

# **NWIC Five-Year Distance Learning Plan**

## **Spring 2016**

### **Mission Statement**

The objectives of this Distance Learning Plan and the work of the Instructional Technology Committee are to:

- Create an environment that facilitates the development and improvement of distance learning instruction in response to student and community need.
- Encourage faculty participation in distance learning initiatives, provide assistance and support in the development of courses, course materials, and make better use of instructional technology.
- Help ensure that the technical infrastructure is in place to allow faculty to utilize good distance learning and technology-based education.
- Enhance student accessibility and utilization of distance learning initiatives.
- Promote the availability and utilization of distance learning courses as a viable option for pursuing educational goals.
- Build partnerships with other TCUs and neighboring institutions to create more distance learning opportunities and better practices.
- Ensure quality instruction in all distance learning classes.

The emphasis of this work will be on:

- Delivering quality distance learning courses to students and non-academic receipts
- Providing services to students taking distance learning courses
- Supporting instructors of distance learning courses
- Promoting distance learning as a viable modality

### **NWIC Distance Learning Delivery Methods**

Videoconferencing: ITV

Web-based: Canvas Learning Management System courses

Print-based: IL courses

Hybrid: Hybrid courses utilize a variety of delivery methods, including any combination of videoconferencing, web-based courses, face-to-face learning, and print-based learning.

### **Organization and Administration**

The E-Learning Coordinator and the Director of Information Services are responsible for the management of day-to-day operations in E-learning at NWIC. The Instructional Technology Committee's role is to serve as support for the various instructional

decisions. Individual instructional departments and FIGs make instructional decisions. They evaluate instructors, and evaluate the quality of teaching. The committee helps train faculty in the use of technology, works with instructors to develop online curriculum, assists in the promotion of distance learning classes, helps ensure the quality of instruction, secures funding for distance learning technology, and formulates coherent long range plans for distance education at NWIC.

### **Funding**

In order to promote best practices for distance learning, tools for said learning must be effective and intuitive. Current modalities will need to be upgraded, and additional software and hardware incorporated into NWIC's current distance learning. The cost of maintenance and operation of equipment, training of faculty to use the equipment, hiring of additional staff, and faculty time for development and maintenance of the course may make distance education classes in the near future more expensive than those taught in the traditional manner. However, given the importance of online learning and NWIC's need to serve site students, such access makes the investment more than worthwhile.

### **Support For Students**

In addition to traditional support services, sites and main campus will emphasize student knowledge through the actions of the Instructional Technicians and student mentors, who can facilitate distance learning for the students across the NWIC system.

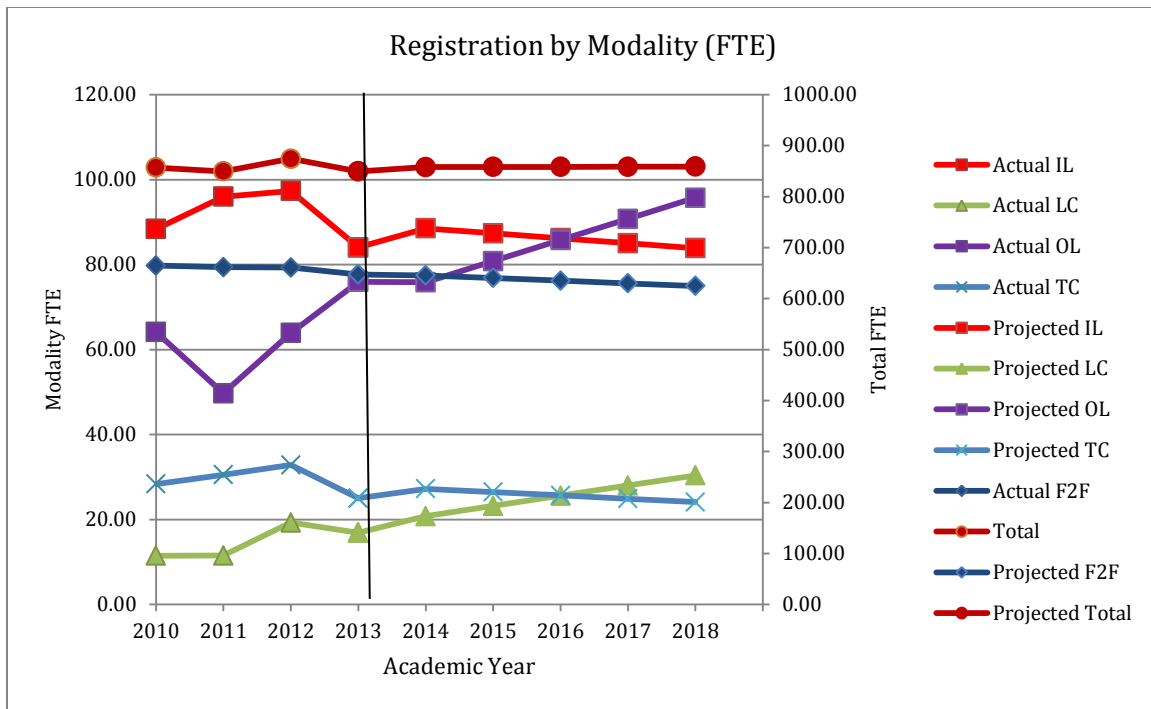
### **Value & Trends**

Distance Learning is becoming, more and more, a vital component of education at NWIC, and it is clear that students are responding to greater DL offerings. In comparing numbers between Spring 2015 and Spring 2016, there is a small decline in overall enrollment of 1.44%, but a relatively large increase in online enrollment of 12.28%.<sup>1</sup>

This is in line with previous projections that predict increasing OL and OLH enrollments over face-to-face enrollments. Using the forecast formula in Microsoft Excel, 2014 projections used "a linear trend to calculate a future y-value (FTE by Modality) with a given future x-value (academic year) in conjunction with historical x-and y- values (academic years & FTEs by modality)."

