention intervention strategies as part of TMCC’s “Best Practices.”

Student issues that have been identified and that need to be addressed include:

- Retention. The program will continue to work with Student Services to develop a strategy for improving retention/success for students.
- Student Evaluation. TMCC has offered an online student evaluation for web-based classes for three years. The greatest challenge is getting the students to complete the online evaluation, the return rate is very low.
- Advising. A profile of the successful online learner would be helpful for the Academic Advisors; the “Is E-Learning Right for Me?” <http://www.tmcc.edu/e-learning/quiz.asp> should be expanded to better reflect realities on online learning.
- Tutorial/orientation: The online tutorial and access to the sample course should be better advertised to students and be more “user friendly” <http://www.tmcc.edu/ici/students/tutorials/webct/webct4xtutorial.htm>.

Staffing and Funding

The budget for DE has varied significantly. Under both SB 204 and AB 606 Legislative funding, TMCC had \$175,000 - \$250,000 available for assisting in the development of NevadaNet, the statewide IAV/ITV network. Since 1999, equipment money has diminished but the institution has committed money for staffing.

Distance Education reports to the Vice President for Academic Affairs and operates with an administrator, the ICI/backend administrator and an AA classified staff employee.

For the 2003-2004 timeframe, the department operated with a payroll budget of \$150,000, \$7000 for a trainer on a letter of appointment, and had an operating budget of

\$20,000. The department received \$65,000 in lab fees that were used to cover the associated cost of licensing, equipment replacement, and student workers, and \$15,000 in technology fees. During the current fiscal year the lab fee has been replaced and the department is receiving \$35,000 in technology fees.

There has been a steady increase in technology fee support for DE.

2002-2003 \$15,000 DE equipment upgrades
2003-2004 \$15,000 DE equipment upgrades
2004-2005 \$35,000 licensing renewal/camera replacement
2005-2006 requesting \$50,000 for licensing renewal and the insertion point for cable classes

DE is not a line item in TMCC's budget. The Cabinet has done away with the lab fee and recognized the institution's responsibility to fund DE. Operating funds are a negotiated disbursement from the Vice President of Academic Affairs' operating budget; currently there is no dedicated equipment money.

DE is a part of the UCCSN budget taxonomy with a funding of 16:1 (as an example, traditional classes in the Social Sciences Department are funded at 26:1).

Summary

The DE program at TMCC has demonstrated the ability to stimulate interest by students and faculty in web-based education. Growth has had to balance student demand and enrollment with course development and faculty training. Distance Education has become a visible part of the overall campus community and provided leadership into embracing new academic technologies and addressing the mandates of TMCC's planning documents.

Strengths:

- Program meets the mandated "technology" requirement for graduation
- Stability of the program
- Program meets student needs for flexibility and access to classes
- Development of a dedicated education channel by Charter Communication for expansion of cable classes offered
- Staff continuity and knowledge
- Number and variety of online courses offered
- Number of faculty involved
- Variety on online student services offered
- Department has strategic plan for future development

Weaknesses:

- Program needs to develop more structured solutions for course development and assessment
- Ongoing budgetary support
- Need to develop an improved training solution to reach more faculty through the ICI and in cooperation with the Office of Professional Development
- Staffing issues as pertains to increasing infrastructure administration
- Lack of definition of role and authority of DE within the organization
- Need to address ADA issues in online classes

Opportunities:

- Develop 2 + 2 online partnerships to offer a “virtual” online bachelor’s degree
- Continued development of classes and student interest in DE
- Development of a student portal

Supporting documents available for review:

