Substantive Change Application
Distance Education – 50% of Students or Courses

Directions: Complete each section, keeping narratives concise and direct. Should you have any questions, please contact substantivechange@accjc.org and we will be happy to assist you.

Email completed application to substantivechange@accjc.org.

Institution name:	Cuyamaca College				
Address:	900 Rancho San Diego Parkway, El Cajon, CA 92019				
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Select the type of Distance Education approval:

☒ 50 percent or more of all the institution's students enrolled in at least one course offered through distance education

8,763 Total number of students | 6,825 Total number of students enrolled in at least one distance education course

☒ 50 percent or more of all the institution's courses available to be offered in the distance education modality

815 Total number of courses in catalog | 517 Total number of courses, not sections, available to be offered in distance education modality

It is the institution's responsibility to demonstrate the effect of a substantive change on the quality, integrity, capacity, and effectiveness of the total institution. The substantive change process requires evidence of institutional planning, resource commitment to the proposed change, and evidence that following the change, the institution continues to meet the Eligibility Requirements, Accreditation Standards and Commission policies. References to the Accreditation Standards are intended to help provide the institution with a framework for its response, and along with the required documentation, align with federal regulations for accreditation standards[1]. Your thorough responses to the questions below and submission of required documentation will assist ACCJC in making its determination.

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[1] 34 CFR § 602.16(a)

Describe how the distance education modality is consistent with the mission of the institution (*Standard 1.1*).

Cuyamaca College's mission (1) is to advance equity and social justice through student-centered and innovative approaches to education. Distance education programs and courses will allow the College to expand equitable access to college courses and programs for historically marginalized and underserved communities. Courses offered in distance education modality, either fully online, partially online, or hyflex, allow the College to reach remote areas within East San Diego County, including students who may not have transportation or the ability to take classes on campus due to work, life, and family responsibilities. With the ability to offer distance education courses, Cuyamaca College can further its mission of creating unique and meaningful learning experiences that build upon the strengths and socio-cultural experiences of our diverse student population and the communities we serve, including many Indigenous students who reside in rural areas within the College's service area. Leveraging technology to deliver courses in modalities that meet student needs will provide opportunities for more students to complete certificates and/or degrees, ultimately leading to greater social and economic mobility.

Cuyamaca College has long served a diverse population of students (2) that includes greater proportions of adult learners, returning students, parents, and low-income students. To meet these students' needs, the College began growing its distance education offerings as far back as 2016 (3). In fact, even before the pandemic, roughly one in three course enrollments was in an online class, and approximately half of the College's students were taking at least one online class.

Through ongoing surveys (4) throughout the pandemic, many of students shared that they faced challenges in accessing on-campus classes due to balancing work schedules, childcare or care for family members, and transportation, even as the College gradually expanded on-campus course offerings. While the College has strengthened and expanded its support for students facing these challenges through and beyond the pandemic, many students still opt for online classes if the option is available. Recent enrollment data (5) show that online classes continue to have higher fill rates than in-person classes following the pandemic. Prior to the pandemic, fill rates for on-campus and online class sections were comparable.

In order to meet the changing needs of the diverse East San Diego County community, the College completed its most recent strategic planning process in Spring 2022. The 2022-2028 Comprehensive Plan (6) was informed by various campus forums, student focus groups, and surveys. Based on the data collected, the College prioritized improving the student experience in online and hybrid classes to help increase student successful course completion rates and eliminate equity gaps. The College has since bolstered its professional development offerings focused on teaching and learning in a distance education modality.

Describe how distance education will be integrated into the institution's regular review of relevant and meaningfully disaggregated data to evaluate its progress and inform plans for improvement and innovation (*Standard 1.3*).

Cuyamaca College has incorporated distance education data into its regular review of relevant data for several years. Since 2017, instructional program review data (7) has included disaggregation of program- or-discipline-level data by distance education status. Since 2019, instructional comprehensive program review (8) and annual update (9) templates have included reflection- and action-oriented questions related to improving online teaching and learning and addressing disparities in course success by modality. In addition, the College's Online Teaching and Learning Committee (10) regularly reviews distance education course offerings and success data (11). The College's instructional deans and Vice President of Instruction regularly review course enrollment and fill rate data by modality to ensure students have access to the classes they need in the modality they prefer. These data inform addition course section offerings and planning for the subsequent year.

