

Request for Institutional Change

Application for Approval of Institutional Change

In 1992, Mott Community College applied to NCA for a change in its institutional status to permit the College to offer Associate Degree programs via telecourses. In April 1993, NCA changed Mott Community College's Statement of Affiliation Status to allow the College to offer degrees via telecourses. The College is now requesting a further change in the SAS and asking that evaluation for approval of that change be included in this comprehensive evaluation. At the time of the previous comprehensive evaluation, MCC was offering courses via television, but at that time, the College had no degree programs available entirely by distance learning. Indeed, the phrase "distance learning" was not generally used, as distance education was generally delivered by video, print, or audio means.

Since then, technology has changed and diversified, especially with the enormous growth of the Internet and the World Wide Web. The College has been actively involved in developing distance learning courseware and opportunities, and this request, essentially, is for an institutional change that would delete the word "telecourses" from the SAS and replace it with "distance learning," thus allowing Mott Community College to offer degree programs using other distance learning modalities in addition to telecourses. Most notably, MCC wishes to offer web-based and other on-line degree programs, and we believe we have the resources, experience, expertise, institutional support, and commitment necessary to do so effectively.

In preparing this chapter, MCC staff and the self-study coordinators have consulted Chapter 12, "Institutional Change," in the *Handbook of Accreditation* carefully, along with "Guidelines for Distance Learning" appended to it as a Chapter Reference. We believe the following information responds to all the items in the chapter and addresses all the issues relevant to the request for the institutional change. It is our hope that the chapter presents a comprehensive view of what MCC has done in distance learning and what we believe we can do.

Mott Community College's Mission was revised in the early 1990s and is discussed extensively in Chapter Four of this self-study report. The College

believes that distance learning does not in any way violate the College's mission, but instead fits with the overall mission and enhances the school's ability to fulfill it. Distance learning at MCC has its own mission, and this chapter begins with a discussion of what it states and how it relates to the College's overall purposes.

Mission

The current mission statement expressed in the 1997/2000 Distance Learning Three Year Strategic Development Plan simply affirms:

The Mission of distance learning at Mott Community College is to make educational programs more accessible.

The word "programs" in Mott's distance learning mission statement expresses two purposes. For the first ten years, we offered distance learning courses that were valuable to students who were taking campus-based programs. Our distance learning offerings continue to serve that important purpose. But now, with College in the Workplace, we offer complete, campus-free, degree programs by distance learning. This refocusing of our mission on programs, as opposed to courses, presents MCC a greater challenge and has taken distance learning to a higher level of integration within the curriculum of the College.

In 1992, when we first contemplated the possibility of offering a complete Associate Degree by distance learning, the Telecourse Advisory Committee reviewed the idea and recommended it to the Vice President for Academic Affairs. The administration took the proposal under consideration and eventually developed a budget plan and proposed College in the Workplace to the Board of Trustees.

Relevance to the College's mission was an issue addressed by faculty, administration, and trustees. At first glance, in 1992, it seemed beyond the scope of a community college's mission to offer courses in another community college district, let alone statewide or nationally. But, after discussion and reflection, College staff agreed that, in an era of distance learning, a community of interest could be defined that was not limited by geographic boundaries but rather based on specific curricular interests. In Mott's case, a curriculum area of special interest, historically, is educational services to manufacturing employers and employees.

Mott's College in the Workplace program is marketed to employees of manufacturing companies throughout Michigan and in several other states. By focusing the CWP program on one industry, manufacturing, the curriculum may be tailored to the mutual needs of employees and employers in manufacturing, enhancing the value of our program to the manufacturing community, including the community of manufacturing employers and employees in our own College's district. Conversely, many of the manufacturing companies in our district are regional, national, or even international corporations that regularly transfer employees from state to state and internationally. Distance learning at MCC allow those employees to continue their programs regardless of where they may be moved.

The manufacturing community is Mott's traditional constituency. For decades Mott's apprenticeship programs and our technology curricula have served the needs of employees in the manufacturing industry. Manufacturing has been the dominant industry in Flint for more than a century. Flint was a manufacturing center even before it became the birthplace of General Motors. Flint, located as it is in the industrial corridor that stretches from Saginaw to Toledo is centrally placed in one of the world's greatest concentrations of manufacturing enterprises. Taken together with the manufacturing corridor that reaches from Chicago to Pittsburgh, we serve the largest and most advanced industrial manufacturing community in the world. While a community college's distance learning program may serve students far beyond its geographical boundaries, that larger extended community should be an extension of the college's traditional community. The College in the Workplace program is, therefore, complementary to the historical constituency of Mott Community College.

