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Request for Institutional Change - Change in Educational Offerings

Question 1:

What is the change being proposed?

State the specific change being proposed.

Danville Area Community College (DACC) currently has approval from the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools to offer the Associate of Science and Arts Degree online, as well as degrees and certificates in Accounting, Marketing and Management, and Travel and Tourism. DACC is requesting that the HLC grant the College approval to offer any of its existing and future degrees and certificates through online delivery, as deemed appropriate by the College. This request is in keeping with the original dream for the College, which according to Mary Miller in *A Chance for All* was that anyone who wanted a college education should be able to get one. DACC's goal is not to offer all degrees and certificates online immediately. It is to be able to respond quickly to community needs as they arise. At this time the College is prepared to offer the Associate in General Studies Degree entirely online.

State the expected outcomes of this proposed change.

The exponential growth of online learning has greatly impacted all post-secondary institutions and has positively altered how students can gain access to education. The College is hopeful that the major outcome of offering degree and certificate programs online will be increased numbers of students completing degrees and certificates. The numbers clearly indicate that students are interested in online learning, and this interest has grown over time. In fiscal year 2005 just under 900 students were enrolled in one or more online classes. By 2006, 1273 students were enrolled in at least one online class. The number had grown to 1371 in 2007 and 1382 in 2008. This represents a fifty percent increase in just four years.

Not only has the number of students enrolled in online courses increased but also the number of credit hours generated by online classes, going from 6,934 in 2006 to 8,859 in 2008, an increase of nearly 28 percent. The percentage of credit hours generated by online courses compared to total credit hours has increased also, as the following table shows. These figures clearly show that students are interested in online course offerings. It is assumed that, with more degree and certificate programs tailored for

online delivery, these percentages will rise substantially and the number and percentage of students who complete their programs of study online will increase accordingly.

Percent of Credit Hours Generated by Online Courses Fiscal Years 2006-2008

	FY 2006	FY 2007	FY 2008
Total Credit Hours*	60,035	59,140	58,793
Online Credit Hours	6,934	7,729	8,859
Online Credit Hours as a Percent of Total Hours	11.5%	13%	15%

**Does not include Department of Corrections Credit Hours
Source: DACC Institutional Research Office*

A secondary outcome of increased enrollment in online courses and programs is enhanced services for students. DACC maintains an online presence to assist students enrolled in online courses and programs. Enhanced services already exist for students utilizing online delivery of courses in the areas of academic advisement and counseling, admissions and records, career services, financial aid, the library, student support, and technical support. These are described in greater detail under Question 5. Another secondary outcome of increased enrollment in online courses and programs is financial growth for the College. DACC has experienced positive financial returns from offering more academic programs via the internet. With more and more students enrolling in online courses, the College is witnessing increased credit hours which results in increased state apportionments and revenue generated by tuition. In addition to increased enrollment leading to financial gain by the College, the way many of the certificates and degrees have been designed has resulted in decreased expenditures relative to faculty salaries, operation, and maintenance.

For example, DACC currently participates in the Illinois Community College Online (ILCCO) system, where participating Illinois community colleges share courses statewide. DACC utilizes the course-sharing practice in order to offer DACC students the opportunity to enroll in online courses that the College presently does not offer. This course-sharing concept is central to DACC's ability to offer certificates and degrees online. The ILCCO clearinghouse makes it easier to offer several programs at DACC that might not otherwise be offered exclusively online. DACC currently utilizes the ILCCO courses along with the DACC online courses to offer the Associate of Science and Arts degree online and will use ILCCO offerings in developing future online degrees and certificates. Between fiscal years 2004 and 2008, twenty-nine students took advantage of DACC's collaboration with ILLCO.

Project the impact of this proposed change on DACC's current mission, the numbers and types of students to be served, and the breadth of DACC's educational offerings.

This change will help DACC fulfill its mission to meet the life-long academic needs of the communities it serves. For small community colleges like DACC, making educational opportunities available to its residents is paramount. DACC students, past and present, have been faced with many barriers to their educational goals – family, work, and in many cases travel. With the College district stretching over 1,200 square miles, students sometimes have to drive over forty miles to attend classes at the single-campus institution. With today's innovations in technology, the roadblocks many students have encountered in the past en route to their educational goals and dreams have been eliminated. By offering degrees and certificates online, DACC provides students with greater opportunity to enroll in programs of study that they often could not work into their schedules due to family, work, or distance.

