2009 – 2010

Institutional Effectiveness Review

Online Program

Steering Committee Members:

Linda Bigelow – Dean, Learning Resources – Chair
Shirley Dubman – Division Chair, Communication & Arts
Sandy Frey – Director, Center for Teaching & Learning
Chris Grewe – Faculty, Business Management
Amy Kausler – Faculty, Psychology
Terry Kite – Faculty, Teacher Education
Amy McKenna-Jones – Administrative Assistant, Learning Resources
Cindy Rossi – Faculty, Business Management
Mindy Selsor – Dean, Arts & Sciences / CAO
Allan Wamsley – Director, Instructional Support Center

Online Program
Institutional Effectiveness Review

The purpose of the review is to:

Enhance the quality of the online program by taking a holistic look at the program for the following purposes:

- Determine if the breadth of offerings is meeting current needs
- Verify that processes and procedures for ensuring course rigor and consistency have not eroded over time
- Update processes and procedures as needed
- Review and revise course development guidelines as needed
- Identify issues and concerns and develop strategies to address them

The process will involve the following steps:

- Activate an Online Institutional Effectiveness Review Steering Committee to provide oversight for the process and develop recommendations
- Research and review guidelines and best practices and identify how these are applied at Jefferson College
- Assess the currency, scope, strengths, weaknesses and needs of the online program
- Survey faculty, staff, and students to determine ways of improving the program
- Obtain internal data from Institutional Research & Planning Department
- Prepare report of findings and recommendations

Time frames/timeline for the review will be:

Online Program – April 2010

Program/Service: Online Program
Date of Review: April 2010
Review Participants: Online IER Steering Committee, Director of Research and Planning

Overview

Purpose of the program/service and how it relates to college mission, values, vision:

The online program at Jefferson College supports the mission of the college by "providing an accessible, quality college experience as it strives to meet the diverse needs of the students and the community."

The vision and purpose of the online program is to provide alternative methods of delivery of credit courses that will provide students with the flexibility they need to meet their educational needs. In today's society, students want to be able to use instructional technologies and resources to make education accessible for them. The online program utilizes these technologies and provides not only a wide variety of general education courses leading to Associate of Arts and Associate of Arts in Teaching degrees, but also Career and Technical Education courses in such areas as Business Information Technology and Business Management.

Jefferson College is committed to providing online courses that maintain the quality of their on-campus counterparts and providing the support services needed for faculty and students to be successful.

Institutional Effectiveness Review

Present Status

Learning/Service and Action from 2004 Institutional Effectiveness Review:

Learning/Service Goal	Assessment Measurement/ Action	Person(s) to Implement	Timeframe	Resource Implications	Status
PROGRAM REVIEW **Goal 1** Faculty members will remedy problems identified for courses where recommendations were made for improvement and prepare a follow-up report.	Problems remedied and report completed	Faculty, Dean, Academic Affairs Ad Hoc Committee	2005	None	Conferences with faculty were conducted by Division Chairs and Deans. This is an ongoing effort.
Goal 2 Online courses should be reviewed within their discipline group as a part of the five-year program review cycle.	Institutional Effectiveness Review Process	Deans, Division Chairs, faculty	Ongoing	None	This is an ongoing process overseen by the Division Chairs and Deans.
NEW COURSE DEVELOPMENT **Goal 3** Faculty who want to develop an online course should first discuss the proposal with the faculty within their program and with the appropriate Dean.	Discussions with faculty, Division Chairs, and Deans	Faculty, Deans, Division Chairs	Ongoing	None	This has been put into practice as the initial step in the course development process.
Goal 4 For information purposes, the Chair of the Academic Affairs Committee should receive a copy of the approval form when a new distance learning course is being developed.	Communication with the Chair of Academic Affairs	Deans	Ongoing	None	This has been put into practice.
Goal 5 Academic Affairs will establish an ad hoc committee to review new online courses as they are developed.	Actions of the Academic Affairs ad hoc committees.	Chair of Academic Affairs	Ongoing	None	The work of the Academic Affairs ad hoc committees is ongoing. The committees' evaluations of each new course are sent to the Division Chairs and Deans for follow-up as needed.
TRAINING **Goal 6** Regular opportunities for training in technical areas	Training offered by ISAC in both	ISAC	Ongoing	ISAC staff time	ISAC and the CTL collaborate to offer