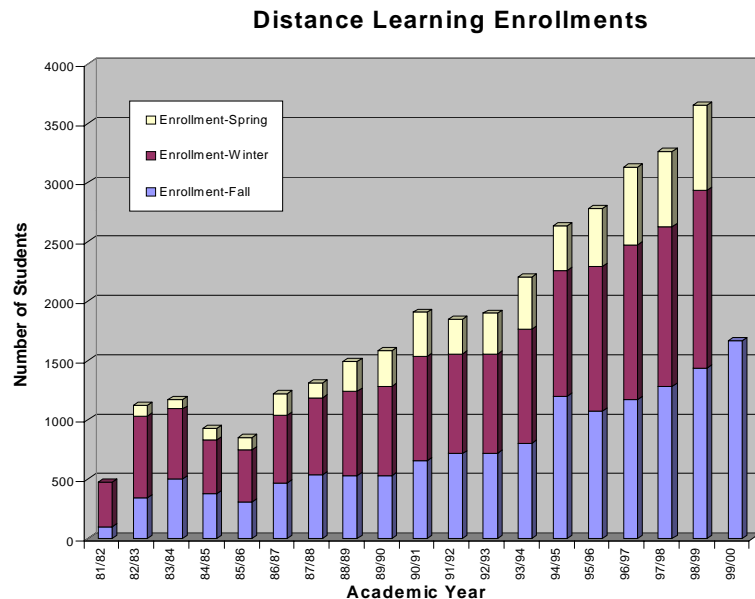
Indeed, because MCC accommodates the needs of distance learning students in other manufacturing locations, the College is able to offer curricula locally when local enrollment alone might not be sufficient to make programs viable. Thus, in-district students and employers benefit directly from CWP being able to draw students from elsewhere.

History

In order to make college courses more accessible to our students, Mott, like many community colleges, began offering telecourse in the early 1980's. In the fall of 1981, MCC offered its first two telecourses. We had 99 enrollments; we were hooked. Eighteen years later, in the fall semester of 1999, Mott offered 55 distance learning courses and had 1721 enrollments. Mott Community College students have demonstrated consistently, over time, that

they value the convenience and flexibility of having a distance learning option.

In the first ten years of Mott Community College’s distance learning program, the College offered courses but no degrees entirely through distance learning. In those years the distance learning program consisted of offering courses for the *convenience* of students taking campus based programs. The telecourse offerings enabled busy students to adjust their course schedule to other, perhaps higher priorities in their lives, such as job and family. Often, schedule *convenience* translated into a student being able to take two classes instead of one, or three instead of two. The *value* of that convenience was, and remains, that a part-time student can reduce by semesters or even years, the time taken to complete a degree or achieve his or her educational objective. The steady growth in enrollments over the past 19 years, as illustrated in the bar graph below, documents the value of distance learning to our student community.



A new phase in Mott Community College’s distance learning program began in 1992 when we undertook to offer video tape based distance learning courses to employees of manufacturing companies through their employers. In partnership with a local engineering school, Kettering University, MCC submitted a grant proposal to the Kellogg Foundation for funds to support joint production of television courses for the purpose of providing an undergraduate degree to employees in automobile manufacturing plants. At that

time, Kettering University already offered a Master's Degree in Engineering Management by video tape to salaried employees at GM plants in several states.

The partnership with Kettering did not work out, but Mott Community College decided to pursue the plan alone. One lesson we learned immediately: employers would require us to offer a complete degree by distance learning before they would include Mott in their tuition reimbursement programs. And, secondly, there is a corollary to that lesson which we also understood from the beginning: MCC would have to be able to produce its own distance learning courses in order to be able to provide complete degrees consistent with Mott's curriculum requirements. The challenge of meeting these two conditions led Mott faculty and administration to thoroughly re-think and re-invent our distance learning program.

The following chronology outlines some of the highlights in the development of the distance learning program at Mott Community College:

- | | |
|-----------|---|
| 1981 | Mott offered its first two telecourses in the fall semester. |
| 1983 | At the insistence of the Telecourse Advisory Committee, the first full-time support position for distance learning was created: the position of Telecourse Staff Assistant. |
| 1984 | The first continuous enrollment (open-entry, open-exit) offerings |
| 1985 | Mott began programming the educational access cable channel with about 55 hours per week of telecourses. This service was discontinued after six years. |
| 1986 | A separate testing center for telecourse students was established in the library. |
| 1989 | The first telecourse, Basic Math 021, was produced by a Mott instructor, Karen Sharp. |
| 1990-1994 | A series of 4 grants were received to build the FANET (Flint Area Network for Educational Telecommunications) fiber optic network to provide interactive television and other distance learning activities. |