This change also will also allow the College to meet its core value of adaptability, which DACC defines as “continuously meeting the needs of those the College serves.” In today's world, the College is preparing students for jobs that don't even exist yet. New programs are constantly being developed, particularly in the areas of technology and green collar jobs. The College needs the flexibility to be able to offer any or all of these new degrees and certificates online, if DACC determines through its planning process that online delivery is appropriate. The College currently has the capacity to respond quickly when the need arises to offer a degree or certificate online, but it does not have the authority. If the College must go through the approval process each time the need for an online degree or certificate is identified, it cannot meet that need in a timely fashion.

While this change has the potential to positively impact a wide variety of students, the College is most interested in the positive impact it could have on working adults who want to complete their education. The College anticipates that up to one quarter of students enrolled in online courses would opt for programs of study that can be obtained solely by online delivery, were they available. These students would be “working adults” ages 21-64. As the following chart shows, the percentage of individuals taking online courses who were between these ages increased from 59 percent fall 2006 to 73 percent fall 2007. Offering more online degrees and certificates would allow for more working adults to further their education while still on the job.

Online Enrollment Comparison by Age and Semester Fiscal Years 2007 and 2008

Age Breakdown	Fall 2006		Spring 2007		Fall 2007		Spring 2008	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
17-20	236	41	310	44	186	27	226	29
21-64	342	59	398	56	496	73	555	71
65+	0	0	0	0	1	-	0	0
TOTAL Enrolled	578		708		682		781	

Source: DACC Institutional Research Office

Offering more degrees and certificates online could directly lead to the broadening of the College's educational offerings. DACC provides students with many choices and options when it comes to selecting a major or program of study. In addition to the Associate of Science and Arts degree, which DACC currently offers online, the College offers an Associate of Engineering Science degree and an Associate in General Studies degree. DACC also awards the Associate of Applied Science degree and career certificates in a wide range of programs, from allied health to computer programming, from criminal justice to early childhood education. Approval of this change request would allow the College to offer these existing degrees and certificates online. It would also allow the College to investigate developing new degrees and certificates that would be appropriate for online delivery. Thus this change request could directly lead to the broadening of the College's educational offerings.

Identify the Commission's policy relevant to this change.

The Commission's policy relevant to this proposed change is I.C.2.b. The creation of online degree and certificate programs at DACC is a change in educational offerings.

Question 2:

What factors led the institution to undertake the proposed change?

Describe the relationship between the proposed change and ongoing institutional planning.

DACC's ongoing institutional planning process utilizes information collected through the Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) process and the annual planning sessions conducted by College faculty, administration, classified staff and board members. The various constituent groups responded each year to the 2006-2008 Strategic Plan by providing action statements that detailed the progress made on the plan. These same groups were instrumental in the development of the current strategic plan. The data collected via CQI and the annual planning sessions to update the strategic plan is also

used in the budget development process, and the Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) program review process. In addition, the system for planning and establishing institutional goals applies to the planning of the annual assessment report and the annual report to the ICCB. The report documents DACC’s progress in achieving common institutional and mission-specific core indicators of effectiveness. Each constituent group on an annual basis addresses the mission-specific and common institutional indicators in their respective department and division goal setting and planning and the data collected from these groups is used for the campus-wide planning. The following illustrates DACC’s institutional planning and goal-setting activities:

August/January	Department/Division Planning & Goal Setting
March/April	Administrative, Faculty, Classified Staff & Board of Trustees Planning Sessions (including Budget Committee)
June-August	Progress on Strategic Plan, Program Review & ICCB Report Organized
September	Institutional Planning and Effectiveness update delivered to Board of Trustees

DACC is committed to this comprehensive planning process to ensure that ownership of goals and initiatives can be achieved at the department and division level of the College. The decision to develop degrees and certificates for online delivery is a direct outcome of the DACC strategic planning process.

Describe the needs analysis related to this proposed change.

The increasing interest DACC students have shown in online education is the single best reason the College is requesting this institutional change. The total number of students enrolled in online courses has grown dramatically. As stated previously, the number of students enrolled in at least one online course increased by over 50 percent between 2005 and 2008. The increase in the number and percentage of online students who are “working adults” was also a factor.

