



# Distance Education Strategic Plan 2023-2028

Created and approved by the CCC Distance Education Committee on April 14, 2023.

Approved by the Academic Senate on \_\_\_\_.

Approved by the Planning Committee on \_\_\_\_.

Approved by College Council on \_\_\_\_.

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## **A. Introduction**

The purpose of this CCC Distance Education Strategic Plan is to recommend how to further develop infrastructure and increase quality at Contra Costa College's distance education program to best meet the students' and community's needs while providing robust support services to faculty and students.

CCC's online education program had unprecedented growth both in numbers and quality over the past 5 years. The COVID-19 pandemic caused a campus shutdown and forced all classes online during spring 2020. This plan is designed to set the direction for the college's distance education program for the next five years which includes: institutionalizing a reliable DE budget, providing a high-quality program, increasing online and hybrid course offerings to meet the student demands, and alignment with directions of the district and the CVC (California Virtual Campus).

## **B. Vision, Mission, Values, and Strategic Goals of Contra Costa College and Goals from the District Distance Education Strategic Plan**

These are a foundation for CCC's Distance Education Program.

### *Vision*

Contra Costa College strives to be a premier college that celebrates innovation, collegiality and diversity, and is committed to transforming students' lives.

### *Mission*

Contra Costa College is a public community college serving the diverse communities of West Contra Costa County and all others seeking a quality education, since 1949. The College equitably commits its resources using inclusive and integrated decision-making processes to foster a transformational educational experience and responsive student services that ensure institutional excellence and effective student learning.

### *Values*

Contra Costa College's commitment to its mission derives strength and guidance from institutional values. As a community of educators, we value:

- **Commitment** to helping students learn and to improving the economic and social vitality of communities through education;
- **Responsiveness** to the varied and changing learning needs of those we serve;
- **Diversity** of opinions, ideas and peoples;
- **Freedom** to pursue and fulfill educational goals in an environment that is safe and respectful for all students, all faculty, all classified staff, and all managers alike; and

- **Integrity** in all facets of our college interactions and operations.

### *Strategic Goals/Directions*

To fulfill its mission and to be consistent with its beliefs and values, Contra Costa College is committed to the following goals/directions:

1. Equitably Improve Student Access, Learning and Success
2. Strengthen Community Relationships and Partnerships
3. Promote Innovation, Create a Culture of Continuous Improvement and Enhance Institutional Effectiveness
4. Effectively Optimize Resources to Support Student Learning and Success

### *Goals from the Contra Costa Community College District Distance Education Strategic Plan*

The District Distance Education Strategic Plan is designed to help grow and support distance education districtwide and at the local colleges. This is the “bigger envelope” for CCC’s Distance Education Strategic Plan.

#### **1. Develop Principles of Excellence in Alignment with Diversity, Equity, Anti-racism, Inclusion, Accessibility and Student Success**

##### *Objectives*

- Align courses with the CVC Course Design Rubric and equity rubrics.
- Institutionalize campus Distance Education programs.
- Evaluate and strengthen processes in Guided Pathways, Curriculum development, Scheduling, Student Learning Outcomes, and Open Educational Resources to reflect and include equity, inclusivity and accessibility online.
- Improve online faculty evaluations to ensure that faculty provide regular and substantive interaction and other practices in high-quality online instruction.
- Ensure continuity of negotiated requirement that all 4CD faculty have completed training to teach online to facilitate adherence to principles of excellence for diversity, anti-racism, inclusion, accessibility and success.

##### *Possible Action Steps*

- Define ‘Excellence,’ by identifying benchmarks for student achievement and support, faculty training levels.
- Establish ongoing funding for campus programs to support high-quality online education.

- Collaborate with librarians districtwide to facilitate professional development in technical skills and information on Open Educational Resources and Zero Textbook Cost courses and degrees.
- Continue dialogue with management and United Faculty regarding online evaluations and training requirements.
- Continuously improve and expand as needed the current districtwide professional development program to train/mentor online faculty to support high-quality interaction with students.

## **2. Enhance Professional Development**

### *Objectives*

- Provide districtwide professional development through training, mentorship and coaching in equitable, accessible online pedagogy and practice that is regularly updated to ensure relevance and currency.
- Integrate Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, and Social Justice in districtwide training courses in online teaching.
- Establish districtwide training for accessibility in compliance with state and federal law.
- Establish mechanisms for districtwide training as new technologies emerge.

### *Possible Action Steps*

- Secure ongoing funding for faculty training, mentorship and coaching, and facilitation in professional development.
- Secure ongoing funding and support for continuation of Peer Online Mentoring and Review program.
- Establish regular DDEC annual review processes for online training courses.
- Establish one or more DDEC workgroups, as appropriate to address emerging technologies.
- Ensure access to accessibility training through districtwide, state or CVC resources.

## **3. Provide Comprehensive Online Student Support Services**

### *Objectives*

- Develop and implement best practices for delivering online student support services, and regularly evaluate effectiveness.
- Establish a single-stop resource for information on best practices in online student services.
- Assess opportunities for professional development in delivery of online student support services.
- Assess opportunities for training in onboarding online tutors, instructional aides

and providers of other student-facing services.

#### *Possible Action Steps*

- Regularly analyze budget through program review and other processes to ensure adequate support for program effectiveness in Distance Education student services.
- Establish districtwide dialog to collaborate with Student Services to create best practices and professional development for online student services delivery.
- Provide connection to resources in professional development for the delivery of online student services.
- Survey online tutoring, instructional aides, and other student facing services to determine needs in professional development.
- Evaluate student needs for individual technology and internet access.