- Findings and Recommendations of the Ad Hoc Internet Design Team, Fall, 1998
- DE update: Fall 2003 enrollments
- Assembly Bill No. 606
- Senate Bill No. 204
- University and Community College System of Nevada, Report on Distance Education, October, 2002
- Organizational Chart – Distance Education Department
- Fall 2003 Course Schedule – Distance Education Classes
- Fall 2004 Course Schedule – Distance Education Classes
- Document – Distance Education: Internet Course Development, approved 6/03
- University and Community College System of Nevada – Interactive Video Course Scheduling Form 6/22/04 revision
- Web Peer Evaluation of Teaching Effectiveness – not dated
- Truckee Meadows Community College – Online Course Design Evaluation – not dated
- Online Course Development Proposal revised 11/03
- Agenda – 1st Annual Summer Institute – 2003
- Agenda – 2nd Annual Summer Institute – 2004
- Teach Online Classes!!! - handout 3/04
- Teach Classes on Cable!!! – handout 3/04

2.G.6

There is an equitable fee structure and refund policy.

Community Services courses are self supporting and fees vary course by course. Because they are exempt from UCCSN regulations for determining tuition residency status, these

courses do not require out-of-state tuition. Nevada residents aged 62 or older qualify for a 20% discount on community service courses although not on conferences or special-events courses, or online courses. Community Service Division classes may or may not provide academic credit toward degree programs, and, as such, may or may not satisfy enrollment requirements for financial aid, scholarships, or veterans' benefits. For full-semester credit classes, policies and procedures for fees and refunds are the same as for on-campus students; for classes of different lengths, policies differ (Exhibit: QuickReg Registration form). For non-credit classes for which students enroll through QuickReg, students are charged a \$10 registration fee if the class is cancelled. QuickReg is an efficient registration alternative for non-credit and other classes that are specifically marked in the 2004 fall time schedule (Exhibit: QuickReg Procedures and Form) although not on the Community Services website. Beginning January 2005, all Community Services and Business and Industry classes will use the QuickReg system. Refund policies are clearly explained for classes of 6-11 weeks and 5 weeks or less; certain programs have their own refund policies and students are referred to descriptions of those programs' specific policies. The refund policies are communicated in the Community Services time schedule.

2.G.7

The granting of credit for continuing education courses and special learning activities is based upon institutional policy, consistent throughout the institution, and applied wherever located and however delivered. The standard of one quarter hour for 30 hours or one semester hour of credit for 45 hours of student involvement is maintained for instructional programs.

Community services courses, programs, and workshops presented through the Division of Continuing Education and Workforce Development (previously Community Services/Institute for Business and Industry) do not intend to offer academic credit or support course work toward academic degree programs. The "C" designated after course numbers of community service classes has indicated that the course did not offer transfer credit; however, C classes have been able to be approved as elective credit toward the AGS degree or certificate (Section 3.C.3). Under Continuing Education and Workforce Development, as of January 1, 2005, all courses will be non-credit but will be available for CEU credit (Continuing Education Credit: one CEU being equal to ten hours of in-class student participation) upon special request from a student; for example, if a transcript and CEU credit is necessary in relation to the student's job, the Division can generate the transcript and CEUs.

Cosmetology and Court Reporting classes do not lead to the TMCC associate of arts, associate of science or associate of applied science degrees or certificates of achievement, but these classes may apply toward a general studies degree or certificate. Silver College and Woodworking classes offer academic credit (standard of one quarter—above); Physical Education credits are transferable to Nevada's universities. Policies regarding transfer of these credits to institutions with which TMCC has articulation agreements are the same as for the regular on-campus credit classes and are described in the TMCC catalog. Credits earned in Grant Writing and Massage/Body Work may also be

applicable to the Associate of General Studies Degree. LEAP (Learning Experience Assessment Program) students earn credit through a challenge exam, transcript assessment, portfolio development, or military experience (See Section 3 and Section 2.G.9—below)

All ABE classes are non-credit. The goal of the program is to assist students in preparing for college success and increasing individual skill levels for college success.

2.G.8

Continuing education and/or special learning activities, programs, or courses offered for academic credit are approved in advance by the appropriate institutional body monitored through established procedures.