- 1992-1994 College in the Workplace program was piloted at three manufacturing plants to offer Associate Degrees entirely by distance learning.
- 1992 Mott applied for and received approval from the North Central Association to offer an Associate Degree entirely by distance learning (telecourses).
- 1994 The FANET Consortium is formally organized: Mott, U of M-Flint, Kettering University, Baker College, and the Genesee Intermediate School District (GISD). Mott is the fiscal agent and managing partner.
- 1994 Mott Community College was selected by PBS to be one of twenty community Colleges nation-wide to be in their “Going the Distance Program,” a program to study the potential for offering complete Associates Degrees by distance learning (telecourses).
- 1994 The decision is made to make College in the Workplace a permanent MCC program. Position of Distance Learning Coordinator created to oversee the program, and Lori France is hired to fill the position.
- 1995 Two-way interactive classroom instruction begins between the main campus and SLBC.
- 1995 First on-line course is offered at Mott: English 101, created by Steve Robinson, MCC English Instructor.
- 1996 *Standards and Practices for Distance Learning Faculty* formally recommended by CPSC and approved by the President.
- 1996 In June a DACUM process is used to define and launch an on-going distance learning professional development program.
- 1997 Distance Learning Assessment Task Force is established to develop strategies to measure student satisfaction, teacher satisfaction, and learner outcomes. The Task Force’s work is completed in the Fall of 1998.

- 1997 MCC hired a full time web/multimedia developer.
- 1998 MCC hired a full time instructional designer, Elaine Winters.
- 1998 Mott's first College in the Workplace graduate is Gail Spears. Gail enrolled in the Fall of 1992, took 79 credit hours - all by distance learning and all from Mott. She is the first graduate in the nation of the PBS Going the Distance Program.
- 1998 Major investments in production infrastructure are made: an Avid off-line digital video editing suite is added to the TV facility; a second production studio is added, and a new larger production server and a development server are acquired for developing and hosting websites.
- 1999 Intellectual Property Agreement successfully negotiated between the College and the MCCEA spelling out ownership and rights to courseware produced at Mott Community College by Mott faculty. This section of the faculty contract is included in the Appendices. The entire contract (along with all other labor agreements) is in the Resource Room.

As the chronology above indicated, since Mott received approval to offer degrees by distance learning in 1992, distance learning has changed substantially, and Mott's program has matured into a large and diverse program. Employers and students expect distance learning providers to offer on-line, web-based courses and programs. We have added web-based Internet delivery and two other important delivery modes to our program options: two-way interactive television and PC/Text delivery. In the balance of this chapter we will describe the planning, resources, support activities, quality measures and professional development effort Mott has made to build a comprehensive distance learning program. These developments and the continued growth in our program are the reason we are requesting the change in status from approval to delivery degrees by *telecourses* to approval for delivering degree by *distance learning* generally.

Planning

Mott Community College's distance learning program has been guided by three major planning events.

- The first one was the original CPSC study committee's work between 1981 and 1983 which recommended the establishing of a "telecourse program" and prepared a five-year plan to launch the program. A copy of the original 1981 study and Implementation Plan is included in the Distance Learning Documents File in the Resource room. (See faculty oversight, below.)
- In 1991/92 a College in the Workplace development plan was prepared that focused on projecting the revenue and expenditure budget for offering a campus-free degree program to manufacturing employees through their employers. This plan, which attempted to anticipate all costs and revenues, has been regularly updated. A copy of this plan is in the Distance Learning Documents Notebook in the NCA Resource Room.
- The *1997/98 to 2000/03 Distance Learning Five-Year Development Program*, prepared in 1997, is the plan we are currently working within. A copy of this plan is also included in the Distance Learning Documents Notebook in the Resource Room. A subset of this plan, titled the *1997/2000 Three Year Strategic Development Plan*, is the plan currently in effect. The latest restatement of Mott Community College's distance learning mission, goals and objectives is contained in this document.

The current five year strategic plan was developed in 1996/97 by the Technology Steering Committee composed of faculty and support staff from three standing committees. Those standing committees were the Distance Learning Advisory Subcommittee (DLAS), the Academic Computing Subcommittee (ACS), and the Committee for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL), a committee concerned with professional development for faculty. This plan will be renewed during the 1999/2000 academic year. Six of the objectives (1,2,3,5,6, and 7) have been completely or substantially achieved. Two of the objectives (8 and 9) have not been achieved and will not be fulfilled in the time frame. The three remaining objectives(4,10, and 11) are partly achieved and may be completed in the time frame.

Goals and Objectives of Mott Community College's Distance Learning Plan
1997/98 – 1999/2000:

Goals

- To offer complete degree and certificate programs and non-credit training.
- To define a community of learners by the learners' needs rather than geographic location.
- To empower teachers to use communications technologies to develop and deliver courses and programs.
- Deliver 10% of the total credit hours generated by Mott through distance learning

Strategic Objectives:

1. Add new degree and certificate programs
2. Articulate Mott's programs with distance learning baccalaureate programs
3. Implement a plan for distance learning course and program assessment
4. Make Mott the regional leader in professional development for distance learning educators
5. Implement a professional development plan for distance learning educators
6. Develop an Intellectual Property Policy
7. Double Mott's capacity for courseware production
8. Achieve 1500 CWP enrollments by 2000
9. Extend FANET Fiber to Lapeer
10. Expand distance learning service to business
11. Create production partnerships

The next major updating of the distance learning strategic plan will integrate distance learning planning with the planning for the Regional Technology Center. Central to the future of the College is the new Regional Technology Center. Its focus is on manufacturing and simulation technology, and the interfaces with distance learning are extensive. The RTC will serve employers and employees throughout the region. Interactive television and web-based delivery as well as

other distance learning modes of delivery will be instrumental in achieving the goals of the RTC.