### **4. Improve Technology Infrastructure and Support**

#### *Objectives*

- Develop districtwide instructional technology procurement process that ensures equity, accessibility, and student privacy, and promotes equitable outcomes and student success.
- Evaluate and adopt instructional technology to facilitate innovative online teaching that supports a variety of teaching modalities.
- Explore emerging technologies, including Artificial Intelligence and Virtual Reality, that may lead to enhanced online learning.
- Promote easy, reliable and secure student access to campus WiFi in collaboration with campus and district staff.

#### *Possible Action Steps*

- Analyze current campus, district, and DDEC processes for procuring instructional technology.
- Collect and analyze best practices for technology procurement at other CCC districts, considering desirability, equity, and accessibility.
- Explore and establish best practices for supporting student technology needs.
- Explore best practices for supporting innovative online instruction.

### **5. Strengthen District Support for Coordination and Continuous Improvement**

#### *Objectives*

- Institutionalize DE program-level support across all campuses to facilitate online student success with full-time DE Coordinators, trainers, and accessibility specialists.
- Provide necessary infrastructure and technology to enable data-driven decisions districtwide.

- Strengthen collaboration between DE and Equity with district support for diversity, equity, inclusion and anti-racism.
- Develop districtwide collaboration to clarify, increase and promote online degrees and pathways.
- Establish districtwide collaboration with the California Virtual Campus in development of regional certificates, degrees and pathways.

#### *Possible Action Steps*

- Explore opportunities for ongoing funding for campus DE Programs and technology.
- Ensure program review process includes disaggregated data for Distance Education delivery of courses and programs.
- Establish regular districtwide student survey to assess student demand and needs online.
- Establish a districtwide collaborative group to explore, create and promote online pathways, certificates and degrees.
- Establish a districtwide collaborative group to examine and create intentional opportunities for integration of diversity equity, inclusion and anti-racism in online classrooms.
- Explore and access possibilities with the California Virtual Campus to develop regional or statewide certificates, degrees or pathways.

### **C. Contra Costa College Distance Education History**

1. 2018-2020: Under the leadership of former DE Coordinator Michael Kilivris, philosophy faculty, CCC had a CTE online certificate pathways grant.
  - The grant allowed the college to create fully-online CTE certificates.
  - The grant allowed us to grow the DE Team, adding an Instructional Designer at 25% release time, an Accessibility Specialist at 25% release time, and a POCR Lead at 20% release time.
  - We were able to establish a local POCR Program to improve online course quality through faculty peer mentoring.
  - CCC's "Introduction to Online Teaching" training course was adopted districtwide.
  - A Canvas shell with faculty resources was provided.
  - A limited number of Camtasia software licenses were provided to online faculty for recording and editing video.
  - The DE Team offered training workshops, including through NEXUS.
  - The De Team offered training workshops in a hyflex modality before it was called "hyflex."

2. March 2020: An unprecedented time when the CCC campus shut down due to the COVID-19 pandemic, forcing all classes online. This was the first time there was so much synchronous “emergency remote” online teaching through Zoom. 4CD had the most faculty districtwide complete the BEOI/Becoming an Effective Online Instructor training course. It (or the equivalent) became required to teach online in the UF contract. We gained HEERF (Higher Education Emergency Relief Funds) to further grow the DE Team, adding two more Instructional Designers at 25% release time (total of 3). These funds allowed us to grow our POCR Program and expand educational technologies.
3. 2020-2023: Maritez Apigo, English faculty, serves as DE Coordinator and has been making major strides for DE at CCC utilizing CARES and HEERF funding sources:
  - Maritez Apigo created and updates the “[Comet Support Hub](#)” in Canvas as a student resource with all student services offered. Data shows that it gets an average of 200 student clicks per week. This student support hub became adopted districtwide, with DVC and LMC following CCC’s prototype.
  - She created and manages “[Quest for Online Student Success](#)” to prepare students for online learning, including three modules: Overview of Online Learning, Getting Tech-Ready, and Becoming an Effective Online Learner. Students earn a certificate of completion to share with their professors.
  - She created and manages “[Wellness Central](#)” in Canvas with 24/7 online health and wellness resources for students and where to get help, It covers the 8 dimensions of wellness: intellectual, emotional, financial, occupational, social, environmental, spiritual, and physical.
  - She created an “[Orientation Module Template](#)” for faculty to adopt/adapt.
  - She coordinates the calendars of [DE PD workshops](#) offered by the DE Team.
  - She leads the development and upkeep of the “[DE PD](#)” Canvas shell (and the older “[DE PD Challenges](#)” shell) along with the DE Team, which is full of faculty professional development resources. The DE PD shell currently has 124 faculty districtwide enrolled in it who are accessing those asynchronous resources and live/synchronous workshop recordings.
  - She developed the “[Online Teaching Essentials](#)” repository of faculty resources in Canvas.
  - She creates and sends regular “[CCC DE Update](#)” newsletters to keep faculty current on the latest DE-related news.
  - She coordinates and promotes the “[DE Help Desk](#)” for one-on-one faculty help that the Instructional Designers and Accessibility Specialist hold.
  - She created and led the “DE Mentor Program” for faculty.