The College develops a Distance Education Plan (12) every 6 years, which is informed by course enrollment, retention, and success data by modality, and aligns with the College's strategic plan. The Distance Education Plan sets goals for improvement of online teaching and learning through professional development, resource creation and dissemination, and evaluation strategies for online courses. The College's Online Teaching and Learning Committee develops, implements, and evaluates the plan. Examples of action steps that have been taken to address the Distance Education Plan's goals include the following:
- Creation of the College's Equity Affirmation (13)
- Development of the Online Equity Rubric for use in professional development and assessment of online courses
- Regular review of course outcome data disaggregated by modality
- Expansion of the Peer Online Course Review (POCR) program (14)
- Participation in the California Virtual Campus Initiative, first as a home college then as a teaching college
- Create and implement Equitable Grading Strategies Community of Practice

The College continues to regularly assess course enrollment, success, and retention by modality as well as by modality and student demographics as part of its commitment to achieving equitable student outcomes.

Describe how the distance education modality meets students and curricular needs and promotes equitable student learning and achievement (*Standard 2.6*)**.**

Cuyamaca College has made significant strides in creating an infrastructure that supports equitable student learning across both on-campus and online classes. The College has a robust curriculum review process that must be completed before a class is deemed appropriate for distance education. The College's Curriculum Commitee (15) executes the curriculum review process, which takes place on a 5-year cycle. Courses must be current and reviewed within the previous 5 years to be offered on the schedule, and a Distance Education Proposal Form (16) must be completed and approved for the course. Courses share the same Course Outline of Record (17), same student learning outcomes (SLOs), and same methods of evaluation, regardless of whether they are offered on campus or online.

In addition, through the College's program review process, which occurs on a four-year cycle, programs are required to analyze distance education enrollment, retention and success data and identify ways to eliminate disparities in course success and retention across on-campus and online courses. Course enrollment, success, and retention are further disaggregated by race/ethnicity and gender so that faculty can examine and identify ways to address equity gaps within the on-campus and online modalities. In addition, programs often survey students to assess course needs by modality and discuss assignment and/or assessment results to inform course scheduling by modality. Results of these analyses have led some departments, such as Art (18), to expand online course offerings and other departments, such as Biology (19), to reduce online course offerings, based on student learning and student needs.

Beginning in 2021-22, the College launched a project (20) focused on assessing student learning outcomes via the Canvas learning management system. This project has grown in scope, with greater numbers of faculty participating each semester. Assessing learning outcomes in Canvas allows faculty to efficiently store and retrieve SLO data for both online and on-campus (web-enhanced with Canvas) courses so they can compare results and make informed changes to the student learning experience online or in-person based on the assessment data. The College is in the process of upgrading to the Nuventive Improve platform, which will allow for data exchange between the Nuventive accountability management system for SLOs and program review and the Canvas learning management system.

Describe how the institution designs and delivers equitable and effective services and programs *(e.g., counseling, advising, tutoring, library, etc.)* **that support students in the distance education modality** (*Standard 2.7*)**.**

Cuyamaca College designs and delivers equitable and effective student learning and support services and programs for students in the distance education modality. Since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, Cuyamaca College shifted its student support services to online modalities, building upon the success of academic support services online offerings that existed well before the pandemic. Students can access the following learning and support services both on-campus and online:
- Counseling (academic and personal)
- Library/reference
- Tutoring
- Special programs, such as Extended Opportunity Programs and Services (EOPS), Disability Support Programs and Services (DSPS), and Veterans Resource Center
- Admissions and Records
- Financial Aid and Scholarships
- Outreach/High School and Community Relations
- Student Affairs
- Cuyamaca Cares Basic Rights program for food, housing, and personal counseling services
- Career Center
- Transfer Center
- Bookstore

- Help Desk

For example, students can make appointments with a counselor by selecting their preferred modality, date, and time. The Counseling Department (21) regularly adjusts its appointment scheduling to meet student needs. Similarly, students can book tutoring appointments for on-campus tutoring or via NetTutor for online tutoring. Moreover, students can access virtual Financial Aid office hours as well as in-person workshops and can meet with Admissions and Records personnel online via Zoom or in the office to get answers to their application, registration, and evaluations-related questions. As with instructional programs, learning and support programs participate in the College's program review process, which includes analysis of student utilization data (22), student retention or success data, and/or student survey data (23). Student learning and support programs complete a comprehensive program review (24) every four years and an annual update on intervening years. Both the comprehensive program review and program review annual update (25) templates include reflections on student service utilization, equitable student access, and improvement to the student experience.