Associate Degree Programs

Mott Community College offers five Associate Degrees by distance learning. Degree requirements are the same for distance learning students as for students taking their courses on campus. The five degrees, offered through telecourses, are:

- Associate in General Studies
- Associate in Applied Science – General Business
- Associate in Arts
- Associate in Science
- Associate in Applied Science – Computer Occupations Technology

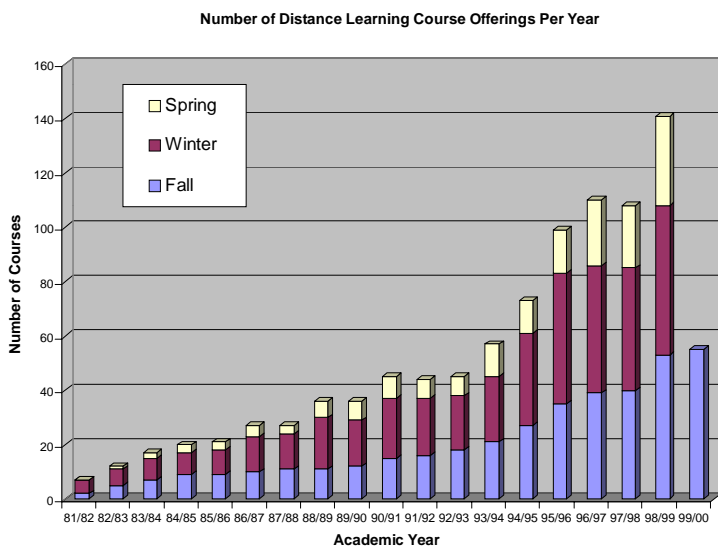
The Associate in General Studies and the Associate in Applied Science – General Business were the first two Associate Degrees offered. The additional three degrees were added in the fall of 1998. The Distance Learning Coordinator continually surveys employers and employees at MCC's CWP manufacturing plant sites on their interest in courses and programs. Survey results show that the General Business degree has the highest interest of the programs we offer through CWP, followed by Computer Occupations Technology. The surveys also show high interest in a Quality Assurance program.

In 1996, we formed an advisory committee to the CWP program specifically to provide client input on the programs we were delivering to the manufacturing sites and to provide input on distance learning course we were producing largely for the CWP community. The committee is called the Manufacturers Courseware Development Committee. Its members consist of representatives from our client CWP manufacturing sites. They meet with faculty and Educational Systems staff during the design and production planning process. The committee does not meet on a regular schedule, but only when a course for the CWP market is in the design and production process. The committee has provided valuable input into the design and production of courses such as Blueprint reading, Geometric Dimensioning and Tolerancing, Technical Writing, and Business Spanish.

Courses and Courseware Production

The courseware production know-how and experience that Mott’s distance learning faculty and production staff have achieved, and are continuing to develop, is one of the special strengths of Mott’s distance learning program. Designing performance objective learning activities and assessment measures and then organizing the material into a web-based or television delivery format can be a daunting challenge for any faculty member. For that reason, Mott has crafted a professional development program specifically for distance learning faculty and supports willing faculty with professional production support, including instructional design, good TV facilities, a dedicated web server, a web developer, and technical support.

Mott currently has 100 approved, active distance learning courses. Forty-two are distance learning courses that have been designed and produced by the Mott Community College faculty working with the production staff of the Educational Systems Department. Of these, 24 are web-based on-line courses and 18 are telecourses. Because of the extensive design and production work involved, the faculty were compensated for their work on each of these courses. Another 35 courses, for which we use the format designation “PC/Text,” include primarily computer applications software courses such as Excel, Word for Window, WordPerfect, and so on. These consist of text materials, a detailed syllabus with specific activity assignments, an orientation video, and the application software itself. Since these courses do not require a large production effort, the faculty who prepare these courses do so without extra compensation. The remaining 23 courses are telecourses licensed from outside providers, primarily PBS.



As the bar graph (on page 9-11) of course offerings indicates, the number of distance learning courses offered has increased as the involvement of faculty in producing distance learning courses has increased. Approval of distance learning courses follows the same discipline and division approval processes as all other courses relative to course content and course objectives. In addition, any time a course is being offered as a distance learning course for the first time, the plans for implementing the course as a distance learning offering must be reviewed and approved by the DLAS before it can be put in the class schedule. The DLAS reviews the instructor's plans for implementation of the courses against the guidelines in *Standards and Practices for Distance Learning Faculty*.