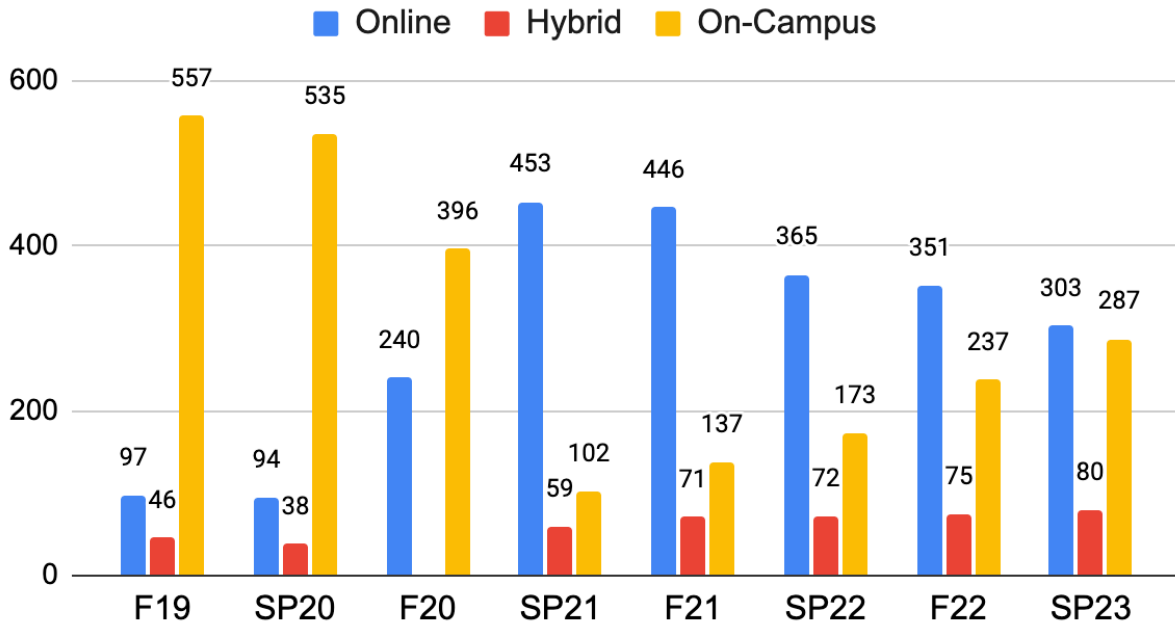
- She created and leads the “YES/Your Equity Squad: Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Antiracism in Online Teaching Community of Practice” for faculty PD.
- She built DE infrastructure by expanding the team positions: 3 Instructional Designers, 1 Student Support Specialist, 1 POOCR Lead, and 1 Accessibility Specialist.
- To fill the Accessibility Specialist position, she recruited and hired from the CCC Accessibility Center to support faculty with making their online content accessible according to the federal and state regulations for students with disabilities.
- She issued a “[Guidance on Online Assessment and Proctoring Software](#)” in collaboration with the DE Committee to create awareness of equity concerns. The guidance was adopted by institutions nationally and was included in several news articles.
- She brought Flip, Hypothesis, Pronto, Padlet, Pope Tech, and PlayPosit educational technologies to CCC (and some of these to the district).
- She led the development of an “[Ed Tech Toolkit](#)” with the DE Team containing a library of resources for all the educational technologies currently available.

At present, CCC’s Distance Education Program consists of fully online synchronous and asynchronous courses as well as hybrid/partially online (51% or more is online) courses. Our focus has been on building the program with quality courses that use good pedagogical principles.

