

# Ohlone Community College District Distance Education Report

**To:** Ohlone Community College District Board of Trustees

**From:** Ralph Kindred, Associate Vice President, Information Technology

**Subject:** 2005-2006 Annual Distance Education Report

**Date:** May 15, 2006

Driven by growing student interest and increased faculty participation Ohlone College's Distance Education program reached new heights during the 2005-2006 academic year! Enrollment in Distance Education courses surpassed the 4,000 mark for the first time, enrolling 4,443 students in 179 sections.

With so many students enrolled, it is important to assess student satisfaction with both WebCT, which is the software used to deliver instruction online, and the quality of instruction that they received.

According to the results of a recent Ohlone College Distance Education student survey (916 completed the survey, the results of which are attached):

- 41.7% rated the quality of the course content excellent , 34% above average, 21.3% average;
- 35% rated the availability of course content materials excellent and 32.2% average and 27.7% average when compared to a classroom based course;
- 73.2% overwhelmingly responded that they would like Ohlone college to offer an AA degree fully online and 57% a certificate online; and

Although enrollment in Ohlone College's Distance Education increased significantly this year, growth in online courses was not a primary objective, rather, improving student success was an overall college goal. WebCT has become an important tool in reaching this objective. One strategy for achieving this is the WebCT faculty training program. This program in place since 2000 has enabled many faculty to attend workshops delivered in face to face, online and self-paced formats and receive expert consultation and support on design and development of online and hybrid courses. Additionally IT staff provides one-on-one consultation and assistance on integrating multimedia software and other learning technologies to enhance online courses.

During 2005-2006 this faculty development program offered the following learning opportunities to: 16 hands-on workshops on Teaching and Learning online using WebCT tools, Web design, multimedia software (Camtasia), web conferencing and 3 self-paced online workshops. 34 faculty have completed the hands-on workshops on WebCT tools and 8 have completed the self-paced online workshops on instructional design and best practices for online teaching.

As a result of these efforts Ohlone College's Distance Education program achieved the following during 2005-2006:

- Ohlone offered 179 sections of distance learning courses
- Faculty developed and offered 23 new online courses
- The first online learning community was offered
- 4443 students enrolled in distance learning courses
- The total FTES<sup>1</sup> for all distance learning courses was 480.26

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<sup>1</sup> FTES= Full Time Equivalent (FTE) for schools, community colleges, colleges and universities refers to the size of the student body.

### Distance Education statistics (2000-01 through 2005-06)

	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06
Total course sections	44	57	85	97	119	189
Total disciplines	12	13	14	17	15	20
Enrollment	1072	1608	2191	2479	3254	4443

### WebCT usage statistics (2004-05 through 2005-06)\*

	2004-05	2005-06
Total sections	319	490
Total # of seats for all sections*	10,096	16,653
Online course sections	119	189
Enrollment for online course sections	3,254	4443
Web-enhanced sections***	200	301

Seat Count = 1 student taking 2 courses counts as 2 Seats\*

Other major highlights surrounding Distance Education at Ohlone College during 2005-2006 were:

- 23 new online courses were offered in various disciplines: Biotechnology, Business Supervision Management, Business Administration, Computer Application, Computer Studies, History, Physical Therapist Assistant, Speech, Music, Multimedia Studies, Real Estate.
- The first online learning community was offered: "On the Road to Research and College Success" linking ENGL 101A, LS 101, PD113.
- The Distance Learning Committee focused on the goal of investigating the standards for quality in online education and recommended for approval by Faculty Senate and Capacity Rubric for Online Instruction" adapted from CSU, Chico and implemented at many CSU schools.
- Student Help Desk provided support to all prospective and current users of WebCT for online courses and web-enhanced courses. Approximately 450-600 voicemails and emails were handled with a target response time of 24 business hours that was achieved 85-90% of the time.
- Faculty began using web conferencing to deliver two-way phone or Voice over IP® synchronous online lessons using CCC Confer®<sup>2</sup>.
- A new workshop on methodology titled "Collaborative Learning Techniques" was offered for the first time in 2005-2006 facilitated by Marilena Tamburello and Vicki Curtis 11 faculty attended

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<sup>2</sup> The CCC Confer project is funded from a grant from the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office. The project was initially funded in February 2001 in order to offer the CCC system a viable means to meet and collaborate at a distance. CCC Confer is led by a Project Director, three managers and a small staff.

## **Future plans**

### **WebCT**

During 2006-2007 Ohlone College will renew the WebCT 4.0 license for 1 year and host its online courses on servers provided by the California Virtual Campus (CVC). In 2006-2007, we will also develop a plan to convert to WebCT 6.0, select a hosting service and migrate all courses from CVC servers to a new hosting service.

To ensure a smooth transition to the new version of WebCT 6.0 it is highly recommended that the staff members participate in "Train the Trainers" WebCT advanced training workshops in order to develop faculty workshops on the new tools and functionalities of WebCT 6.0.