College in the Workplace: A Campus-Free Degree Program

Mott's College in the Workplace program is marketed only to employees of manufacturing companies through their employers. We first recruit the employer. Going state by state, using the Harris Directory of Manufacturers, MCC contacts every manufacturer with 300 employees or more by phone and mail. If the plant management approves our distance learning degrees for their tuition reimbursement program, we then provide information about our program to their employees. This approach, by design, selects employers who support education programs for their employees. We have found that these employers welcome our program. Even though these employers are actively using their local colleges, they all have employees who, because of shift changes, over-time, travel, and family commitments, find a traditional campus program not workable.

We require the employer to provide a suitable proctor and agree to MCC's specific proctoring procedures. We also designate a specific contact person to facilitate communications between the students and the College. This individual, usually the education coordinator, will distribute class schedules and other information to students at the plant site and is available to back up the normal phone, fax, and e-mail communications between student and the faculty or the College's administrative offices. The student studies at home. All materials and correspondence with the student is addressed to the student's home. Tests are administered at the plant site. All tests are mailed to the proctor and returned by the proctor.

A counselor is assigned to the CWP program to provide advisement to all CWP students. Students may fax the distance learning counselor or leave voice mail messages for her at any time. She corresponds by mail and phone with every student at least once each semester. She uses a career planning form to map out a course of study for each student. She assists students with

transferring in credit, making course decisions, and managing incompletes. She even provides advice on study habits.

Mott's College in the Workplace strategy has been to use our large "local" distance learning program to support this new, innovative, niche program targeted to employees of manufacturing companies throughout Michigan and in several other states. All CWP enrollments are seats in distance learning sections that are also being offered "locally." For example, a Blueprint Reading telecourse may have 5 CWP students enrolled in the Detroit area or even out of state and another 10 local students who live in Mott's district. The local students come on campus to register, pick up their tapes, buy their books, and take their tests. The CWP students, on the other hand, are registered by the Distance Learning Office, their materials are shipped to their home, and they take their test at their place of employment. The same teacher teaches all 15 students in the same time period. Although this is a different constituency and we are still learning how to best serve this extended community of manufacturing employees, we have already reached, by 1998/99, 337 enrollments in 35 manufacturing plants, scattered through 15 states.

In summary, the key features of the College in the Workplace program are:

- CWP is marketed only through employers, not to the general public.
- CWP is campus free. Students *never* have to come to Mott's campus.
- Mott expects the employers to be partners by providing test proctoring and some minor administrative support.
- CWP is marketed to employers who have tuition reimbursement programs for their employees.
- Mott charges the full cost of instruction: currently \$450 per course.
- Mott's goal is to tailor CWP to the *mutual* needs of employers and employees.
- Mott has created a Manufacturer's Courseware Development Council, made up of representatives of several of our employer clients, to advise Mott on courseware and curriculum development for CWP.

Although manufacturing companies will always look first to their local colleges for the programs their employees need, we have found that manufacturers welcome the services of a distant college that is prepared to offer their employees quality programs flexibly and conveniently. Thousands of employees in hundreds of manufacturing facilities in the Great Lakes states cannot easily get to local campus classes to take the courses and programs they need. We have discovered in marketing College in the Workplace that distance learning is an option many employers welcome because of the flexibility and convenience it offers their employees.

Program Quality: A Three Element Approach

Mott has developed a three component strategy to build quality in our distance learning program and generate professional confidence in distance learning instruction among our faculty. The three elements have been developed to work together, dynamically, and to complement each other. The three elements are:

- Standards and practices for distance learning instruction
- An assessment plan for distance learning courses and programs
- A professional development plan for distance learning faculty

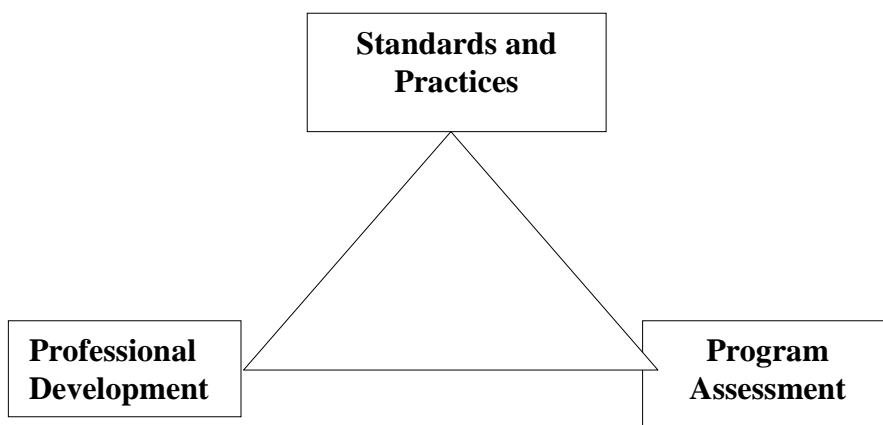
Each of these elements has been developed by distance learning faculty working with the Dean of Educational Systems. By design, they complement and reference each other.