## **D. Current Trends**

## Growth of Online and Hybrid Courses

### Section Counts

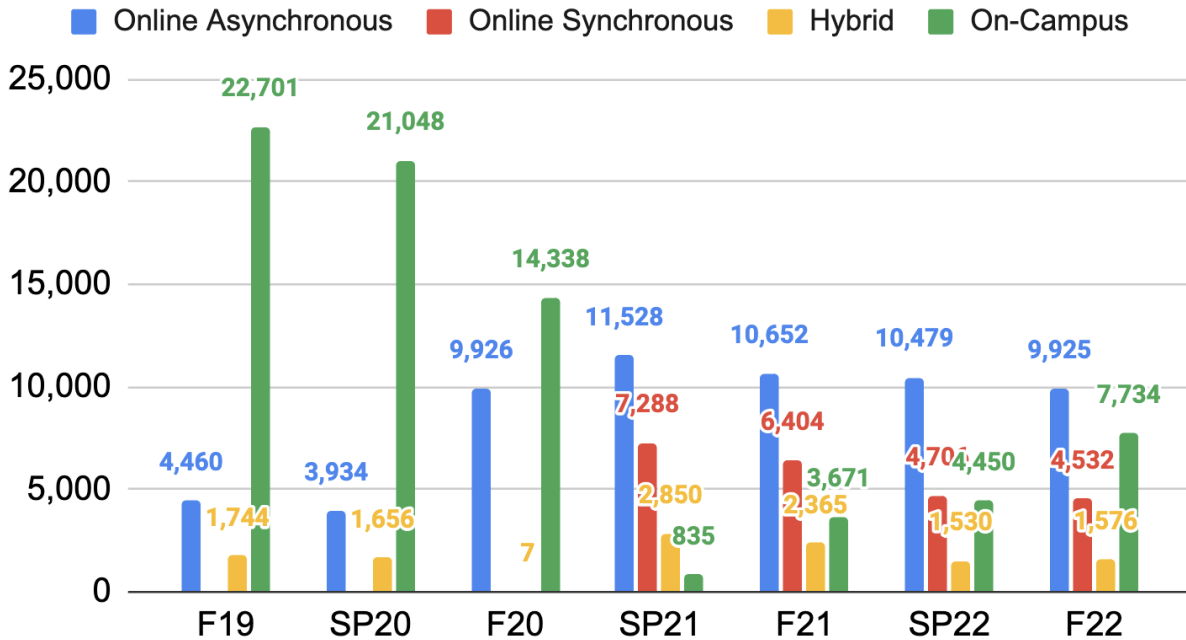


The above graph displays COVID-19's impact on the number of online, hybrid, and on-campus sections--completely shifting the landscape. Pre-COVID-19, the vast majority of sections were offered on-campus while a tiny percentage were offered in online and hybrid modalities. COVID-19 shut the campus down and forced all courses online during the spring 2020 semester. Three years later this spring, there are still more online (303 asynchronous and 80 synchronous) and hybrid classes combined compared to 287 on-campus classes. With the campus slowly reopening over the last two years, the graph reflects how on-campus classes are steadily increasing and online classes are steadily declining. However, we doubt they will ever return to the pre-COVID-19 numbers. We believe online classes are here to stay, which is confirmed by students when we analyze their survey results on modality preferences (below).

## Student Survey Results on Modality Preferences

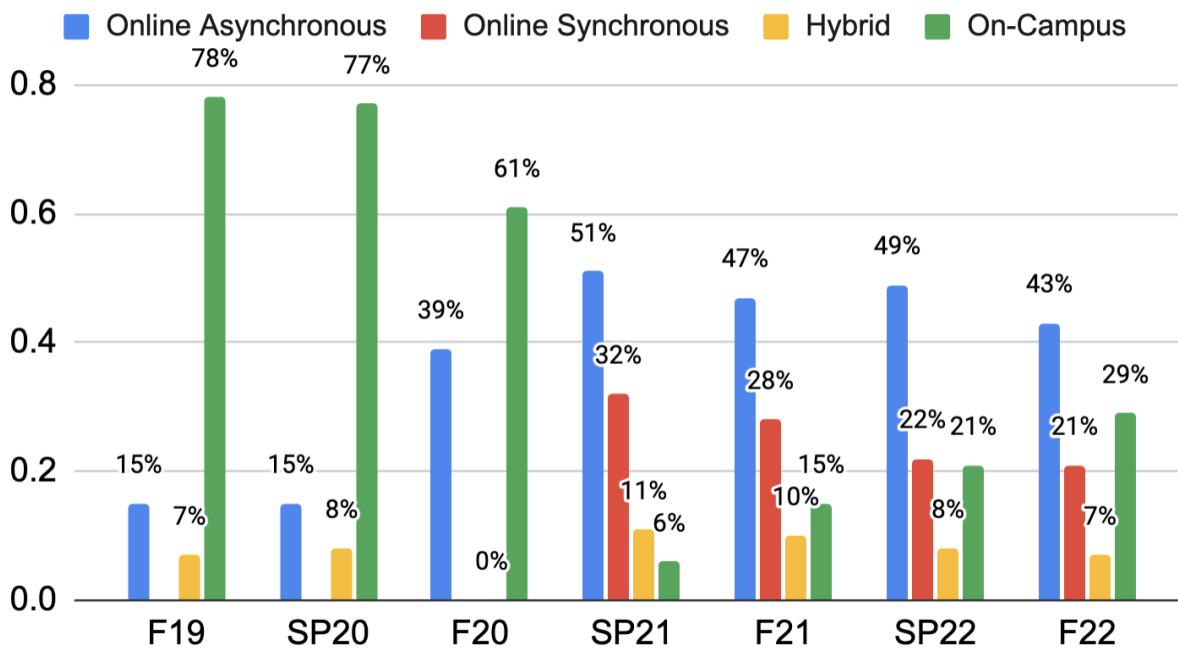
### In Numbers

#### Student Modality Preferences Survey Results



### In Percentages

#### Student Modality Preferences Survey Results



COVID-19 also shifted students' modality preferences. Pre-COVID-19, 77%-78% preferred on-campus classes, while only 15% preferred online asynchronous. COVID-19 spurred an unprecedented amount of synchronous teaching through Zoom, which some students grew to prefer (32% to 15% over time). The percentage who prefer online classes is steadily decreasing but is still high, and the percentage who prefer on-campus classes is steadily increasing. The greatest finding from this chart is that a majority of students prefer online (51% to 38% asynchronous and 32% to 15% synchronous) classes versus the 6% to 29% who prefer on-campus classes.

