

Contact: Diana Gonzalez

2005-06 ANNUAL DISTANCE EDUCATION REPORT

Action Requested: Receive the report.

Executive Summary: The mission of the Distance Education Strategic Plan is to extend the campus beyond its physical limits to meet the learning needs of state, regional, national, and international audiences. The goals contained in the Plan include (a) contributing to the state's economic development; (b) selecting and using appropriate strategies for instructional delivery; (c) cooperating among the Regent universities in distance education delivery; and (d) providing continuing education or career development opportunities for professionals.

The Regent Enterprise addresses the Distance Education Strategic Plan by providing distance education programming through the Regent universities to citizens throughout the state and beyond. For many people, attending classes on campus would be impossible. Distance education addresses those needs through a variety of formats, including off-campus classes, guided independent study, the Iowa Communications Network (ICN), the worldwide web, and other digital and electronic media. Regent university distance education programs continue to reach students who live and work in communities throughout Iowa. In 2005-06, there were 25,933 students enrolled in credit courses across 480 communities in 97 counties (Attachment A); this represents an increase of 590 students from the prior year. In addition, there were 524,713 students enrolled statewide in non-credit offerings which represents an increase of 46,483 students.

Background:

- ◇ Significant developments in distance education at the Regent universities in 2005-06.
 - ☑ Ability to share courses developed by the Commission on Institutional Cooperation (CIC) and between the Regent universities has allowed the universities to provide courses which may not be available on campus.
 - ☑ Improved educational software in capability and bandwidth requirements facilitates simultaneous instruction to on-campus and off-campus students. Illuminate and Breeze are examples of web software that allow an easy exchange of two-way audio, video, and electronic files.
 - ☑ Using the Web to offer professional licensure courses has enhanced opportunities in Law, Dentistry, Pharmacy, and Nursing.
 - ☑ Expanded distance education opportunities for students include programs that can be completed entirely on the Web without a campus component, including SUI's Master of Science in Nursing and Master of Arts in School Administration and ISU's Master of Science in Computer Engineering and Master of Science in Statistics. A number of UNI's programs can be completed without a campus component through the ICN, including the Master in Elementary Education, the Master in Early Childhood Education, the Master in Middle Level Education, and the Bachelor in Technology Management.

- ☑ Development of the Bachelor of Applied Studies program has allowed the University of Iowa to offer blended courses at selected community colleges. Continued cooperative efforts will streamline the opportunities available to community college graduates and work toward a seamless process.
 - ☑ Changed student enrollment patterns have resulted in more students supplementing their on-campus academic experience with distance education offerings, including those offered by other institutions.
 - ☑ Changed faculty attitudes have resulted in increased Web delivery opportunities.
 - ☑ Increased competition for distance learners, especially from an expanding number of on-line higher education institutions offering programs to Iowa students, has required different approaches from the Regent universities. The Regent universities have responded by focusing on their unique strengths and have used Web courses and programs to serve remote areas of the state.
 - ☑ Decreased state financial support and its effect on distance education has resulted in reduced availability of faculty at a time when enrollment has increased.
- ◇ Collaborations to enhance distance education efforts in 2005-06.
- ☑ A limited TV campaign was conducted by the Regent universities in Western Iowa in 2005 on stations serving Council Bluffs and Sioux City. Unfortunately, there were few responses attributed to the campaign.
 - ☑ A cooperative survey led by ISU will be conducted of potential students in the Southwest Iowa Regents Resource (SWIRRC) area in the coming months.
 - ☑ The Regent universities entered into a contractual arrangement with ACT to administer the Alumni Outcomes Survey to graduates from the Bachelor of Liberal Studies program at the three universities.
 - ☑ A cooperative certificate in museum studies in which the three universities would provide courses is being evaluated. Two distance education certificates have been developed – Public Health and Entrepreneurship – which build on existing campus offerings.
 - ☑ Staff expertise in student outcomes assessment in distance education, including formative and summative evaluation, will be shared by the three universities.
 - ☑ Shared oversight of SWIRRC by the three Regent universities has resulted in improved promotional and marketing efforts.
 - ☑ Membership in the Great Plains Interactive Distance Education Collaborative has allowed ISU to offer programs in financial planning, gerontology, and community developments. Future degree offerings will include food science and agriculture.
 - ☑ UNI and SUI continued to cooperate in delivering the Master in School Psychology program through the ICN and Web. Students receive their school psychology certification from UNI.

- ◇ The following table describes distance education indicators contained in the Distance Education Strategic Plan relating to student access:

	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06
Credit courses and programs¹				
Number of programs ²	59	61	67	179
Number of course sections	1,650	1,748	1,753	1,855
Number of student enrollments (duplicated)	26,228	25,210	25,343	25,933
Non-credit courses				
Number of student enrollments (duplicated)	474,957	479,676	478,230	524,713

- ◇ Regional Study Centers.
 - ☑ In 2005-06, 40 Regent university programs were available through the Quad Cities Graduate Study Center (Rock Island, IL.); 59 were available through the Southwest Iowa Regents Resource Center (Council Bluffs); and 39 were available through the Tri-State Graduate Center (Sioux City).
 - ☑ More than 1,000 students were served by the Regent universities through the centers in 2005-06.
 - ☑ The Regent universities also delivered courses through the Des Moines Higher Education Collaborative.

Details about distance education enrollment and programming are available in the Board Office.

¹ Only off-campus courses and programs are included. These are delivered in such formats as off-campus classes, guided independent study, ICN, WWW, and other digital, electronic, and print media.

² Includes degree, certificate, and endorsement offerings. Certificates and endorsements serve to meet an agency's requirements to practice a profession or to show proficiency in a topic or subject area.