A 2-year plan (07/09) for e-learning at NSCC aligned with the pillars of quality online education

The guiding principles and support service objectives of “North’s e-Learning Support Center” (NeLSC) at North Seattle Community College align with the five pillars of quality online education established by a national consortium of colleges through their cumulative research and experience. The Alfred P. Sloan Foundation sponsors this consortium of accredited higher education providers and organizations.

The national report on the “Five Pillars of Quality Online Education” (by George Lorenzo and Janet Moore) is available online in PDF format at http://www.sloan-c.org/effective/pillarreport1.pdf. The research on effective practices contributing to each of these five pillars has been compiled (and continues to be expanded) by this consortium from specific data supplied by colleges around the country. The web address for this documented research and ability to share is http://www.sloan-c.org/effective/index.asp.

I. Learning Effectiveness

○ Create policies & processes to foster & maintain e-learning quality
  ▪ Develop and receive college endorsement (by I.C., CAS, faculty) for e-learning quality standards\(^1\), e-teaching preparation processes & periodic peer-review rubrics
  ▪ Develop a process to collect and apply student and faculty feedback in order to continue to improve e-instruction

○ Invest in faculty-to-faculty mentoring, training & research
  ▪ Utilize stipends to support faculty mentors\(^2\) to introduce colleagues to specific technologies (especially “home-grown” technologies already initiated) and to provide one-on-one assistance in pedagogically sound and effective application of those technologies\(^3\)
  ▪ Utilize stipends to support faculty research into potentially valuable e-learning technologies through pilot projects & through attendance at national conferences
  ▪ Continue quarterly TLC workshops on e-learning pedagogy / technology / legalities (e.g. compliance with copyright laws & ADA)
  ▪ Host a District Summer Institute on effective e-learning pedagogy & technology

○ Build faculty use of NSCC’s innovative (and cost-effective) home-grown and already-in-use technologies\(^3\) for on-campus, blended & fully online classrooms
  ▪ Introduce all faculty (division by division) to use of NSCC-developed websites (available via NetID to all faculty, staff & students)
  ▪ Support faculty mentoring faculty on podcasting of lectures, video production (streaming and DVD creation) and other NSCC-provided e-tools such as NetID discussion rooms, blogs, wikis and icalendars
  ▪ Expand use of rich-media e-tools such as Camtasia and Producer\(^3\)
  ▪ Expand use of live communication e-tools such as Gizmo/Skype & Sightspeed
  ▪ Mentor faculty on uses of WebCT for online communication & assessment
  ▪ Integrate SmartBoards into on-campus classrooms

○ Investigate new e-learning technologies with promising effectiveness and fit to NSCC’s mission and student needs
  ▪ Work with IT to test Moodle as an open-source course management tool
  ▪ Develop a course in Second Life (a virtual reality classroom)\(^4\)
Work with divisions to introduce faculty to Chalk & Wire e-Portfolio
Evaluate the pros and cons of Tegrity to Camtasia for lecture videos
Explore use of new online educational resources including Web 2.0 social software, Merlot Reusable Learning Objects, Groove & One-Note (in Microsoft Enterprise Office 2007), aggregate software (Pageflakes) and publisher e-pack modules for WebCT

II. Student Satisfaction
- Learn from students about their needs & maximize e-learner success
  - Develop & distribute quarterly student “needs” online surveys, present survey results at eTAC (e-Learning & Technology Advisory Committee) meetings and determine strategies & actions to respond to these needs
  - Provide online orientation modules (with & without multimedia) to help students evaluate their readiness and prepare for online instruction
  - Adopt instructional technologies in direct response to student needs
  - Consider office staffing increase if needed to continue full support services for a growing number of e-learners (on-campus as well as at a distance)