### *Student Technology Trends*

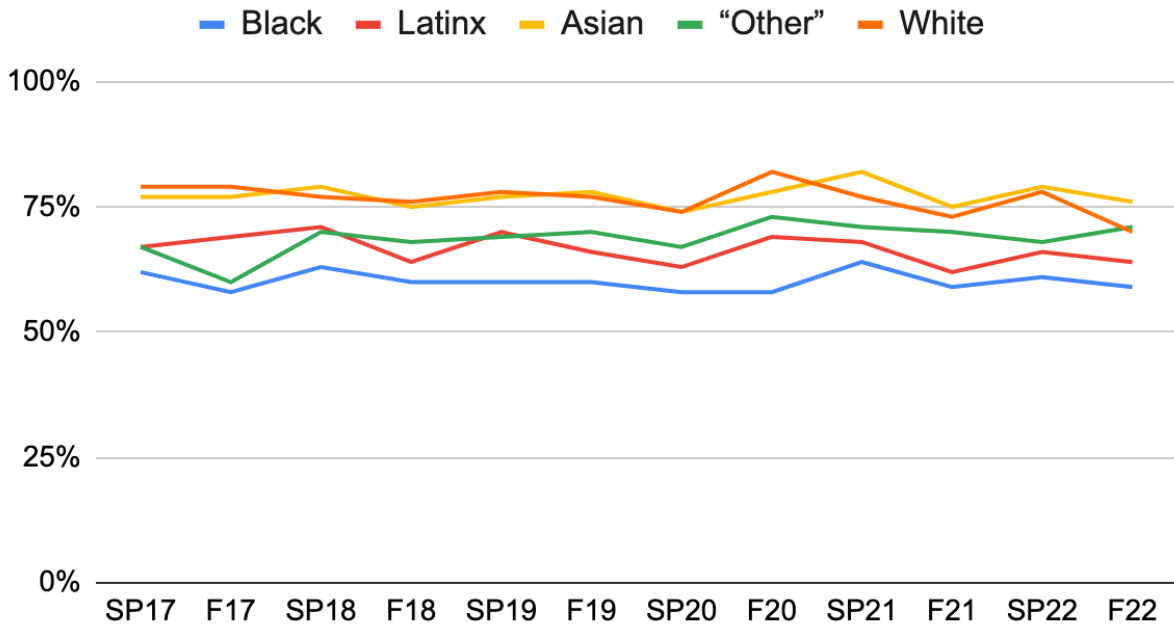
<b>Semester</b>	<b># of Chromebook Loans</b>
SP21	159 + 133 renewals
SU21	45
F21	311 + 134 renewals
SP22	261 + 96 renewals
SU22	98
F22	469

To ensure students have equitable access to technology needs, we initiated a Chromebook loan system with the help of the library to facilitate checkouts. The chart above shows that this is a significant need for students, and we should continue putting resources into this effort of Chromebook loans.

### *Racial Equity Gap*

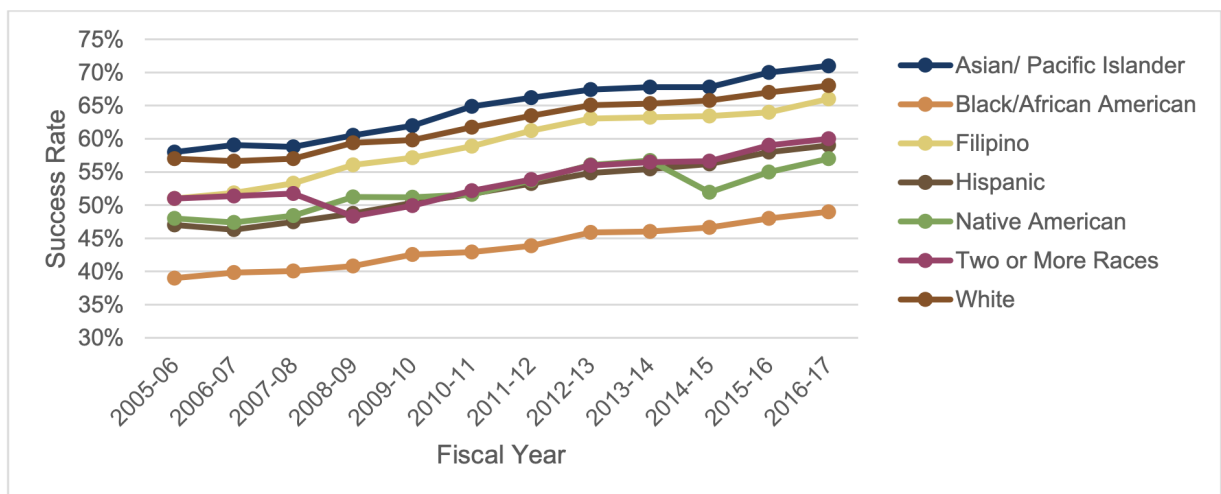
Historically, a racial equity gap exists in online classes that is similar to the on-campus racial equity gap. African American/Black students have the lowest success rates compared to all other races. Latinx, Indigenous, and multiracial students also have lower success rates than their Asian and white counterparts. DE still needs to close this equity gap, focusing on diversity, equity, inclusion, accessibility, and antiracism. See the following graph with success rates (inclusive of all modalities) at CCC disaggregated by race. Unfortunately, the data in Tableau does not define the meaning of the category "Other".