	group and one-on-one settings				workshops addressing technical and pedagogical best practices and innovations in one-on-one settings and in group workshops. In addition, they have instituted the *Faculty Certification for Online and Hybrid Courses program.*
OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS **Goal 7** Waitlists should not be maintained for online courses since most are late-starting classes.	Waitlists discontinued for online courses	Registrar	Ongoing	None	Waitlists for online have been discontinued. Student needs are being met with additional online sections.
Goal 8 Students who enroll in online courses must score at or above college level reading scores because these courses are heavily dependent upon the reading skill of the student.	No action taken	Deans, Academic Affairs	None	None	No action taken.
Goal 9 Online courses should continue to be assigned to experienced, well-qualified faculty.	Full-time faculty assigned online courses as much as possible. Adjunct faculty teaching online courses are experienced and endorsed by faculty in the program.	Division Chairs, Deans, Faculty, ISAC and CTL	Ongoing	None	The *Faculty Certification for Online and Hybrid Courses* program was implemented Fall 2009 and continues. This training is required for full-time faculty new to online/hybrid and adjunct faculty interested in online/hybrid teaching.
Goal 10 Terminology referring to tele-web and online distance learning courses should be combined under one heading – online courses.	This action taken	Deans, Registrar	Ongoing	None	This was accomplished.
Goal 11 Documentation and forms associated with distance learning should be revised and updated to reflect the new nomenclature and the revision of processes for developing new distance learning courses.	This action taken	Dean of Learning Resources	Ongoing	None	This was accomplished as well as developing definitions for online and hybrid.

Innovative Changes (in last 5 years):

Since the 2004 Online Program Institutional Effectiveness Review, a number of changes have occurred that have had an impact on the Online Program.

- Jefferson College received HLC approval for offering an online Associate of Arts Degree.
- Most of the recommendations made as a result of the 2004 review were implemented.
- The online program has grown dramatically:
  - The number of online courses and sections available has more than tripled since 2004.
  - Over half of the new courses developed have been in the Career and Technical Education division and the Education department.
  - A snapshot of online courses for Spring 2010 showed that online courses accounted for 20% of the total headcount, 12% of the enrollments (seat count), and generated over 7,300 credit hours, which equates to 13% of the total credit hours generated for the semester.
  - The number of faculty teaching online courses has nearly doubled to cover the increased number of sections of courses offered.
- The schedule of online courses located on STARS has been enhanced to provide more descriptive information about the courses to assist students and advisors in selecting their programs of study.
- Rubrics were drafted to address guidelines and best practices for developing and implementing online courses.
- The staff in the Instructional Support Center and the Center for Teaching and Learning have collaborated to develop required certification training for full-time faculty new to online/hybrid instruction and adjunct faculty interested in online/hybrid teaching.
- Hybrid courses have been added as a course delivery option.
- Help Desk services were added to cover evenings and weekends.
- Blackboard was implemented as the learning management system for online course delivery.
- Support services, such as the Library, ARC, registration, and the Bookstore, provide additional resources and services online.

Faculty/Staff (Degree to which faculty/staff are qualified, effective, and supported.)

Qualifications

Faculty members who teach online courses are well-qualified and must meet the same academic qualification standards as faculty who teach on campus. They also follow the same patterns of evaluation as on-campus faculty.

Because online teaching does require additional skill sets to be effective in the online environment, training opportunities are provided to assist faculty in identifying and developing these skills.