Describe how the institution ensures that "regular and substantive interaction" occurs between students and instructors (*Policy on Distance Education and Correspondence Education*)**.**

Cuyamaca College ensures regular and substantive interaction through policy, program review processes, curriculum review processes, and peer review of online courses. Prior to 2023, Cuyamaca College had a longstanding Regular and Effective Contact Policy (26), which specified standards for instructor and student communication and engagement in distance education courses. In 2023, the College's Online Teaching and Learning Committee (OTLC) began updating this policy to reflect guidance at the federal level on Regular and Substantive Interaction. The OTLC completed its revision of the Regular and Substantive Interaction Policy (27) in November 2023 (28). The Policy was approved by the Academic Senate (29) in November 2023, and training on implementation of the new policy began in January 2024.

In addition, Cuyamaca College's program review process has long included reflection questions focused on how instructional programs ensure regular and effective contact. For 2024-25 program reviews, reflection questions for instructional programs included updated language on Regular and Substantive Interaction.

In addition, through the curriculum review process, any course that is proposed to be taught in a distance education format must receive the following assurances and acknowledgements:
- Faculty are expected to provide a variety of types of instructor-initiated interaction (as defined by the Regular and Substantive Interaction Policy) when the course is taught online.
- The program chair understands the Title 5 requirements related to regular and substantive interaction
- All instructors who teach this course in an online modality must be educated on legal requirements and principles of regular and substantive interaction

The College's Regular and Substantive Interaction Policy specifies the types of activities and communication that qualify as Regular and Substantive Interaction.

The College's Peer Online Course Review (POCR) process serves as a mechanism for assessing Regular and Substantive Interaction. Through POCR, the instructor teaching the class and trained faculty reviewers examine the selected course against the [California Virtual Campus Course Design Rubric (30)](#). Courses and instructors who complete this iterative review process receive a [POCR badge for quality assurance (31)](#).

To ensure regular and substantive interaction, the OTLC and Distance Education Faculty Coordinator provide [regular training (32)](#) through both individual workshops and through cohort professional learning in the form of distance education "summer camp" or "winter camp" that focus on effective methods for equitable online instruction, assessment, and grading. In addition, full-time faculty members teaching distance education classes conduct office hours for students via Zoom. Many part-time faculty members offer Zoom office hours as well.

Describe how the institution authenticates students in distance education courses (*Policy on Distance Education and Correspondence Education*).

Cuyamaca College authenticates students in distance education courses from application to enrollment. The College uses the online CCCApply application platform provided to California Community Colleges. Within 24 hours of applying, students receive their district-generated Student ID Number. Students who apply for enrollment undergo an internal review to ensure they are not flagged for possible fraudulent enrollment. If flagged as a possible fraudulent enrollment, and a registration hold is placed on the student record. The student is then required to visit the Admissions and Records Office or meet with an Admissions and Records team member and show an accepted form of identification to verify their identity. Students who verify their identity have the registration hold removed from their record. This procedure is followed for all students who are flagged as possibly fraudulent, regardless of the modality of the courses they enrolled in.

Once a student receives their Student ID number, the student can log on to Self-Service, the College's registration system. Students receive login information at the email address they provided at the time of application. Students can plan their schedules, search for classes, and register for classes via Self-Service. Students who enroll in online courses are enrolled in the Canvas learning management system to access online course content and assignments and are invited to created a Canvas account in their first semester of enrolling in an online course. Registered students can begin accessing course materials via Canvas no later than the first day of class. Faculty teaching online courses receive guidance each year on monitoring student engagement, detecting fraudulent enrollment, and ensuring academic integrity. Per [Administrative Policy 4105 (33)](#), Cuyamaca College authenticates student identity through secure credentialing (login and password). Students enrolled in distance education courses are authenticated through the [Canvas login process (34)](#). At the start of each semester, the District Educational Support Services Department sends [guidance (35)](#) to all faculty on how to detect and prevent enrollment and financial aid fraud.

Describe how the institution employs qualified faculty, staff, administrators, and other personnel to support and sustain the distance education modality (*Standard 3.1*).

Cuyamaca College employs qualified faculty, staff, and administrators to support and sustain its robust distance education course offerings. As of Spring 2024, the College employed 95 full-time faculty members and over 250 part-time faculty members. All faculty members at Cuyamaca College must meet the California Community Colleges Minimum Qualifications for Faculty (36).

The Distance Education team includes the Dean of Learning and Technology Resources, the Distance Education Faculty Coordinator, and the Instructional Design Technology Specialist. This team maintains online teaching resources (37) and works closely with faculty who teach online courses to ensure high-quality distance education courses. In addition, the Distance Education team provides robust professional development and technical support, and several faculty members serve as online teaching mentors (38) to other faculty teaching online courses. In addition, the College's DSPS Department employs an Alternate Media Specialist, who provides guidance, training, and resources to ensure accessibility of online course materials through the High Tech Center (39).