## Success Rates by Race from 2017-2022



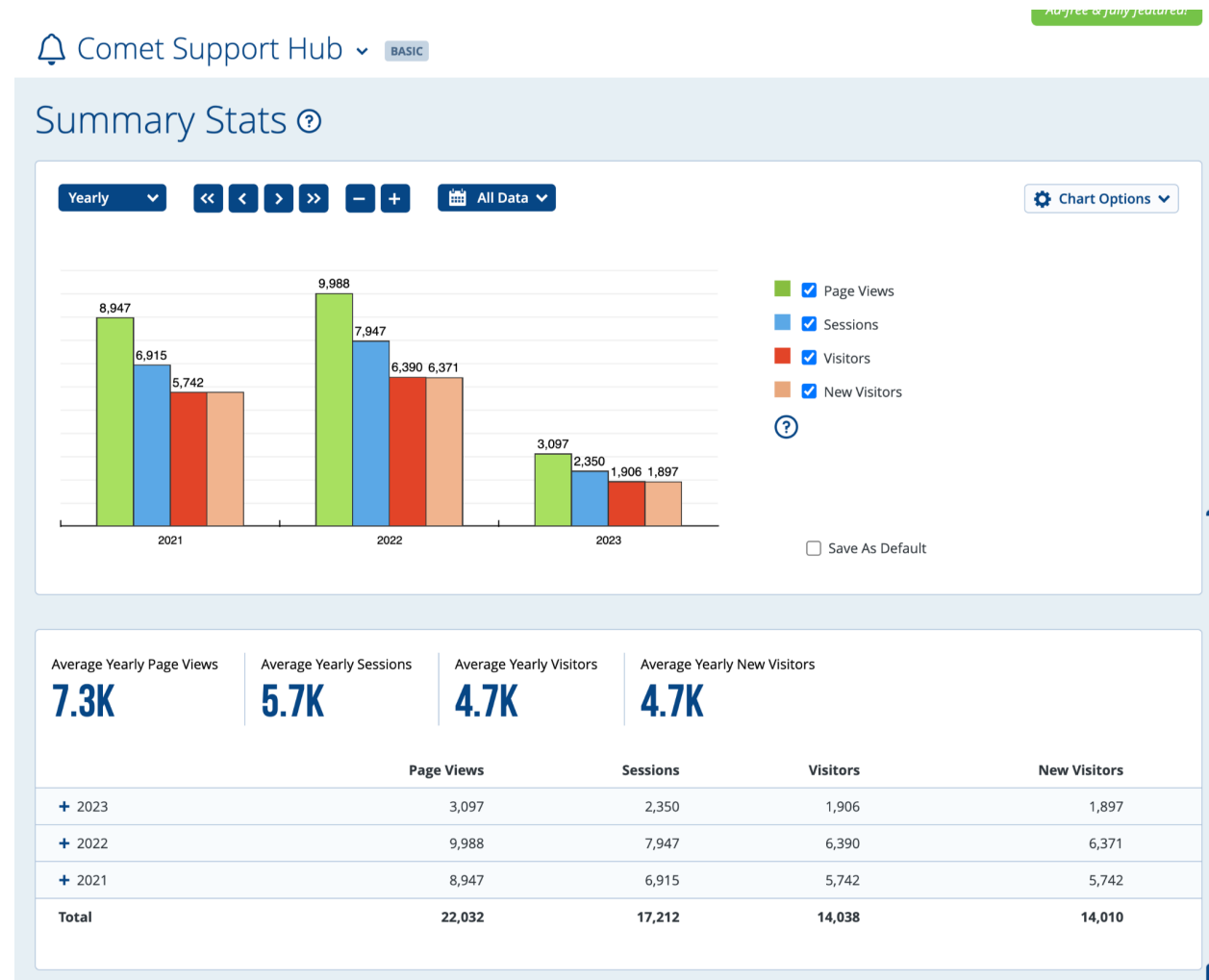
The following graph (Figure 10) displays a comparable pattern with African American, Latinx, Indigenous, and multiracial students having lower success rates. This graph is the state's data for distance education success rates disaggregated by race from 2005-2016 as published in the [Chancellor's Office 2017 Distance Education Report](#) (27).

**Figure 10. Distance Education Success Rate by Ethnicity from 2005 to 2016**



## Comet Support Hub

January 2021 to March 2023 data on the [Comet Support Hub](#) below indicates that this is a very useful resource for students to access support services that should be continued and regularly updated.



## Quest for Online Student Success

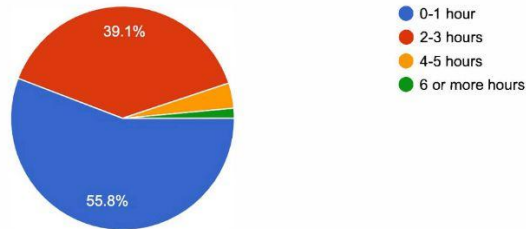
Total number of Quest Completion Certificates issued from January 12, 2021 to April 11, 2023: **5,490**.

The Quest feedback data indicates that students found this to be a helpful resource for online learning preparation, and therefore, it should be continued.

## Quest Feedback

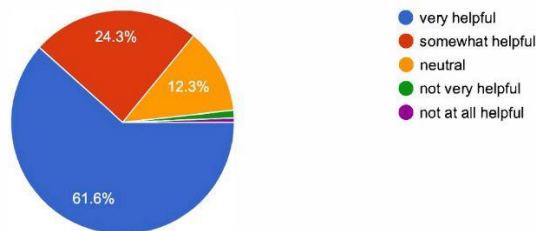
How much time did you spend completing Quest?