New courses continue to be developed primarily by full-time faculty. While most online courses continue to be taught by full-time faculty, the growth in the number of sections offered requires that well-qualified adjunct faculty be added to the mix. One issue facing the recruitment of adjunct faculty is the comparatively low rate of pay for adjunct faculty at Jefferson College.

Assessment

Multiple methods are used to assess and improve online courses.
- New courses are reviewed for interactivity, integrity, and correlation of content and objectives to on-campus courses by a subcommittee of Academic Affairs. The results and recommendations are forwarded to the appropriate Dean and Division Chair for review. The Division Chair then shares the findings with the originating faculty member and follows up to see that agreed-upon changes have been incorporated.

  One concern expressed in the surveys and interviews conducted for this review was that a more formal framework for policies and processes is needed to administer quality online course development and instruction.

- An online student evaluation component is included for each online course. The responses are tabulated and distributed to the Division Chairs and the appropriate faculty for their use in continued course improvement.

- Online courses are reviewed individually at the time of the appropriate department's five-year institutional effectiveness review.

  A concern expressed was that five years is too long between individual course reviews. More frequent oversight and evaluation of online courses should provide more timely adjustments in methodologies, use of technology, and content by faculty.

Data Review

At the request of the Online Program IER Steering Committee, the Office of Research and Planning collected data for analysis for the period Summer 2006 through Spring 2009. The data was intended to answer the same questions asked during the 2004 review and yielded the following results:

- What does a snapshot of the online course data reveal?
  - The overall success rate (grades A, B, C) in online courses is lower than in face-to-face courses (66% versus 71%)
  - The overall attrition rate is higher (14% versus 9%)
  - Overall grade point average differences are negligible (2.54 versus 2.58)
  - The range for student success for online courses was 49% - 83%.

- o The range for student success in similar face-to-face courses was 55% - 87%.
- How do online courses compare with similar classroom-based courses?
  - o Of the 80 online courses included, about 60% showed same as, better than, or within 10 percentage points of the same success rate as similar on-campus courses.
  - o The remaining 40% showed a lower success rate than their on-campus counterparts, sometimes substantially lower.
- What are the characteristics of online students?
  - o A comparison of online student characteristics for Fall 2008 compared to Fall 2003 showed the following:
    - Similar gender distribution (29% male, 71% female in current range)
    - Larger percentage of online students are younger (38% versus 17% less than 21 years of age)
    - Larger percentage of online students less well-prepared academically on the ACT (26% versus 19% with ACT composite score less than 18)
    - Similar geographic distribution (78% from Jefferson County)
    - Increase in student enrollments in online courses of over 2 ½ times since Fall of 2003.
    - More full-time students taking online courses along with their on-campus courses.

This data was useful in developing the recommendations in this report and will be shared with the individual faculty members and the appropriate Division Chairs.

Support Services for Faculty

Several support services are in place to assist faculty in developing, implementing, and sustaining their online courses.

The **Division Chairs** provide course development approval, course and faculty evaluations, and staffing for online and hybrid courses.

The **Instructional Support Center (ISAC)** staff provides assistance in course development, instructional design assistance, training and support on Blackboard and other instructional technologies both in groups and one-on-one, Help Desk assistance via phone and STARS tab, and collaboration with CTL staff to provide certification for online teaching.

The **Center for Teaching and Learning** staff works collaboratively with ISAC staff to provide training in instructional design, course development, and effective pedagogy and best practices for online and hybrid instruction. The CTL staff, at the request of Division Chairs, evaluates individual adjunct instructors who teach online, provides a forum for faculty to share ideas and best practices, and maintains an online teaching tab on STARS.

The **Academic Computing and Administrative Computing** departments provide the technology support needed for course delivery including Blackboard, Banner, and STARS.

Student Services staff provides online registration, advising, maintenance of the course schedules online, and assistance through referrals for student intervention to the Advising and Retention Center (ARC).

The **Library** provides online databases and services to support the research needs of students enrolled in online courses, provides library use instruction to online students, and maintains an online link on STARS and the Library web site.