The staff members in the counseling and advising department have conducted surveys of students over a three-year period to determine course and program preferences. Upon registration, students are polled as to what new courses or programs would interest them if added to the DACC curriculum. The results of this informal interview-based survey indicate that students at DACC would like to have more online course offerings, particularly in the general education and transfer areas. Students have expressed interest in having the option to complete their degree or certificate program online. In fall 2007

on-line students were asked if they would be interested in completing an entire degree online; fifty percent said they would be.

The Vice-President of Instruction and Student Services has talked to numerous local business groups about the College's online offerings, seeking input on both what DACC offers, and what it should offer. These groups have included the Vermillion County Labor Management Council, the Chamber of Commerce, and Vermillion Advantage, the local economic development group. In addition the president and members of the Board of Trustees have met with community groups in an initiative called "Coffee and Conversation." All of these business and community groups were asked what courses, programs, and online services the College should add. In general all of these groups expressed satisfaction with DACC's online offerings but several employers said that it would be better for their workers if DACC could offer entire degrees online. That way the employees could continue to work and complete their education at the same time.

Members of advisory committees for career and technical programs were also asked what online offerings the College should add. Members of the fire science advisory were very interested in the possibility of offering a fire officer certificate online. Participants at the early childhood advisory were interested in online offerings in that program area because the law now requires child care workers to have an associate degree, whereas in the past they needed just thirty hours of college credit, with six hours from the area of early childhood. Professionals in the field are having difficulty completing the required course work due to their work schedules, and an online degree would help them. Another area that expressed interest in an online program was health information technology, again because students are working in the field while trying to go to school.

Describe the involvement of various constituencies in developing this proposed change.

The proposed change in status originated at the Office of Instruction meeting and was then developed by the Academic Affairs committee at DACC. Academic Affairs is one of six Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) committees of the College. The CQI process allows all constituents of the College an opportunity to share in the idea generation and decision-making of the College. The Academic Affairs Committee submitted the proposal to the CQI Quality Council, which reviewed the proposal and determined that all constituent groups had reviewed the request for institutional change. The request was then sent to the president of the college for formal approval.

Question 3:

What necessary approvals have been obtained to implement the proposed change?

Identify the internal approvals required and provide documentation confirming these actions.

Upon review by the appropriate groups, the proposal was presented to and approved by the president of the college, who in turn presented it to the Board of Trustees for review. After this internal approval for a request for institutional change, the proposal is being submitted to the Higher Learning Commission. **A copy of the draft of the institutional change request that was submitted to the board for review prior to their meeting on February 24, 2009, is available in the Resource Room.**

Identify the external approvals required and provide documentation confirming these actions.

The Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) and the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) are the two external entities that govern Illinois community colleges. The ICCB and IBHE must approve all degrees and certificates prior to their being offered by the College. Neither ICCB nor IBHE require prior approval before the College can offer a degree or certificate online. The HLC is the only entity that has the authority to approve offering degrees and certificates online.

Question 4:

What impact might the proposed change have on challenges identified by the Commission as part of or subsequent to the last comprehensive visit?

Identify any challenges directly related to the proposed change.

The College was awarded ten years of continued accreditation after the last comprehensive visit in March 1999. DACC was required to submit within three years a progress report on the integration, using data based decision making, of the following processes: strategic planning, Continuous Quality Improvement, budgeting, and assessment. In June 2002 DACC submitted the progress report, and it was approved by the commission in August 2002. **Copies of the team report from the 1999 comprehensive visit and the progress report are available in the Resource Room.**

In 2004 the College submitted a Request for Institutional Change, seeking approval from the Commission to offer existing degrees and certificates online. A team conducted a focused visit to the College in February of that year. Their recommendation was that DACC be granted permission to offer its degree and certificate programs in Accounting, Marketing and Management, and Travel and Tourism and its Associate in Science and Arts degree primarily through distance delivery. The team identified three challenges: the technology plan lacked timelines for implementation of budget links;

the operating budget did not establish a specific cost center for distance learning; and there was no established plan for online course or program development. Timelines and budget links were therefore not available. **Copies of the Request for Institutional Change and the team report are available in the Resource Room.**

How has DACC addressed the concern that the technology plan lacks timelines for implementation of budget links?