5,490 responses

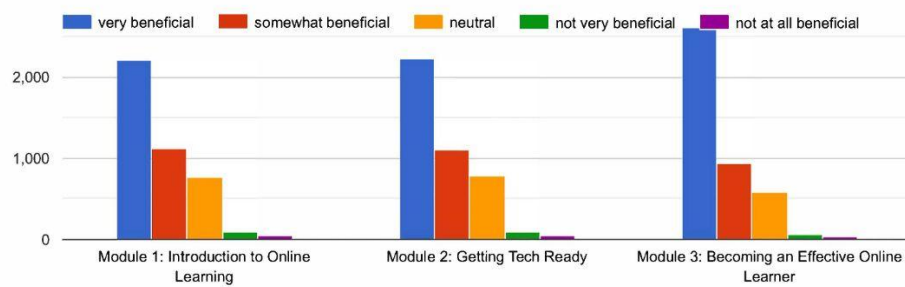


How helpful was the overall information in Quest for Online Success?

5,490 responses

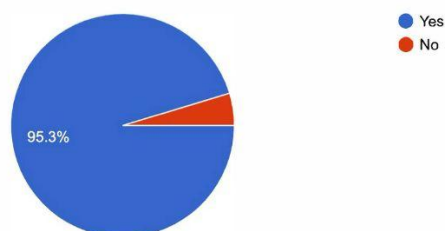


How beneficial was each module?



Would you recommend Quest for Online Success to a friend who is new to online learning?

5,490 responses



## **E. What are the Most Important Things Contra Costa College Distance Education Needs to Do in the Next 5 Years?**

### *1. Institutionalize Funding for DE at CCC*

- 1.1. To maintain or increase the positions on the DE Team: a DE Coordinator, Instructional Designers, Instructional Technologists, POOCR Leads, and Accessibility Specialists.
- 1.2. To maintain or increase the educational/instructional technologies needed for effective online teaching.
- 1.3. To maintain or increase the cohorts of faculty mentors and mentees to participate in the POOCR program to improve online courses.
- 1.4. To maintain or increase all other DE positions, technologies, professional development, and other offerings.

### *2. For Student Equity and Success*

- 2.1. Close the equity gap for marginalized groups with a focus on diversity, equity, inclusion, accessibility, and antiracism.
- 2.2. Improve and refresh Quest to better prepare students for online learning (ex: tech proficiency, LMS training, time management). Give students access to Quest while they are still in high school and applying to CCC by partnering with outreach. Institutionalize Quest so that every new online student completes it.
- 2.3. Maintain or increase distance education faculty professional development workshops and asynchronous resources in best, equitable practices.
- 2.4. Maintain or increase online programs and DE Guided Pathways based on the current trends data in section C.
- 2.5. Match or increase online course retention, persistence, and success rates by 10% or more compared to on-campus classes.
- 2.6. Offer workshops, webinars, mentorships, and other supports for students on Canvas, technology support, and online learning each semester.
- 2.7. Continue to grow the number of courses and sections that are quality online courses through the POOCR program.
- 2.8. Maintain or increase training and support so that online content is accessible in compliance with Section 508 and ADA with the support of an Accessibility Specialist position.



- 2.9. Maintain or increase the number of faculty using [OER textbooks and resources](#) so students don't have the cost of textbooks as a barrier.
- 2.10. Increase awareness to improve [Regular and Substantive Interaction \(RSI\)](#).

### *3. To Support Instructors in Creating and Improving Online and Hybrid Courses that are High Quality*

- 3.1 Support the districtwide "Becoming an Effective Online Instructor (BEOI)" and "Becoming an Effective Hybrid Instructor (BEHI)" training courses.
- 3.2 Maintain or increase accessibility training offerings.
- 3.3 Maintain or increase the POCR program to improve online course quality and equity.
- 3.4 Maintain or increase subscriptions and licenses to DE technology tools to support online faculty in their teaching, such as: Padlet, Hypothesis, Pronto, Camtasia, etc.
- 3.5 Maintain or increase access to and training for technology tools, including support for innovation to try new technology tools.
- 3.6 Maintain or increase training on video production, including software (such as Adobe Premier Pro and Camtasia), hardware, tech support, recording, editing, lighting, audio, set-up, etc.
- 3.7 Maintain or increase faculty knowledge of Canvas upgrades and new features.
- 3.8 Increase the number of online teachers using Open Education Resources (OER) to make classes ZTC and LTC.
- 3.9 Maintain or increase training related to making equity visible through a student-centered approach to online teaching.
- 3.10 Maintain or increase providing NEXUS training in DE and Canvas for new hires.

### *4. Support of On-Campus Faculty, Non-Instructional Faculty, and Classified Professionals Using Canvas*

- 4.1 Maintain or increase providing faculty support on how best to use Canvas to supplement their on-campus courses.
- 4.2 Maintain or increase providing training to non-instructional faculty and classified professionals on Canvas and accessibility for their non-instructional Canvas shells.
- 4.3 Maintain or increase providing support for equitable online student support services.