The **Learning Center** provides proctored testing services, certifies off-site testing sites for students enrolled in online courses, offers tutoring services, and provides Disability Support Services for students with documented disabilities.

The **Bookstore** provides for online ordering of textbooks.

The **Learning Resources Office** provides administrative support for online courses, including licensing of video materials for online and hybrid courses, coordinating scheduling of orientations, compiling on-campus course requirement information for the course schedule and for advisors, tracking enrollment statistics, mailing information to online students each semester, and updating general online student information for the Online Course web page.

An online survey was sent via email to all faculty teaching online courses. Of the 52 faculty surveys distributed, 35 responses were received. While most were complimentary of the level of support received from the ISC and the Help Desk, some areas for additional support were noted, including:
- Providing additional training – ways to present material, ways of sharing/promoting good strategies or innovations throughout the year, required yearly updates and training
- Establishing process for screening and remediation for required technology skills for students
- Providing 24/7 instructor and student phone support.

Students/Constituents (The degree to which student/constituent needs are met.)

Students have embraced the online program as a desirable method of course delivery. Online course sections have a high fill-rate and students clamor for more.

An updated snapshot of online student characteristics showed some interesting data. Of the 1,500 students taking online courses in Spring 2010, 355 (24%) were *only* taking online courses that semester. Of the remaining online students, 64% were also taking additional courses at one other Jefferson College site, and 13% were taking courses at two other Jefferson College sites.

Students are provided with an opportunity to evaluate each of their online courses through an online evaluation form each semester. The results are tabulated and forwarded to the appropriate Division Chairs and faculty for their use in evaluating and enhancing online courses.

For purposes of this review, the Office of Research and Planning sent a survey to all students enrolled in online courses during the Spring 2009 semester. The responses were analyzed to identify areas of student satisfaction and concerns about the online program.

Of those responding, 84% were sufficiently satisfied with their online courses that they agreed or strongly agreed that they would recommend online courses at Jefferson College to another student. They especially appreciated the convenience and flexibility of online courses.

The issues they had with online courses generally fell into these categories:
- Timeliness of feedback from instructors
- Difficulties with technology (outages, lack of access to high-speed Internet)
- Consistency in how courses are set up
- Need for more (quantity and variety) online course offerings.

Also for purposes of this review, the Center for Teaching and Learning staff conducted a phone survey of students who withdrew from online courses during the Spring 2009 semester. Half of the students cited job and/or personal reasons for withdrawing. The overwhelming majority of students indicated that there was nothing Jefferson College could have done to help them complete the course. Many of the students indicated that they liked being able to learn where and when they wanted and liked being able to stay with their children while they learned.

While basic support services are in place to support online students, consideration needs to be given to ways of expanding those support services that will increase the success rates of students taking online courses. The HLC recommendation to look at developing the online program into a fourth campus suggests centralizing such services as advising and other support areas under an "online" umbrella.

One major concern identified was the need for students to better understand their responsibilities when taking online courses (technical requirements, basic computer skills, time commitment, and so forth). Students also need more information about the nature of online courses prior to registration so that they can make better decisions on whether they are ready for the online environment. Students also need additional support services to help with retention and success in their online courses (tutoring, math lab, writing lab, tutorials for Blackboard and computer literacy).

Curriculum/Services (The degree to which curriculum/services are thorough, current, and supported.)

Jefferson College offers a broad array of online courses in multiple subject areas. Deans, Division Chairs and faculty review their programs and identify additional course offerings suitable for online delivery as well as identify online courses that are no longer relevant to the curriculum. Since the 2004 review, all distance learning courses have been converted to online courses. Over 60 new online courses have been developed and 10 existing courses were reviewed and withdrawn from the schedule. There are currently 96 online courses on the master list, including 18 in the Communications/Arts Division, 9 in the Math/Science Division, 41 in the

Social Sciences Division, and 28 in the Career & Technical Education Division. These numbers continue to grow each semester.