Courses must go through a rigorous curriculum review process before they are approved for online modality. Faculty wishing to teach online courses must participate in training before teaching an online course. In addition, the College's Distance Education team offers a variety of professional development opportunities (40) for faculty teaching online courses, including the following topics:
- Designing a Liquid Syllabus
- Supporting Online Students
- California Virtual Campus (CVC) Course Design Rubric
- Course Navigation
- Student-to-Student Contact
- Facilitating Group Work on Canvas

Faculty members who teach online courses are also required to complete foundational training (41) on the Canvas system, accessibility, and pedagogy in distance education classes.

Describe the institution's fiscal resources to support and sustain the distance education modality (*Standard 3.4*).

Cuyamaca College allocates appropriate fiscal resources to support and sustain distance education programs and courses. As a California Community College, Cuyamaca College receives several technology tools and resources to support online learning. Among these are the Canvas learning management system, the Zoom videoconferencing system and Canvas Studio, which is a video creation and editing software. The College also subscribes to Padlet for real-time class feedback and posting and the Cidi Labs Design Plus tool, which provides support for faculty to more efficiently design their Canvas courses with templates created by instructional designers. The College provides funding for these tools as well as the personnel that support distance education through its Distance Education Budget (42).

The College funds a 1.0 FTE Distance Education faculty coordinator (43), who provides training, resources, peer support, and leadership for the distance education modality. In addition, the College funds the Peer Online Course Review (POCR) program, which provides

a mechanism for setting high standards for online course design, delivery, and evaluation and ensuring online courses meet these standards. Furthermore, the Dean of Learning and Technology serves as the administrative lead for distance education. The Dean co-chairs the Online Teaching and Learning Committee with the Distance Education faculty coordinator, and this committee leads distance education planning and guides resource development for distance education.

The Dean and Distance Education faculty coordinator seek external funding opportunities and internal funding opportunities through the program review process to support innovation in distance education. Recently, the College applied for and received a statewide grant (44) for over $300,000 to support equitable student learning and inclusive pedagogy. The majority of these funds have been dedicated to enhancing distance education through professional development of faculty and expansion of the POCR program. The College devotes a full-time Instructional Design Technology Specialist to distance education. These investments are ongoing and provide the resources necessary to maintain and expand a robust distance education program.

Describe the institution's physical resources including, if applicable, equipment and supplies, to support and sustain the distance education modality (*Standard 3.8*).

The College has adequate physical resources, equipment, and supplies to support and sustain the distance education modality. Based on multiple student surveys (45; 46) conducted during the pandemic and after the pandemic, students indicated a strong interest in online and hybrid classes and online services. Enrollment management data (47) have demonstrated that strong interest, as online sections of many college courses fill more quickly than on-campus sections. However, many students require a space outside their home or work in which they can study, access online services, and even complete online course work. The College has several dedicated spaces for students to utilize, regardless of whether they are taking classes online or on campus. These spaces include the Tech Mall (48), Library (49), Computer Science labs, MakerSpace, and campus engagement centers, such as the Together We Rise Latinx student center and Queer Center (50), which offer study space, workshops, hands-on learning labs, virtual learning labs (51), and wi-fi internet access.

Describe the institution's technology resources to support and sustain the distance education modality (*Standard 3.9*).

Cuyamaca College's technology resources are ample to support and sustain the distance education modality. The College utilizes the Canvas Learning Management System for all distance education and web-enhanced courses. Students receive access to Canvas courses no later than the first day of the class they are registered for. In addition, the College provides laptop and wi-fi hotspot lending services (52) to students enrolled in classes each semester through its Library lending program. Students in special programs such as EOPS, NextUp, Umoja, and Rising Scholars have a set of laptops specifically designated for participating students to check out each semester. In addition, the College offers a variety of online support services, many of which can be accessed via Zoom drop-in hours or the e-SARS scheduling platform. Students enrolled in courses at the College receive a student email address and free

access to Microsoft Office 365 (53) so they can access essential software to complete class assignments. Students in specific programs, such as computer science, receive access to virtual machines with course-specific software installed through the College's NetLabs program. The College provides access to course-specific software for students enrolled in both on-campus and online classes. In addition, the college library offers a variety of online databases and resources (54) to currently-enrolled students.

Describe how the institution's decision-making structures support innovation and equitable student outcomes in the distance education modality (*Standard 4.3*).