Standards and Practices for Distance Learning Faculty is a set of guidelines prepared by a small task force of the DLAS (Distance Learning Advisory Subcommittee of CPSC). The task force met and discussed best practice issues with a large percentage of distance learning faculty. They identified four standards of practice for the delivery of distance learning instruction at Mott Community College. The *Standards and Practices for Distance Learning Faculty* guidelines were forwarded by the DLAS to CPSC, which recommended them to the President for his approval. They were approved and became formerly part of Mott curriculum policy in 1996. In 1998, the DLAS appointed a small team of subcommittee members to revise and update the guidelines to reflect the addition of on-line courses and other changes. Two new standards were added. A copy is in the Distance Learning Document Notebook in the Resource Room.

A professional development plan for distance learning faculty was developed in 1996/97. A DACUM process was used to design a professional development program for distance learning faculty. Twenty-four faculty and support staff, involved in distance learning, were brought together on the premise that they, collectively, would have the most accurate and detailed awareness of the job performance needs of distance learning educators. An experienced consultant facilitated the DACUM. In two days of work they collaboratively defined and ranked the skills, competencies, and knowledge areas needed by distance learning educators. Each year the Educational Systems department has a series of workshops and professional development options based on the work of the DACUM. As much as possible, faculty help to organize workshop activities. Peer to peer workshops are favored. A list of distance

learning workshop activities is included in the Distance Learning Document Notebook.

In 1997 the DLAS created a Distance Learning Assessment Taskforce of three subcommittee members who, over a period of a year and a half, working with other distance learning faculty and the Assessment Coordinator, prepared an *Assessment Plan for Distance Learning* that embraced three areas of assessment: student satisfaction, faculty satisfaction, and learning outcomes. The task force's proposal was accepted by the DLAS in 1998. Once it has been fully piloted, it will be forwarded to CPSC for final approval.



Each of these three processes has been developed by distance learning faculty through a collaborative process guided by the DLAS and the Dean of Educational Systems. They are designed to relate dynamically in a long term process of continuous improvement. For example, the *Assessment Plan for Distance Learning* provides input for continuing revision and development of *Standards and Practices* and the professional development plan. The *Standards and Practices Guidelines*, because they are the collaborative product of distance learning faculty, have the authority of peer recognition. Our professional development program, in turn, has emphasized assessment practices and will, over time, improve the effectiveness of distance learning assessment practices.

Faculty Oversight: the Distance Learning Advisory Subcommittee

Faculty oversight is a major strength in Mott Community College's distance learning program. Faculty oversight is accomplished through the Distance Learning Advisory Subcommittee (DLAS), a standing subcommittee of the College Professional Study Committee (CPSC). This committee, is made up of faculty and academic administrators, makes recommendations to CPSC and advises the Vice President for Academic Affairs on all matters relating to distance learning.

The precursor of the present committee was formed by CPSC in 1980/81 as an Ad Hoc Study committee to examine the question of whether Mott Community College should offer courses by television. That study committee, composed of seven faculty and one administrator, recommended a one year pilot offering of five telecourses for the 1981/82 academic year. The pilot was successful, and the study committee's final recommendation to CPSC was that a permanent program of offering courses by television be approved. (At that time, the term "distance learning" had not yet come into use.) After the completion of their work as an Ad Hoc Study committee of CPSC, the same members, seven faculty and one administrator, continued on as an administrative advisory committee called the Telecourse Advisory Committee. In 1995, the administrator responsible for distance learning, the Director of Educational Technology, initiated a process to reestablish the committee's formal relationship to CPSC by reorganizing the committee as a standing subcommittee of CPSC: the Distance Learning Advisory Subcommittee. In the formal request to CPSC the reasons given included: the growth of distance learning enrollments, the fact that Mott had begun to offer degrees via telecourses, and the diversity of delivery modes.

The administration has used the DLAS as an advisory body on all matters relating to the operation and support of the program. Over the years, these have included issues such as levels of staff support, requirements for orientation and review sessions, the establishment and growth of a testing center for distance learning students, student support services in the distance learning office, the addition of new courses, the addition of new modes of delivery, and program promotion.

In 1996 the Vice President for Academic Affairs established the policy that no new distance learning offering of an existing course may be entered in the class schedule until the DLAS has reviewed and approved the proposal. The faculty member proposing a new distance learning offering meets with the DLAS to review the faculty member's plans for implementing the new distance learning offering. The review is conducted using the guidelines in *Standards and Practices for Distance Learning Faculty*.