Concerns that have been expressed concerning curriculum relate to:

- Course design/re-design
  - Incorporation of best practices/rubrics
  - Consistency across multiple sections
  - Methods of ensuring academic integrity
  - Promoting academic honesty
  - Consistent format
  - Ease of transition of teaching online courses among faculty

- Basic computer literacy skills needed for academic courses

Once again, a move toward establishing online as a fourth campus suggests centralizing support for curriculum design, development, and implementation, putting into place policies and procedures that will help faculty incorporate best practices for the online environment.

Community (The degree to which the program contributes to the community and responds to community needs)

As reported earlier, the Spring 2010 snapshot of online courses shows that a significant number of students are taking online courses only (24%). Online is an alternative delivery system which allows the College to reach a population of students who can't come on campus. Online also serves as a way for on-campus students to add credit hours to their course load.

One issue that was identified was the need to take advantage of online courses as a way to reach out to targeted populations such as dual credit students, returning students, homebound, workforce development, and other underserved populations.

A second issue is the limited availability of high speed internet connections in Jefferson County for accessing online courses. The College is currently working with community leaders to explore ways of bringing broadband access to the County.

Cost

The costs involved in offering the online program include such direct costs as the course development stipend for new courses, faculty salaries, and course license fees. Income derived from online courses is based on tuition plus an online course fee. A review of FY2009-2010 direct costs and income showed that online courses are both cost-effective and self-sustaining.

Summary (SWOT)

Strengths	Weaknesses
- Demand for online courses is high and growing. - ISC and CTL staff effectively support online instruction. - Experienced and committed online faculty members provide quality online instruction and are willing to share expertise. - A broad range of online courses are offered in both Arts & Sciences and in Career & Technology. - An online Arts & Sciences associate's degree has been approved by the HLC. - Required initial and ongoing faculty training is provided to ensure quality instruction which reflects most recent and effective technologies and pedagogy.	- A more formal framework of policies and processes is needed to administer quality online course development and instruction. - More frequent oversight and evaluation of online instruction is needed to ensure positive learning experiences for students and to provide more timely adjustments in methodologies, use of technology, and content. - Students don't always know or understand expectations required in online courses. - The "look" and navigation of online courses is not consistent, causing student confusion. - System outages, and communication about planned outages, are a problem for both students and faculty. - Low success rates in online courses in some areas are of particular concern.
Opportunities	**Threats**
- Online courses could provide outreach opportunities to specific populations such as dual credit, returning students, students with disabilities, homebound, workforce development, elderly, and incarcerated. - New technologies can be incorporated into online teaching. - Online courses can build capacity by increasing credit hours generated without adding to facilities costs. - Expansion of hybrid courses could ease space availability issues and provide another instructional delivery option. - As suggested in the HLC assurances, it may be a good time to consider steps toward setting up the online program as a "4th campus."	- Proprietary schools are able to make decisions quickly, market online courses widely, provide flexibility in scheduling, and pay instructors well. - Adjunct pay is not competitive. - Many parts of Jefferson County do not have high speed Internet access.