In response to this concern, the Technology Team developed the 2004-2006 Technology Plan. This plan was divided into three areas: data systems, instructional media, and computer and network services. It focused on planning; budgeting; hardware and software upgrades; support for faculty, staff, and students; access for students; support and training for office users, and pilot projects. This plan clearly identified needs, and as a result of this plan, many improvements were made across campus, including the implementation of student network accounts, expansion of the DACC website, introduction of wireless networking, and constant upgrading of server hardware and software. What this plan could not address, however, was how to continue to fund technology in general and, specifically, how to pay for a new management information system when the funds the state had previously provided for technology had been eliminated. In 2005 the Board of Trustees saw a window of opportunity and took it. A building bond, which had been issued in 2003, was due to retire. Board approval of a new bond would have minimal to no impact on the property tax levy rate and would not require a tax increase, thus placing the least financial burden on the communities the College serves. The board voted to borrow \$1 million in debt certificates and issued technology bonds in December 2005. These funds were used to purchase the \$1.7 million Datatel/Colleague system.

The Technology Team then developed a new plan for 2007-2010. This plan, too, addressed the areas of data systems, instructional media, and computer and network services. It also focused on planning; budgeting; hardware and software upgrades; support for faculty, staff, and students; access for students; support and training for office users, and pilot projects. In addition to the ongoing challenges of upgrading hardware and software and providing additional services to students and other end users, two new concerns were identified. One was the need to provide more support for online learners, and the other was the need to purchase a new learning management system (LMS) for online delivery of instruction. In 2008 the Board of Trustees again saw the opportunity to provide the needed funding for technology with the least financial impact on the communities the College serves. The technology bonds issued previously were due to retire, so in November 2008 the board approved the issuance of a \$1 million technology/equipment funding bond. This will provide \$500,000 per year for expenses related to technology. The College then developed a list of all computers on campus and ranked them in order of age, with the oldest being first. In March DACC began replacing the oldest computers in the labs first and will continue working through the

list until all computers on campus have been upgraded. Every computer will then be upgraded every three years. The funds generated from these bonds will also be used to purchase SmartBoards, projectors, and other technology; to purchase the new learning management system; and to defray the cost associated with the additional resources to support online students. The learning management system is discussed in greater detail under Question Five. **The technology plans are available online at <http://www.dacc.edu/selfstudy> and in the Resource Room.**

How has DACC addressed the concern that the operating budget does not establish a specific cost center for distance learning?

Beginning in fiscal year 1995, a budget was established for distance learning to support the costs related to providing instruction at several area high schools. Cameras and computers were used to link these “distant” classrooms together for two-way communication between instructor and students. As time went by, other methods of instruction were included and the Distance Learning Department was renamed “alternative delivery.” The demand for these types of courses declined while the demand for online courses increased. The costs related to online delivery instruction were budgeted in various departments and not included in a single department budget. Beginning in fiscal year 2006, an additional department titled Online Support was created. Items paid from this budget include salaries and benefits for the staff that provide support to faculty and students, maintain the learning management system, and assist with on-line course development, as well as software and hardware related to online learning. The budget is monitored and reviewed annually to ensure that sufficient funds are available to support the projected activities, demands, and trends in this method of instruction. This budget was enhanced with the issuance of the \$1 million technology/equipment funding bond, which was described in a previous section. This provides approximately \$500,000 per year for technology, including the costs needed to support online learning at DACC.

How has DACC addressed the concern that there is no established plan for online course or program development and timelines and budget links are therefore not available?

Since the 2004 Request for Institutional Change, the College has designed and developed an infrastructure to support the development and growth of online needs. First and foremost, oversight for online learning was placed under the Vice President of Instruction and Student Services. This was because online offerings cross every division and department through academics and student services. With the assistance of his team, the Vice President manages the planning, development, budgeting, production, retention, and assessment of online offerings and services. The move to centralized online offerings and services has helped the College provide the resources needed to support online learning, which has grown exponentially over the last decade.

The plan for online course and program development is linked closely with the process for developing any course or program. The Office of Instruction, which is comprised of all department heads who report to the Vice-President of Instruction and Student Services, meets every Wednesday. Each month the notice of request for new degrees and certificates issued by the ICCB is distributed and discussed. Are there any new degrees or certificates that the College should consider offering? If so, should any of them be offered online? Annually this group reviews the Cooperative Agreements Annual Report to see where the College is losing students to other institutions. For example, over the last three years students have gone to Parkland, DACC's nearest competitor, for the following programs: construction (16 students); dental hygiene (26 students); diesel mechanics (24 students); and mass communication (15 students). Discussion among department heads focuses on questions like, should DACC be offering any of these degrees and certificates? If so, should any be offered on-line?