Our current website for online student service and support will need to be updated to provide current information on Log in, WebCT 6.0 Orientation and other resources for online students. In 2006-2007, we plan to continue to offer workshops to train faculty in technology assisted learning and active and collaborative learning methodologies to meet the objectives of the Title III Grant.

For 2006-2007 we will also began development efforts on an Educational Technology website. This website will include a variety of faculty resources on active and collaborative learning methodologies, methodologies for online teaching and learning, a faculty and staff training schedule for online workshops and tutorial.

In 2005-2006, under the leadership of the new AVP of Information Technology, two innovative initiatives were launched: iPod – iTunes U Initiative and the e-portfolio initiative.

### **iPod – iTunes U Initiative**

With the assistance of the Educational Technologist an ESL (English as a Second Language) faculty member wrote a proposal highlighting the benefits to student success of integrating Apple's iPod technology into the 3 learning communities on Basic Skills. When Apple made iTunesU available for free to a limited number of colleges nationwide, the Basic Skills proposal formed the critical core of a rationale for requesting Apple to select Ohlone College as an iTunesU site.

iTunes U is the application of Apple's popular iPod technology and infrastructure to the academic community. Via iTunes U Apple Computer provides a free, hosted service for colleges and universities that provides easy access to your educational content, including lectures and interviews 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Ohlone College's goal is to make iTunes U available to all faculty and students to extend teaching and learning beyond the classroom by providing an easy to use digital content management system that has the capability of transferring audio/video content to the iPod to make mobile learning a reality for our students. iTunes U will complement WebCT the course management system currently used at Ohlone College.

Ohlone College has made a commitment to find innovative and research proven methodologies to better serve the large percentage of "at risk" and ESL students who enter Ohlone lacking the basic Math and English skills to be successful in college. For 2006-2007, Ohlone plans to pilot iTunes U and iPods for 3 learning communities on "Basic Skills", with approximately 125 students. This learning community will use the iPods to create an integrated program of study featuring courses on reading, writing, Introduction to Psychology, and a Personal Development.

After an evaluation of the "Basic Skills" pilot, Ohlone plans to expand the use of iTunes U to all faculty who wish to distribute digital course content as audio/video podcasts. In the Fall 2006, workshops on how to create podcasts and how to use the tools of the iTunes U will be offered to the faculty teaching in the Basic Skills learning communities pilot as well as to all interested faculty and staff.

### **e-portfolio Initiative**

In 2005-2006, under the leadership of the AVP of Information Technology, the Educational Technology & Distance Learning staff facilitated the formation of a focus group of faculty and staff to investigate e-portfolio technology and systems.

e-portfolios are personalized, web-based collections of work, responses to work, and reflections that are used to demonstrate key skills and accomplishments for a variety of contexts and time periods. These systems allow individuals to organize and archive work materials in various formats (text, graphics, audio, and video). Components of coursework once stored electronically can be easily used by students, faculty, staff to prepare, manage and reflect, share and present the results of their academic career and their personal, professional experiences.

The goals for the e-portfolio group are:

- to educate ourselves and the Ohlone community about the different categories of e-portfolios: student, faculty, institutional
- to promote information about e-portfolio with the creation of an e-portfolio website
- to focus on the issues and challenges of e-portfolio adoption and implementation
- to adopt a set of evaluation criteria that will enable the focus group to evaluate and rate the features and functionalities of 4 e-portfolio systems (3 commercial, 1 open source)
- to schedule commercial vendors to demo e-portfolio systems
- to review examples of e-portfolios created with e-portfolio systems adopted by other institutions
- to provide hands-on training sessions on e-portfolio systems to facilitate the evaluation process
- to provide recommendations for IT and the college at large
- to promote implementation of e-portfolio pilots for 2006-2007