The nature of the DLAS as a predominately faculty body, functioning under the auspices of CPSC, has made it useful as an instrument to administer certain contract provisions negotiated between the MCCEA and the administration which involve distance learning. In the fall of 1999 the MCCEA ratified contract language, in the context of an intellectual property agreement, that added substantially to the DLAS's oversight role (Article XXI, which is included in the Appendices).

In this new contract language, the DLAS is invested with the responsibility of certifying faculty to teach distance learning courses (Article XXI.D.2). The subcommittee has forwarded to CPSC, for its adoption, a process for certifying faculty. Also included in the new contract language is a role for the DLAS as final arbiter when there is dispute involving the assignment of a distance learning course created by an MCC faculty member (Article XXI.D.1). Finally, the DLAS now has a contractually identified responsibility for monitoring the currency of distance courses (Article XXI.I.1).

Appropriate Technology

Mott Community College provides access to distance learning courses and programs primarily in four formats:

- Telecourses
- Text and Software based courses
- On-line courses
- Two-way interactive courses

The first, and most important, step toward the use of appropriate technology in distance learning is to provide good instructional design services to faculty. If the faculty members apply good instructional design principles in planning a distance learning course, then appropriate technology choices will be a product of well designed performance objectives and learning activities.

In 1998, Mott Community College adopted the Wisconsin Instructional Design System (WIDS) as a design template for distance learning courseware production. Forty-two Mott faculty have been through the WIDS training since the Fall of 1998. Three distance learning faculty and two support staff persons have been certified as trainers by WIDS and are part of our on-going WIDS training program. Mott Community College also hired a full-time Instructional Designer in 1998 to work directly with faculty as they produce distance learning courseware.

Integrated technical support services are also extremely important in assuring the appropriate applications of technology to instructional objectives. Where instructional computing services are provided by the computer department, and television and other media services are provided by the media department, the choice of appropriate technology will often be made when the faculty member chooses which department he or she wants to work with. At Mott, instructional technology support services are all provided through one services area: the Educational Systems Department. Educational Systems provides instructional design and professional development services to faculty together with

support services in a full range of technical systems including television production, academic computing (including web development), and classroom presentation technologies. Faculty seeking to develop distance learning courseware can come to the Educational Systems staff with their course objectives and obtain beginning-to-end development assistance without having to cross administrative boundaries either to obtain design assistance or to receive support in multiple technologies.

The third element in ensuring the appropriate use of technology is that the institution must make the necessary investment in courseware production and delivery infrastructure so that the faculty and the design team actually have choices in utilizing appropriate technology. Mott Community College has made that investment. Mott has made a major investment in television production resources including two production studios, digital editing, and two skilled videographers. Mott also maintains its own web server and the capacity to develop its own web courses. Mott employs a web developer to work exclusively with faculty in developing instructional material for on-line delivery. Mott does not need to depend on third-party providers to create and host on-line courses. We have the infrastructure and capacity to produce our own multimedia courseware.

Currency

Program currency, regarding all degree and certificate offerings, is addressed through the program review process by the office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs, the same as with all programs regardless of their delivery mode. There are, however, procedures and activities that do specifically address the currency of distance learning courses and materials.

Currency is one of six defined standards in *Standards and Practices for Distance Learning Faculty*. These guidelines identify the faculty member's responsibility to review courseware for currency and take steps to update or replace the materials as necessary.

Article XXI.I.1 of the faculty contract provides that the Educational Systems Department and the creating faculty member "will review each distance learning course/courseware annually to determine the necessity for revision/replacement" based up on the Assessment Plan for Distance Learning. Based on that review, appropriate recommendations for revision or replacement will be made to the DLAS annually. The contract language further states that "The decision of the DLAS on revision or replacement determines the useful life of the course/courseware and shall be final and binding."

Mott Community College pays faculty for distance learning courseware and for significant revisions of courseware. This is a necessary institutional commitment to maintaining the currency of distance learning courseware and courses. Another incentive to maintaining the currency of Mott's distance learning courses is the fact that the majority are produced by our own faculty rather than licensed from other sources. Faculty have a high degree of professional commitment to the courseware they develop and willingly maintain and continue to develop the material.

Faculty Support Services for Distance Education

The Educational Systems department administers distance learning. Educational Systems is a large department with a staff of 15 which integrates a wide range of services in support of distance learning including the Distance Learning Office itself, Academic Computing Services, Television Services, the Faculty Support Center, which is a professional development service, and instructional design services. Support services for faculty include activities that support faculty in the delivery of instruction, in the production of courseware, and in professional development.

The Distance Learning Office was created in 1983 at the recommendation of the original Telecourse Advisory and committee. The purpose of the office has always been to support distance learning faculty and students. Today a full-time telecourse staff assistant and a full-time clerk run the office with the aid of a staff of student workers. They provide a variety of clerical services to faculty. These include scheduling all orientation and review sessions; collecting materials for, and assembling and distributing all orientation packets; preparing and printing all distance learning course flyers and informational brochures; facilitating communications between students and faculty by phone, fax and mail, and publishing a distance learning newsletter.