Course syllabi for any credit classes offered through the community Services Division are written and presented to appropriate faculty for approval. Course syllabi for non-transfer/non-credit--or C courses--although not required, are strongly advised. Community Service instructors are provided with instructions, clear guidelines, and samples for making course syllabi, which include a section defining course outcomes (Exhibit: syllabus guidelines/sample syllabi). The non-credit courses offered by Community Services are selected and evaluated on the basis of marketability, non duplication of TMCC credit courses, non duplication or similarity to existing Community Services courses, qualifications of the instructor, and availability of facilities. Prospective instructors for these classes are invited, on the Community Services' website and in its brochures/time schedules, to submit course proposals by filling out detailed course proposal forms, with electronic submission available (Exhibit: Teaching Opportunities/ Course Proposal).

2.G.9

Credit for Prior Learning is offered only at the undergraduate level and in accordance with policy 2.3 Credit for Prior Experiential Learning.

The Learning Experience Assessment Program (LEAP) allows the college to award credit for prior experiential learning (<http://www.tmcc.edu/outreachservices/leap.asp>). Defined as credit granted toward the award of a certificate or degree for prior learning experiences that can be shown through various means of assessment, primarily portfolios, to be the equivalent of learning gained through formal collegiate instruction. This definition complies with the Northwest Association of Schools and Colleges guidelines (Exhibit: Request for Participation in LEAP). Up to 25% of credits in an associate's degree can be generated through LEAP projects, not to exceed 30 credits for a combination of LEAP, CLEP, and other non-traditional methods. (Exhibit: Non-Traditional Programs Fast Facts)

Students must meet the following criteria before applying for credit through LEAP:

- Be a current TMCC student with a minimum of 12 semester credits earned to establish evidence of a satisfactory learning pattern;
- Be enrolled in a degree program to which the credit applying for is relevant;

- Complete the English/communications general education requirement for the associated degree program;

Students may not apply for LEAP credit that duplicates previously earned credit, nor may they apply if they have already earned 30 credits through other non-traditional methods, such as credit by examination.

The college provides students pursuing LEAP credit with academic, career, and personal counseling (Exhibit: LEAP promotional brochure). Students are also encouraged to review opportunities to earn credit through all other methods, including CLEP, before applying for LEAP credit. Appendix C in the TMCC catalog lists these various methods. Advisors also recommend that students choose electives for LEAP credit due to the difficulty of transferring non-traditional credit to other institutions. The application must also be approved by the appropriate academic dean.

Once accepted into the program, students must submit evidence of experiential learning, usually in the form of a portfolio. Portfolio formats vary based upon the nature of the subject matter. Advisors instruct LEAP applicants on the development of portfolios (Exhibit: Non-Traditional and Special Programs document). Completed portfolios are assessed by LEAP advisors with assistance from faculty from the appropriate discipline. LEAP advisors indicate that 37 students have applied for LEAP credit (Exhibit: Student Outreach Services document).

2.G.10

An institution offering an external degree, degree-completion program, or special degree has clearly articulated policies and procedures concerning admission Level Examination (CLEP) of the College Entrance Examination Board and the institution's own examinations), credit for prior experiential learning, credit by examination, and residency requirements.

TMCC has clearly articulated policies and procedures concerning credit by examination using CLEP: The College Board's College Level Exam Program--
<http://www.collegeboard.com/student/testing/clep/about.html> or CHALLENGE EXAMS (Credit by examination). CLEP allows any student to demonstrate college-level achievement and earn college-level credit by taking a proficiency exam in lieu of coursework. 23 of the 35 College board CLEP exams--in a variety of subject areas--may be taken at TMCC's Testing Center. See
http://www.tmcc.edu/inst_research/selfstudy/standard2/tmcccleptestingprogram.pdf for the courses, course numbers, departments, and number of credits that may be earned for each test taken at TMCC. Three or more credits may be granted if score of 50 or above is earned on general exams or if a score that meets ACE recommendations for credit is earned for a subject exam. Some exams may require an essay in addition to the objective test. (Students who have earned 30 semester credits or more are not eligible to take any of the General exams. Students who have earned six or more credits in any one of the subject areas are not eligible to take the General exam in that area) (2004-04 TMCC Catalog—p. 246). Since the beginning of the 2003-04 academic year, 12 students