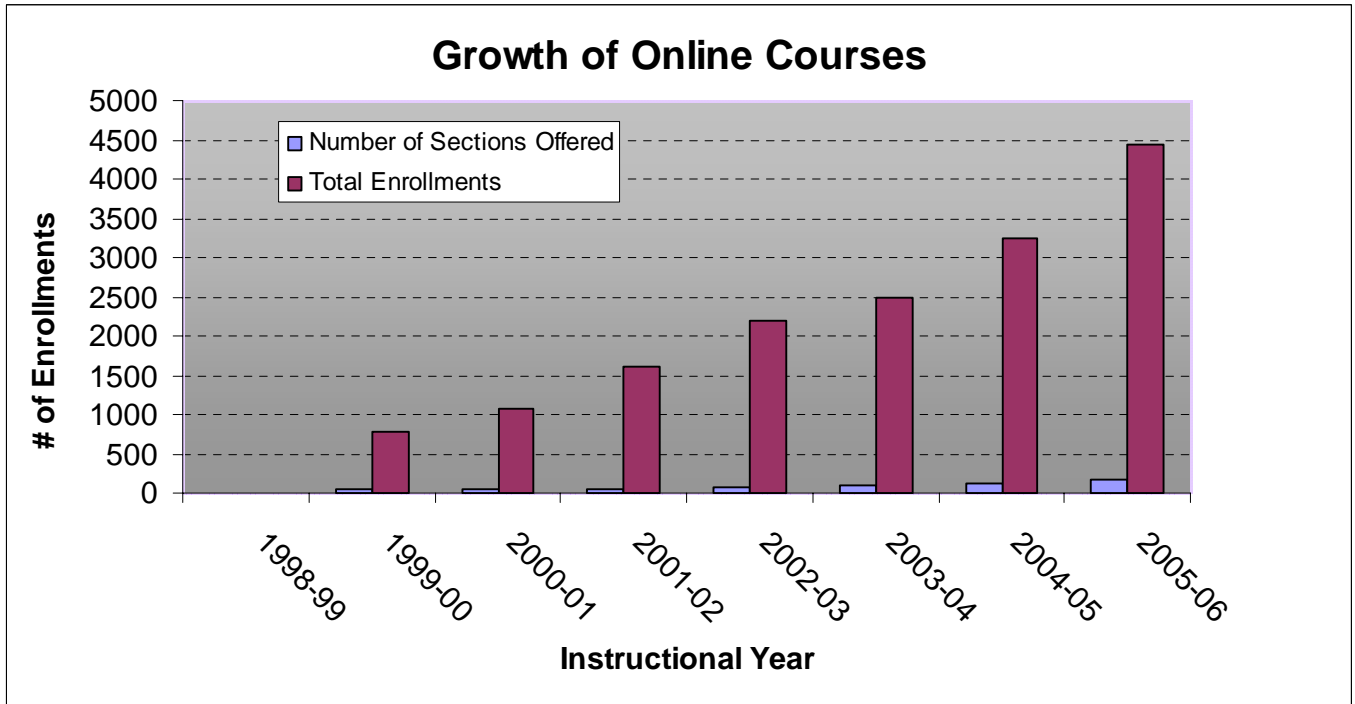
### **Findings and Recommendations**

2005-2006 was a stellar year for Ohlone College's Distance Education program. Enrollment in distance education courses increased nearly 40% from 2004-2005. Additionally the number of new courses offered online and the number of faculty offering either fully online or web-enhanced courses increased significantly over prior years. Furthermore these increases reflect recognition of students and faculty of the important role of distance education at Ohlone College as a vital means to increase student access to educational opportunities.

However while we acknowledge the important growth (**See Appendix A**) that we have experienced in our distance education program, we also have to acknowledge that there is still room for improvement. A review of the student success data for the distance education program for academic years 2002-2005 reveal marginal levels of improvement, (**See Appendix B**). In noting this we acknowledge that there can be multiple factors that contribute to the reported findings. This point notwithstanding, we feel that there are opportunities to improve the effectiveness of our distance education program. Specific recommendations for program improvement include the following:

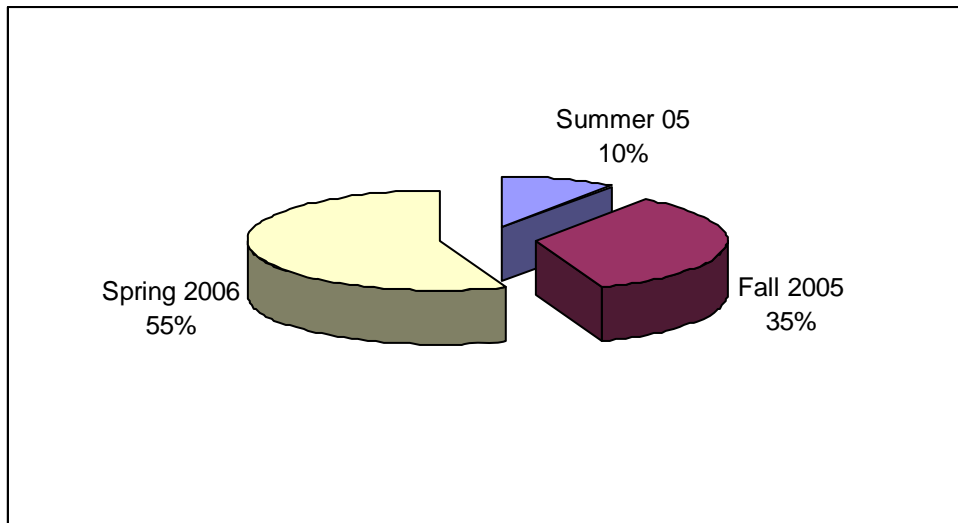
- Implement standards for Quality in Online Education by adopting a "*Rubric for Online Instruction*".
- Expand training for faculty on strategies for quality in online teaching and learning, active and collaborative learning methodologies; project based learning and other research based methodologies that have the potential to increase student success rates.
- Plan, and implement a team approach for the development and production of online courses for online AA degrees and certificates.

## Appendix A



### Web-Enhanced Sections

Summer 05	Fall 2005	Spring 2006
29	105	168



## Appendix B

### Retention and Student Success Data

	2002-03			2003-04			2004-05		
Student Success Data	Summer	Fall	Spring	Summer	Fall	Spring	Summer	Fall	Spring
% Retention	83	72	76	77	79	77	83	74	79
% Success	66	58	65	68	65	64	76	59	66