The Distance Learning Office also operates a distance learning testing center staffed by one full-time clerk and student assistants. The VLC/Testing Center operates under guidelines approved by the DLAS. It conducts proctored testing for almost all of Mott's distance learning courses, including on-line courses. The Testing Center is open regular hours, evenings, and Saturdays. The Testing Center secures and administers tests, provides all proctoring, and collects documents and tracks the tests as they are returned to faculty for grading.

Educational Systems also provides distance learning faculty and students support for on-line instruction through its Academic Computing Services unit. This staff includes a Multimedia/Web Developer whose responsibility is to

perform systems administration for Mott's instructional web server and student email server and who works directly with faculty and as part of the design team on all web courseware development.

Educational Systems provides production support to faculty who want to produce distance learning courseware. These support activities include instructional design, television production, and web and multimedia production technicians. The services include five full-time Educational Systems staff. In 1998/99, working with Educational Systems staff, eight faculty produced 16 new distance learning courses: four telecourses and twelve on-line courses. In the past five years Mott faculty have produced 33 distance learning courses through the productions services of the Educational Systems staff.

The staff and resources of the Educational Systems Department are heavily engaged in supporting the distance learning program at Mott. Distance Learning has long been a major priority of the department. Nevertheless, concern has been expressed by some faculty that clerical staff in the Distance Learning Office and the Testing Center has become insufficient to provide needed support as the enrollment has continued to increase. The College will be assessing this issue and determining an appropriate course of action.

Student Support Services

Library services are available on-line to any student with Internet access. These include access to an on-line catalog and periodical indexes. Full text access to many periodicals is available through the Mott Community College Library on-line service. Distance Learning students, like any other Mott College student, may also arrange for inter-library loan.

Because our distance learning program has been in place for 18 years at Mott Community College, all of the support services have integrated a sound awareness of distance learning student needs into their services. This includes advising, counseling, financial aid, and the Learning Resources area.

The Academic Computing area has two staff members, the Computer Applications Specialist and the second shift Computer Lab Technician, who provide assistance to all Mott on-line students from 8:00 AM until 10:00 PM and on Saturdays. This department also provides technical orientation to new on-line students each semester.

Intellectual Property Policy

In order for a College to offer Associate Degrees by distance learning, it is essential that the College, through its own faculty, have the capacity to produce distance learning courses. Without that capacity, the college will be dependent on licensed courses or brokered courses from third parties. As a result, the College will be less able to exercise control over its own distance learning curriculum and more subject to the program and curriculum decisions of agencies far removed from its district and constituency. For this reason Mott administration and faculty have placed a high priority on developing the infrastructure and capacity to create our own distance learning courses. One of the most important “foundation elements” required to be a producer of distance learning courseware is an intellectual property policy that will enable the College and the faculty to work together effectively to produce distance learning courseware. Mott Community College has developed a comprehensive intellectual property policy for distance learning courseware.

The administration and the MCCEA negotiated an intellectual property agreement that was ratified by the MCC Board of Trustees and the membership of the faculty union in the fall of 1999. This agreement has been incorporated as Article XXI of the faculty contract. The agreement, copied in full below, addresses all of the major issues that arise as a consequence of the production and use of distance learning courseware. The agreement can be found in the MCCEA master contract and in the Distance Learning Documents Notebook. Its key provisions include the following:

- Distance learning courseware which has been produced by Mott faculty under the terms of a written agreement and compensated for in accordance with the provisions of the contract will be the property of Mott Community College. (Article XXI.B.4 & 5)
- The faculty member who creates a distance learning course has the right of first refusal whenever the course is assigned in the class schedule. When the creating faculty member does not wish to or cannot teach the course, it may be assigned to another faculty member under the terms of an Assigned Use Agreement. (Article XXI.C.1. & D.3)
- Compensation for production of courseware, for its internal usage by other faculty and for licensing or sale to external users is all provided for in the agreement. (Article XXI.E & F)

Conclusion

Mott Community College is not a late comer to distance learning, nor do we see distance learning as replacing what we have traditionally done in our district for our constituencies. Rather, distance learning permits the College to add services and make educational opportunities available to a wider group of people. Through CWP, the College serves a wider and more dispersed group of the same community the College has traditionally served. With NCA's approval to offer programs in other distance learning modalities, the College can further achieve its mission and provide educational opportunities to others who find traditional or the current means too limiting. MCC has the resources and commitment to achieve those ends, and a long history of success in distance learning. Mott was a founding member of ETOM (Educational Television of Michigan) and has for many years offered the largest number of distance learning courses and had the largest distance learning enrollment of any of the 28 community colleges in Michigan.

Mott Community College requests the Commission approve a change in the College's status that would replace "telecourses" with "distance learning," permitting the College to offer Associate Degree programs in other distance learning modalities as well as telecourses.