- Initiate new enrollment strategies & learning options to fit students’ needs
  - Develop effective design/delivery models for blended (“hybrid”) learning and integrate blended learning offerings into the quarterly scheduling in a way that maximizes student attendance and also contributes to the efficient use of classroom space for all classes
  - Expand open enrollment options like our online preparatory math courses
  - Expand 1-2 credit modular offerings that focus on specific skills or needs such as our Medical Assisting modules and our Math Review modules
  - Provide more learning opportunities for underserved populations through flexible e-learning programs such as blended on-campus & online learning for specific student cohorts with assigned tutors (e.g. the Native American program with Grays Harbor and Evergreen)

III. Faculty Satisfaction
- Learn from faculty and “build e-learning from the ground up”
  - Develop routine avenues for campus-wide communication, “grassroots” collaboration (acceptance) and strategic college coordination such as the monthly meetings of eTAC (e-Learning & Technology Advisory Committee)
  - Develop & distribute quarterly faculty online surveys to maintain a mutual understanding of faculty needs, ideas, feedback and successes
  - Implement germane quarterly TLC workshops that foster faculty success and satisfaction in their e-learning efforts
  - Use effective rich media software (like Camtasia and Producer) to create anytime-anywhere online training modules to reach faculty who cannot attend face-to-face TLC workshops or face-to-face NeLSC tutoring sessions
  - Address critical issues for e-teaching (e.g., in eTAC meetings) such as copyright laws, ADA website compliance, ownership contracts & peer-review processes
  - Consider office staffing increase if needed to continue full support services for a growing number of e-teachers (on-campus as well as at a distance)
IV. Cost Effectiveness

- **Incorporate cost-benefit analyses into strategic e-learning plans**
  - Collaborate amongst Administration, Student Services, IT Services, North’s e-Learning Support Center & the Business Office to **define measurable benefits & true costs** of e-learning curriculum (with help of nationally-recognized rubrics)
  - Create and monitor benchmarks to maintain **steady and sustainable growth**
  - Use nationally recognized **e-learning cost-benefit models** to estimate cost-effectiveness of potential future e-learning directions, technologies and resources

- **Expand the college’s student community through strategic marketing**
  - Consult with PIO on **costs and success rates** for traditional promotional methods
  - Solicit ideas for **strategies / catchphrases** in IC and eTAC (such as “Save Gas with Fuel-Efficient Learning” as a billboard?)
  - Publicize the **technology advantages** being adopted by NSCC faculty
  - Complete the **community profile website** of NSCC faculty & support staff (or link from online quarterly schedule directly to faculty “www websites”)

V. Accessibility

- **Collaborate with Student Services on e-learner success programs**
  - Apply feedback on **student “needs” surveys** to regularly assess the range of online support services and 24/7 e-learning orientation modules
  - Identify & address **limited access opportunities** by low-income students & other learning communities (e.g., racial, geographic) affected by the “digital divide”

- **Collaborate with IT Services on universal website design & functionality standards**
  - Evaluate & update all NSCC websites for **ADA compliance**

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1. NSCC’s recognized e-learning standards are available online at:

2. Mentor projects would include:
   - Division-by-division introduction of home-grown technologies to all faculty
   - Creation of a web presence for all faculty (either through the community profile website or through the www folder personal wiki)
   - Review of all websites to ensure compliance with copyright laws
   - Review of all websites for ADA compliance

3. Examples of instructional technologies in use by NSCC faculty:
   - Summer Institute 2006 projects: http://podcast.seattlecolleges.edu/fd/rmsi/rmsi-blog.html
   - Microsoft-Producer-created presentations: http://faculty.northseattle.edu/si2004/league2004/
   - Podcast: http://podcast.seattlecolleges.edu/jkent/podcast-promo-part2.mp3
   - Camtasia screen-action capture: http://facweb.northseattle.edu/jkent/it111/questions/assignment3-sp-07/assignment3-sp-07.html
   - Summer Institute 2004 projects: http://faculty.northseattle.edu/si2004

4. Web 2.0 Social Software Tools are described on the following Collaboration Day handout: