

Expanding Our Community with Blended Learning Programs

Estrella Mountain Community College Sloan Grant Final Report

The second year of the Sloan grant saw attainment of all grant metrics along with a 32% double-digit growth of the Estrella Mountain Community College (EMCC) Blended Learning program. Online courses continue to outpace blended courses in growth. However, the blended environment provides the institution with an ideal framework to develop a comprehensive faculty development program which focuses on pedagogy, instructional design, and teaching and learning in virtual environments. The blended environment is the reason our faculty have had such success in the online environment.

EMCC would like to thank the Sloan Foundation for their support. The Sloan Grant provided EMCC the resources necessary to springboard the EMCC Blended Learning Program to an institution-wide initiative.

The Localness Initiative Metrics

1. Marketing Plan – 100% completed. Materials developed as part of the Sloan grant continue to be used as part of the Estrella Mountain Community College brand ‘start here, go anywhere’ marketing campaign. In fall 2010, the institution adopted a new scheduling paradigm in order to maximize facilities space to ensure student access to education. This paradigm shift will expand blended and online courses even further from the current 35% blended student enrollment baseline figure.
2. Blended and Online Course Development (33 courses) – 100% completed. In fact, we exceeded the 33 courses and have continued to expand our online program.
3. Online Tutoring Support: Smarthinking, Inc. has been incorporated into the Blended Learning student support model. Changing the paradigm from a reactive support model to a proactive support model allows student and faculty the opportunity to experience success. Students in traditional courses also use the tool. We average approximately 1000 hours per semester. There continues to be a debate amongst some faculty and administrators as to ‘buy or build’. This debate is ongoing. EMCC continues to provide support for the online tutoring tool although they have not yet found permanent funding.
4. Customized Course Interface and Program Assessment: Developed a ‘Week 10’ program registration web interface for all blended and online courses. This feature, along with consistent blended and online marketing messages, has lead to a substantial increase in blended enrollment.
5. Rich Media Design (RMD), Course Production Specialist II instead of RMD; because of continued advancement in technology tools and the addition of a videographer who possesses a sophisticated skill set to our staff, the rich media component is being met. As we progressed through the grant process, the need for a Course Production Specialist II instead of a Rich Media Design Specialist became evident. The Course Production Specialist II continues to be funded even after the grant funds expired. This position has been ranked as 1 of the top 3 positions to be permanently funded by the institution in 2011/12.

6. Classroom Space Utilization - completed and ongoing. The Office of Institutional Planning and Effectiveness (OPIE) compile this report. Data is used for scheduling purposes. Without the expansion of hybrid and online learning at the college, classroom space limitations would have resulted in smaller full-time student equivalent (FTSE) increases. The unprecedented 53% FTSE increase from spring 2008 to spring 2009 for enrollment in hybrid and online courses allowed the college to generate higher overall growth rates. Over this time period EMCC has not expanded its classroom facilities and still managed to generate more than a 10% college wide increase in total FTSE in 2008-2009 and a projected 20% increase for 2009-2010.
7. Percentage of time on campus vs. course load – completed.

Estrella Mountain Community College	
Average Number of Meeting Days by Attempted Hours	
	0 - 6.9 Hours
Fall 2006	1.82
Fall 2007	2.30
Fall 2008	1.94
Fall 2009*	1.94

*Fall 2009 is estimated as of 9/25/2009

8. Annual Enrollment outside expanded 8 mile service area
Increase annual headcount by 300/year over current enrollments outside our expanded 8 mile service area radius.

EMCC Enrollment Outside 8 Mile Service Area			
Fiscal Year	Fiscal Year Enrollment	Change from previous year	Total Change from baseline year 2006-2007
2006-2007	3,718	132	
2007-2008	3,844	126	
2008-2009	4,319	475	601

Summary of EMCC Blended Learning Programs

# of Students with Goal Intent by Degree Program (Outside 8 mile radius)				
Degree Program	2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008	2008-2009
Associate in Arts Transfer Degree (8400)	338	489	523	494
Associate in Arts Elementary Education Degree (8101)	20	52	43	78
Speech Language Pathologist Certificate (5994)	0	13	17	22
Associate in Transfer Partnership Elementary Education (9201)	70	56	34	33
Total	428	610	617	627

9. Faculty satisfaction – completed and ongoing. Two faculty surveys were conducted during the Sloan grant period. One by the E-Learning Advisory and the second by the CTL Advisory committee. Faculty have identified that the Blended Learning processes are well understood and supported by the institution. One area identified for improvement and funding is a formal course revision process. The course revision process is currently being discussed at pedagogy meetings and reviewed via the E-learning Advisory Committee. Recommendations will be forwarded to leadership in spring 2011.
10. Student Satisfaction – completed and ongoing. In addition to our Week 4 and Week 15 Student Satisfaction Surveys and Course Evaluations, this year the OPIE conducted blended student focus groups and sent out a follow-up survey to the entire blended population of students. The student feedback is consistently positive and their constructive criticism provides us with valuable information regarding course design and interface, and teaching and learning best practices.
11. Assessment of Student Learning - completed and ongoing. In addition to course, program and institution assessments, the Office of Planning and Institutional Effectiveness annually compile Blended Learning enrollment and completion data. This information is used to analyze, investigate and improve the Blended Learning Program. The spring 2009 results may be viewed at <http://www2.estrellamountain.edu/academics/elearning/eli/hybridsummaryresultsSpring2009.pdf>
12. Dissemination –completed and ongoing. Presentations were made during spring 08 at two Sloan-c conferences, one in Chicago in April, and the second in Carefree, AZ in May. A third presentation, in which the marketing plan was presented, was conducted at the fall 2008 ALN conference in Orlando, Florida. Also, the EMCC E-Learning Advisory Committee meets monthly to review data, processes, policies, and recommend improvement strategies.

Institutional Matching Funds: \$250,000.00

Faculty Development Workshops \$72,531.00

Blended and Online Course Development/Redesign \$137,496.00

Instructional Technologist and Course Production Specialist II
\$29, 526.92

Marketing

- SLPA, Teacher Education ‘Student Voice’ videos \$695.15
- ‘Top Student’ Time Management video \$600.00
- Learning Styles/Study Skills Module \$1040.00
- Academic Rigor Module \$162.00

Student Support

- WIMBA Live Classroom \$23,652.00

Total Institutional Funds \$ 265,703.07