have been tested. The college has provided this testing for approximately five years, beginning in the counseling office, then moving to the Edison Campus, and in fall 2003 moving to the Office of Institutional Research & Assessment. Cost for the CLEP test is \$70 (\$58 going to College Board, \$12 for site administration). Although TMCC can administer all of the CLEP tests listed on the above website, it may not be able to accept all of them for credit; credit is granted only for what TMCC accepts or UNR will accept based on common course numbering.

CHALLENGE EXAMS: An enrolled or formerly enrolled TMCC student may petition for a challenge exam (referred to as “Advanced Standing for Credit by Examination” and “Departmental Examination” in 2003-04 TMCC Catalog—p.246) in certain courses approved by the college. The petition, obtained from Admissions and Records, is completed and returned with the necessary fee. (Costs and credits earned vary; for these and for the departments/courses for which challenge exams exist at TMCC, see Exhibit—Courses Eligible for Credit by Exam.) Approval is based on these policies: *1. Only exams on approved course challenge list may be applied for. 2. A student may not retake an exam. 3. From the time of application, the student has one full semester in which to complete the exam.* Upon approval from A & R, the petition is forward to the department giving the exam--the department responsible for instruction of the course. The exam should be comprehensive in nature requiring all basic skills a student gets by completing the course in a regular manner. (2003-04 TMCC Catalog—p.8)

Regarding both CLEP and CHALLENGE EXAMS: No examination is considered part of a student’s credit load; all credits earned through examination are on a Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory basis and, therefore, are not included in the student’s GPA.

RESIDENCY REQUIREMENT: To earn TMCC’s degrees (associate of arts, associate of science, associate of applied science, associate of general studies) or certificate of achievement, a student must have completed a minimum of 15 semester credits in residence within TMCC for each degree pursued. Only classroom instruction is applicable. Challenge examinations, nontraditional credit, etc. do not count as resident credit. (2003-4 TMCC Catalog, p. 10)

Recommendations: What is the approval process for departmentally-made or instructor-created challenge exams? Is Curriculum Committee involved? How is the taking of departmental challenge exams monitored? Procedures and policy, if they exist, need to be clearly defined—for students and for those who advise them. Procedures regarding transfer of credit for CLEP and Departmental Challenge Exams should be clarified. Terminology (CLEP, Challenge Exam) should be added to the TMCC Catalog and Student Handbook glossaries.

2.G.11

When credit is measured by outcomes alone or other nontraditional means, student learning and achievement are demonstrated to be at least comparable in breadth, depth, and quality to the results of traditional educational practices.

2.G.11 In some of the Community Service classes students do demonstrations rather than taking tests. *Data collection is continuing..*

Strengths/Weaknesses: Community Services and Business and Industry

Strengths of the Divisions of Community Services and Business and Industry are evident in the LERN report dated 3/31/04 (Exhibit___), in which the opening letter congratulates the two Divisions' administration and staff and announces certification of TMCC's continuing education unit. The meaning of the program review's 76% score details, throughout the lengthy report, specific areas of strength and weakness. A listing of positive actions TMCC has taken and a listing of Program Review and Certification recommendations are given. "Scorecards" for *Standards Met, Partially Met, and Not Met* are listed for both the Community Services and Business and Industry divisions, including reasons standards were partially met or not met. In the Community Services Division, out of 47 standards 35 were met, 6 were unmet, 6 were partially met; in the Business and Industry Division, out of 47 standards 25 were met, 9 were unmet, 13 were partially met (LERN Exhibit, pp. 4-10).