## **F. Contra Costa College Distance Education Strategic Goals and Objectives**

*Goal 1: Develop and Promote Principles of Excellence in Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Accessibility and Antiracism and Increase the Quality of Fully Online Courses*

### **Objectives**

- 1.5. Integrate diversity, equity, inclusion, antiracism, and culturally responsive teaching in professional development trainings. Apply equity and course design rubrics to improve online course quality.
- 1.6. Support 4CD's BEOI/Becoming and Effective Online Instructor training course.
- 1.7. Advocate for and provide trainings on educational technologies that improve student success (e.g. Pronto, Hypothesis, Padlet, PlayPosit, etc.).
- 1.8. Increase the student voice.
- 1.9. Maintain at least 5 courses or increase the local POOCR program to improve online course quality. Continue to hire POOCR Leads to coordinate the POOCR program.
- 1.10. Provide support for faculty on DE improvement plans, such as mentorship, an extension of BEOI training, etc.
- 1.11. Maintain or increase DE faculty professional development workshops on topics such as equitable practices for online teaching, student-to-student interaction, different modalities online, etc.
- 1.12. Annually participate in the Online Teaching Conference and other DE-related conferences.
- 1.13. Continue hiring Instructional Designers to deliver online workshops and train online faculty on the latest equitable best practices.
- 1.14. Continue hiring Accessibility Specialists to deliver accessibility workshops for online teaching and support the POOCR Program. Continue to provide technology that supports faculty in creating accessible course content such as the PopeTech Dashboard.
- 1.15. Continue the DE Help Desk for one-on-one faculty support.
- 1.16. Maintain or increase CVC Consortium participation.
- 1.17. Highlight experts in the DE/online field as guests in workshops.

*Goal 2: Enhance Professional Development*

### **Objectives**

- 2.11. Develop and require ongoing training beyond the initial training requirement with the latest best practices in collaboration with UF.
- 2.12. Update NEXUS for new FT faculty to incorporate DE PD and accessibility.
- 2.13. Offer more formalized 2-week training and earn units for salary advancement, such as a bootcamp or hackathon by the DE Committee. Example topics can include video production, enhanced RSI, equity deep dive, etc.
- 2.14. Training and guidance for management in collaboration with UF. For example, show instances of Regular and Substantive Interaction (RSI), equitable practices, Universal Design for Learning (UDL), etc.
- 2.15. Continue offering synchronous and asynchronous DE training by campus Instructional Designers.
- 2.16. Continued accessibility training by campus Accessibility Specialists.
- 2.17. Establish and maintain support for tech-enhanced on-campus classes, hyflex classes, and other new modalities as they emerge.
- 2.18. Continue developing and training faculty to align with the CVC Course Design Rubric and the Peralta Equity Rubric through our local POCR program.
- 2.19. Fund a college team to attend the Online Teaching Conference or other online-teaching-related professional development to stay current in best practices.

### *Goal 3: Expand Online Student Support Services*

#### **Objectives**

- 3.11 Continue and update “Quest for Online Student Success,” the “Comet Support Hub” & “Wellness Central” student resources in Canvas.
- 3.12 Continue offering students free internet access and Chromebook loans.
- 3.13 Develop and implement best practices for delivering online student support services, and regularly evaluate effectiveness.
- 3.14 Incorporate Work Study or Student Tutors into support services to assist other students.
- 3.15 Develop accessible student-facing how-to video resources.
- 3.16 Offer student workshops on how to do basic computing, use technology tools, and use Canvas for online learning.

### *Goal 4: Improve Technology Infrastructure, Resources, and Support*

#### **Objectives**

- 4.4 Institutionalize reliable funding for DE.
- 4.5 Continue to develop technology infrastructure, resources, and support.

- 4.6 Encourage procuring grant funding when possible for additional funding.
- 4.7 Support a districtwide instructional technology procurement process that ensures equity, accessibility, and student privacy, and promotes equitable outcomes and student success.
- 4.8 Expand access to technology for all who need it, such as Chromebooks, internet access, and hotspots for students, webcams and laptops for faculty, etc.
- 4.9 Advocate for more accessibility training to be included with FLEX requirements.
- 4.10 Create awareness about salary step increases for faculty for completing BEOI/BEHI and other college or district DE PD.
- 4.11 Collaborate on the CCC Technology Plan, particularly on the educational technologies that online faculty use in their classes.

### *Goal 5: Strengthen College Support for Coordination and Continuous Improvement*

#### **Objectives**

- 5.1 Institutionalize DE positions to facilitate online student success with full-time DE Coordinators, Instructional Designers, Instructional Technologists, POCR Leads, Accessibility Specialists, Hyflex Coordinators, and other positions as necessary.
- 5.2 Develop collegewide collaboration to clarify, increase, and promote online degrees and pathways in consultation with counselors and articulation officers.
- 5.3 Establish districtwide collaboration with the California Virtual Campus (CVC) to develop online certificates, degrees, and pathways.
- 5.4 Continue the partnership as a member of the CVC Consortium Exchange.
- 5.5 To stay abreast of both state directions as well as accreditation changes on online education, to continue to actively engage with district distance education committees, and to assess the impact on CCC, and to inform management and Academic Senate of directions that should be taken. To also stay updated with Canvas upgrades and changes to prepare for new training needs.

## **G. Acknowledgements**

This document was written by Maritez Apigo, the Distance Education Coordinator, with input from members of the 2022-23 CCC Distance Education Committee and with input from committees and councils through shared governance.

2022-23 members of the committee include: Anthony Gordon, Brandon Marshall, Erica Watson, Carlos-Manuel Chavarria, Mónica Landeros, Bashir Shah, Kristin Lassonde, Michele Redlo, Sarah Boland, Dionne Perez, Alexa Simen, James Eyestone, Sue Abe,

Elvia Ornelas-Garcia, Karen Ruskowski, and Liesl Boswell.

## **H. References & Sources of Authority**

- [Previous Contra Costa College Strategic Plan 2018-2023](#)
- [4CD Distance Education Strategic Plan 2022-2027](#)