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<sup>1</sup> Spring 2015 total enrollment: 1662  
Spring 2016 total enrollment: 1638  
Spring 2015 total OL & OLH enrollment: 391  
Spring 2016 total OL & OLH enrollment: 439



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Current numbers seem to support the 2014 projections, as online enrollment grows even when overall enrollment stagnates.

It is clear that college resources should be devoted to growing distance learning offerings and programs due to student interest.

### Distance Learning Goals and Objectives, Years One Through Five

#### Goal 1: Greater integration of e-Learning content into ground courses, including hybrid classes

##### Objectives:

1. Beginning in Year One, identify five high-enrollment courses (examples: ENG 101, CMST 101) that can be run as hybrid evening courses, and faculty willing to help develop online content for said courses.
2. Beginning in Year One, identify five required courses in courses of study that can be adapted for online delivery.
3. Beginning in Year One, train developmental education instructors in best distance learning delivery methods in preparation to develop a wider variety of online curriculum in developmental education.
4. Beginning in Year Two, create online versions of required course of study classes, using software, synchronous videoconferencing, and Internet content to create greater interactivity.

<sup>2</sup> Lawrence, Sean. *A Feasibility Analysis of Offering More Online Hybrid Courses/Programs*, 2014

5. Beginning in Year Two, plan funding and incorporation of tablets and laptops available specifically to four-year-program students, particularly Mac products that can allow students to use more innovative and intuitive software, and perhaps promote graphic design and music classes.

**Goal 2: Create greater continuity between sites and main campus, especially in the areas of course curriculum, course availability, and degree pipelines, by retraining Instructional Technicians and student mentors, upgrading site technology, and putting more required classes online.**

### **Objectives**

1. Beginning in Year One, meet with site Instructional Technicians and accomplished students at sites for training in best practices for distance learning, able to instruct other site students in use of Canvas, ITV, best practices for distance learning, and facilitating contact with main campus teachers.
2. By the end of Year One, hold training for mentors and instructional technicians, separate from in-service and incorporate mentor training into pre-service for Fall.
3. By the end of Year One, provide training to main campus faculty on best practices in working with site students and instructional technicians.
4. By Year Three, use Canvas as a component of 99% of offered classes, showing good practice across all sites.
5. During Years One and Two, make library materials more accessible at each site by reorganizing off-site access to library databases. Beginning in Year Two, library staff will work with E-Learning Mentors at sites to ensure that students know how to use the different databases, the Lummi Card Catalogue and the American Indian Higher Education Consortium Virtual Library.
6. Beginning in Year Three, make lab activities accessible at each site either through LMS innovations or on-site facilities.

**Goal 3: Increase breadth and viability of face-to-face modalities, moving away from the k20 system and prepare for full Learning Management System-centered videoconferencing.**

### **Objective**

1. During Year One, research and plan a classroom built for Canvas built-in conferencing classroom environment, using relay microphones independent of software to replace Polycom equipment.
2. Beginning in Year One, begin practice of replacing all out-of-date monitors with camera-equipped monitors on all sites to greater increase online videoconferencing access.
3. Beginning in Year One, outfit any non-camera site computers for personal videoconferencing.

**Goal 4: Continue to promote best practices and use of Canvas LMS, and continue to fund support for Canvas LMS..**

1. In Year One, create a support system to fund cloud-based LMS, including outside support, which will provide greater capacity for videoconferencing, assessment rubrics, and integration with outside institutions. Continue to identify grants, including Canvas grants that could support integration of a new LMS into NWIC.
2. Throughout Year One and Year Two, train Instructional Technicians and student mentors at sites, to acclimate faculty and students to use of LMS.
3. In Year Three, provide online versions of all reasonable courses regularly offered at NWIC, allowing for the fact that some classes may not be adaptable.

**Goal 5: Create a systematized method of technological training for faculty, staff and students.**

1. Beginning in Year One, identify faculty willing to serve as part-time E-Learning mentors who can become experienced with best practices for distance learning and best use of LMS.
2. Train mentors, instructional technicians, and faculty at sites and at Lummi in best practices for distance learning, best use of LMS, and ways to interact with teachers.
3. Beginning in Year One, meet with Coast Salish Institute and community members to develop an NWIC-specific mode of training and conceptualizing indigenous spaces online, and creating ceremony within online classes.
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**Goal 6: Guide students toward education success through quality services.**

1. For years One and Two, increase retention rate in distance learning courses by at least 20% per year. For years Three through Five, increase by 10% per year.
2. Annually review and update the Distance Learning Plan so that it is a perpetual five-year plan. Annually adopt new goals and objectives in response to the needs of students, faculty and administrators.
3. Hold monthly meetings of the Instructional Design Committee, instructional technicians, and student and faculty E-Learning mentors to discuss ways to improve services to faculty and students and to assess success of distance learning in meeting goals.