Positive accomplishments attributed by LERN to Community Services are the following:

1. *CS is self sufficient.*
2. *CS students rate program quality and customer service at 4 out of 5.*
3. *CS offers 20% new courses/events.*
4. *CS cancellation rate is 17% (at a time when cancellation rates overall are way up—even to 30%--due to the economic slump).*
5. *CS pricing is diversified (allowing for a diverse population of participants)*
6. *CS product is focused (has done a good job of determining who their strongest participant segments are and have developed programs targeted to those segments).*
7. *CS staff productivity, revenue divided by the number of staff, exceeds LERN's \$125,000 per person benchmark.*
8. *Instructors rank working with CS at 4 out of 5.*
9. *The CS brochure:participant ratio is 52:1(determined by dividing the number of promotions distributed by the number of registrations generated—"right on target for a community the size of Reno."*
10. *CS has a person dedicated to marketing. (LERN REPORT—pp. 20-23)*

Positive accomplishments attributed by LERN to Business and Industry are the following:

1. *BI is self sufficient.*
2. *BI students and clients rate program quality and customer service at 4 out of 5.*
3. *BI product mix is focused (targets population segments realistically).*
4. *The BI brochure:participant ratio is 5:1(see #9—Community Services).*
5. *Instructors rank working with BI at 4 out of 5. (LERN REPORT—pp.24)*

Because some of the accomplishments are the same for Community Services and Business and Industry, some of the points made in the CS list weren't repeated in the BI list.

In its conclusion, LERN recommends that TMCC address "six 'musts' in order to become an Information Age organization."

1. *Perfect operations*

- Develop/purchase a web-based management system*
- Streamline processes*
- Contract out instead of hiring*
- Redesign organization's staffing structure*
- 2. *Build long-term relationships*
 - Monitor the repeat rate*
 - Targeted marketing*
 - A more global outreach*
 - Showing you care*
- 3. *Build a significant brand*
- 4. *Ensure that channels of communication with customers are consistent*
- 5. *Make investments and utilize sound financial decision-making*
- 6. *Become a liaison that adds value or find one to join (partner with other lifelong learning programs*
(LERN REPORT—pp. 66-72)

According to the Assistant Dean of Community Services and the Dean of the Outreach College, a number of LERN recommendations are currently being implemented, key among them being integration of Community Services with Business and industry to form the Division of Continuing Education and Workforce Development, under which a new centralized registration system will begin January 2005.

Recommendations

1. A TMCC Outreach College document entitled “Alternative Course Offering Procedures: A Guide for Administrative and Classified Staff in Designing Customized or Non-traditional Courses and Programs,” dated spring 2003, recently appeared. It details
 - Course Development Criteria for Administrative Staff
 - Scenario Procedures (for offering a variety of types of continuing ed. classes)
 - Procedures Modules (for course financing, submittal, A & R, Controllers Office)
 - Checklists (for actions taken re: both credit and non-credit courses)
 26 copies of this carefully and clearly written, and seemingly very useful, document were distributed to a variety of campus individuals and offices (e.g. Deans, Contollers, Re-entry, Community Services). Its introduction states that it grew out of a set of strategic goals for the 2001-02 academic year, related to Goal #3: Expand TMCC's ability to meet workforce needs.” While it appears that this document has been shelved and forgotten, its well researched and carefully laid-out procedures and explanations could become a useful guide for developing, offering and assessing courses. It should be reviewed and analyzed for possible future implementation and redistribution as a procedures manual for existing and new staff. (Exhibit: TMCC Outreach College—Alternative Course Offering Procedures)
2. Information contained in publicity/information sources (TMCC catalog; time schedules—semester academic schedule and Community Services' own schedule; class and program brochures; websites) could be more consistent. In some information sources, more helpful and specific information is given than in others; e.g. Community

Services refund policy is clearly detailed on a QuickReg page in the Community Services fall schedule but not in other sources.