Future

Proposed Learning and Service Goals and Action Plan

Proposed Learning/Service Goal	*Proposed Assessment Measurement/ Action*	*Person(s) to Implement*	*Timeframe*	*Resource Implications*
FACULTY **Goal 1** Develop quality standards and expectations for faculty teaching online and hybrid courses to include curriculum development, certification, evaluation, and professional development.	Form a faculty/staff task force to review and make recommendations for quality standards (and examine applicability to all courses).	CAO, Deans, Division Chairs, faculty, staff	Academic Year 2010-2011	Faculty and staff time
	Work with Academic Affairs to update the document used by Academic Affairs to evaluate the instructional design of individual online courses.	CAO, Directors of ISC and CTL, Chair of Academic Affairs	Academic Year 2010-201l	Staff time
	Provide certification and ongoing professional development training for all faculty teaching online and hybrid courses each semester and as needed.	CAO, Deans, Division Chairs, ISC and CTL staff	Ongoing	Staff time
	Develop a supplemental hybrid-specific module for the Certification of Online and Hybrid Courses training.	CTL and ISC staff	Academic Year 2010-2011	Staff time
	Support faculty with ongoing workshops and one-on-one training as needed.	ISC and CTL staff	Ongoing	Staff time
	Create and implement a process to review online instruction more frequently to allow for more timely adjustments in methodologies, use of technology, and content.	CAO, Deans, Division Chairs, Directors of ISC and CTL	Academic Year 2010-2011	Staff time, possible additional ISC/CTL staff
	Explore professional development options for certification training as they relate to CTE faculty training and DESE requirements.	CAO, Director of ISC and CTE Dean/Division Chair	Academic Year 2010-2011	Staff time
STUDENTS **Goal 2** Improve student orientation for online courses by clarifying expectations and increasing student awareness of responsibilities.	Develop an online literacy training module to download into each course for students to complete as part of orientation process. Include such elements as computer literacy requirements (posting,	ISC and CTL staff, online faculty	Fall 2010	Staff and faculty time

	attachments, etc.) and online course expectations.			
	Explore incorporating technical skills needed to succeed in online courses into COL 101.	CAO, ISC Director, ISC and CTL staff, COL 101 Advisory Committee	Academic Year 2010-2011	Staff time and COL 101 instructor training
	Reduce system outages and improve communications about scheduled outages.	ISC staff, Administrative Computing staff	Fall 2010	Staff time
	Improve web site for online courses through such enhancements as adding a FAQ section, putting sample courses on the web, and adding course syllabi.	ISC and CTL staff, Webmaster	Academic Year 2010-2011	Staff time
CURRICULUM **Goal 3** Develop a plan for growth of the online program and support course development consistent with the plan.	Increase capacity.	CAO, Deans, Division Chairs, Faculty, ISC and CTL Directors	Academic Year 2010-2011	Faculty and staff time, additional adjunct faculty salaries
	Seek HLC approval for additional degrees.	CAO, Deans, ISC Director	Ongoing	Staff time
Goal 4 Assure online course development reflects approved quality standards.	Consistently apply policies and procedures created for the development, implementation, and ongoing evaluation of online courses.	CAO, Deans, Division Chairs, Faculty, ISC and CTL Directors	Academic Year 2010-2011	Faculty and staff time
SUPPORT SERVICES **Goal 5** Expand and improve support services for students taking online and hybrid courses and for staff teaching those courses.	Develop a Student Support module to download into each course for students to complete as part of orientation process. Include such elements as access to and use of the Library, Student Services, bookstore, Help Desk, etc.	ISC and CTL staff, Support Services staff, online faculty	Academic Year 2010-2011	Staff time
	Develop Online Tutoring services.	Division Chairs, Faculty, Learning Center staff	Spring 2011	Faculty and staff time
	Explore expanding availability of support services for students and faculty.	ISC Director, Support Services staff.	Academic Year 2010-2011	Staff time, possible additional staff
Goal 6 Explore concept of online as a 4th campus.	Research components to be in place to implement this concept (systems, policies and procedures, administrative structure, budget, etc.).	CAO, ISC Director, administrators, faculty, CTL Director	Academic Year 2010-2011	Staff time

OUTREACH & MARKETING **Goal 7** Provide outreach and marketing to specific populations.	Identify targeted populations who would benefit from the availability of the online/hybrid program, such as returning students, and market the program to them.	Deans, Division Chairs, ISC and CTL Directors, PR/Marketing Director	Academic Year 2010-2011	Faculty and staff time Marketing funds
	Provide the student online literacy and expectations training module and/or workshops to prepare students in the targeted populations for the online environment.	ISC and CTL staff	Academic Year 2010-2011	Faculty and staff time

DISCIPLINE STATUS

    X   Satisfactory
_____ Requires Immediate Attention
_____ Unsatisfactory

Linda Bigelow_____ April 2, 2010_____
Dean   Date