The College's decision-making structures support innovation and equitable student outcomes in the distance education modality. The College's governance structure (55) consists of a primary recommending body, the College Council (56), and three major councils which focus on planning and evaluation, resources and operations, and college-wide initiatives implementation, that report to College Council. Each of these councils includes representation from faculty, administration, classified professionals, and students. These councils use qualitative and quantitative data, feedback from students, federal and statewide policy changes, and input from constituent groups and specific campus committees to formulate recommendations for College Council. College Council reviews and approves recommendations from these councils, including resource allocation recommendations, and then forwards the recommendations to the College President. Within this governance structure, the Online Teaching and Learning Committee (OTLC) serves as the primary body for guiding innovation and assessment of distance education outcomes. The OTLC reports to the College's Academic Senate (57) and reports out to the Teaching and Learning Committee (58).

Required Documentation

Provide a hyperlink or include documentation for each item below. Be sure to provide a clear, descriptive name for each document.

- Documentation of the institution's advertising and recruitment policies, demonstrating alignment with the *Policy on Institutional Advertising and Student Recruitment.*

  The Cuyamaca College Catalog (59) details the College's advertising and recruitment processes in the Services for Students: High School and Community Relations (Outreach) Section. In addition, student outreach and recruitment activities and events can be found on the College's Outreach Department webpage (60) and on the College's home page (61).

- Policies/processes for student complaints, demonstrating how the institution communicates process to students and handles complaints with due process.

  The Cuyamaca College Student complaints follow an established process outlined on the Student Complains webpage (62) and Grievance Process webpage (63).

- Documentation of institution's implementation of the required components of the Title IV Program (if applicable), including:
  - Findings from any audits and program/other review activities by the U.S. Department of Education (ED)
  - Evidence of timely corrective action taken in response to any Title IV audits or program reviews.

A [Financial Aid Program Review (64)](#) was completed for Cuyamaca College by the Department of Education. The College provided a [response (65)](#) in 2020. The College continues to make strides in improving efficiency of financial aid processes, with the implementation of a new financial aid system (Colleague) in 2024 and new disbursement schedules to better meet student needs and ensure accuracy in disbursements.

See *Policy on Institutional Compliance with Title IV*

Supporting Evidence

> Please provide any evidence that supports the narrative above as separate files. Please link evidence where appropriate in the narrative. Do not embed evidence files into the application.

1. [Cuyamaca College Mission Vision and Values](#)
2. [Cuyamaca College Environmental Scan 2022](#)
3. [Cuyamaca College Enrollment Trends](#)
4. [GCCCD Return to Campus Student Survey Report 2021](#)
5. [Spring 2024 Enrollment Report 9 Weeks After Term Start](#)
6. [Cuyamaca College Comprehensive Plan 2022-2028](#)
7. [Accounting Program Review Data by Modality](#)
8. [Child Development Comprehensive Program Review 2022](#)
9. [Sociology Program Review Annual Update 2023](#)
10. [OTLC Charge and Composition](#)
11. [OTLC Minutes 5-13-2022](#)
12. [Cuyamaca College Distance Education Plan](#)
13. [Cuyamaca College Equity Affirmation](#)
14. [Cuyamaca College POCR Reviewer Checklist](#)
15. [Curriculum Committee Charge and Composition](#)
16. [Course Addition and Distance Education Approval Form GEND 116](#)
17. [Course Outline of Record COUN 120](#)
18. [Art Comprehensive Program Review 2021](#)
19. [Biology Comprehensive Program Review 2022](#)
20. [SLO Assessment on Canvas Presentation](#)
21. [Counseling Comprehensive Program Review 2023](#)
22. [General Counseling Comparison Report](#)
23. [Library Survey Results 2024](#)
24. [Tutoring Comprehensive Program Review 2022](#)
25. [Library Program Review Annual Update 2023](#)
26. [Cuyamaca College Regular and Effective Contact Policy](#)
27. [Cuyamaca College Regular and Substantive Interaction Policy](#)
28. [OTLC Minutes 11-3-2023](#)
29. [Academic Senate Minutes 11-16-2023](#)
30. [CVC OEI Course Design Rubric](#)
31. [Cuyamaca College POCR Process](#)
32. [Cuyamaca College POCR Training Webpage](#)
33. [AP 4105](#)
34. [Cuyamaca College Canvas Login Instructions](#)
35. [GCCCD Fraud Guidance for Instructors](#)
36. [CCCCO Minimum Qualifications for Faculty 2023](#)
37. [Cuyamaca College Teaching Online Webpage](#)