Annually the vice-president shares the development of an online course, program, and services planning worksheet. Deans and department heads are asked to fill out the planning worksheet, which looks at the availability of online courses, programs, and services at DACC and at other colleges. The worksheet asks for any requests for online courses that may have come from students or the community. It also asks for any online courses, programs, or services DACC should develop or faculty and staff are considering developing. The individuals completing the worksheets are to list timelines, budgets and resources needed for the on-line courses, programs, or services they have identified. These worksheets are summarized and shared with the Office of Instruction. Potential courses, programs, degrees, and certificates then go through the normal planning processes of the College. **Copies of the completed worksheets and summaries are available in the Resource Room.**

The addition of an instructional designer/academic web technologist has helped the College establish and maintain the plan and timeline for the development of online courses. This person has already established a training schedule for faculty wanting to move their existing courses to Blackboard. Many faculty are designing new online courses because they and their students have the support of the instructional designer.

Question 5:

What are DACC's plans to implement and sustain the proposed change?

Describe the involvement of appropriately credentialed faculty and experienced staff necessary to accomplish this proposed change.

Curriculum development at DACC is driven by the College's award-winning faculty, who are ready to meet the many educational needs of a diverse student population. The faculty are well-trained in the leading web-based classroom technologies and are

committed to offering many of their traditional degree and certificate programs online. Faculty who wish to develop a course or program first submit a proposal to the appropriate dean. The dean presents the proposal at the Office of Instruction meeting, where all academic deans review the contents and offer approval. The dean then takes it to the Academic Affairs Committee for approval. Upon their approval, it is submitted to the Vice President of Instruction and Student Services. After he signs off on the proposal, the Director of Institutional Effectiveness submits it to ICCB for approval. The process is the same for traditional and online courses and programs. Once ICCB approves the course, it is added to the College catalog and the course schedule. The syllabus is shared with the Transfer Articulation Coordinator, who submits it to numerous four-year colleges and universities. If three of them accept the course, it is listed as a transfer course in the College catalog.

DACC requires that all full-time and part-time faculty be evaluated by their students at the conclusion of each semester. Tenured faculty are required to be evaluated by students in three of their classes. Non-tenured and part-time faculty are evaluated by students in all of their classes. The same evaluation system is employed for courses delivered online. Students are able to access the evaluation instrument from the virtual class site and the responses are archived in a secure DACC database. The Director of Institutional Effectiveness generates summary reports for all classes, both traditional and online. The reports are forwarded to the Vice-President of Instruction and Student Services, the appropriate dean, and the respective faculty member prior to the beginning of the next semester of instruction. The vice-president and the deans use the student evaluations as one artifact of evidence in determining teaching performance. If patterns exist in the evaluations, the deans devise remediation plans for the given faculty member. The survey results do not factor into salary schedules or faculty contract bargaining.

In addition to student evaluation of instruction, the deans evaluate faculty on an annual basis. These evaluations consist of the dean conducting classroom observations of each tenured and non-tenured faculty member. The deans visit online classrooms, as well as traditional classrooms. Evaluations of these visits are documented and each faculty member meets with the respective academic dean to discuss strengths and weaknesses of instruction. These performance evaluations, along with the student evaluation of instruction results, assist the dean and the faculty member in setting goals for the year and addressing remediation areas.

Describe the administrative structure necessary to support the proposed change.

While day-to-day oversight for courses and programs is the responsibility of the dean of each of the academic divisions, the Vice President of Instruction and Student Services carries the ultimate responsibility for all courses and programs. Oversight of all online degree and certificate programs at DACC adheres to this governance policy. To support this proposal to offer more degrees and certificates online, the College expanded

the role of the instructional technology librarian into a full-time instructional designer / academic web technologist, effective May 2008. This person serves as the first point of contact for online learning at DACC and works with faculty to improve teaching and learning through effective use of technology, thus providing a more dynamic and substantial learning experience for students.

The instructional designer supports faculty in the development of online, hybrid, and web-enhanced courses. Some of the services include designing engaging interactive materials for use in the classroom, providing special topics presentations and workshops, helping faculty select software and hardware solutions, and developing instructional materials that are appealing and media rich. The goals of the instructional designer/academic web technologist for 2007-2010 in regards to faculty include: fostering and strengthening collaboration with current online teaching faculty, as well as faculty who aren't currently teaching online but are interested in doing so; assisting faculty in the transition to Blackboard; training and assisting faculty with the enrollment and grading functions of WebAdvisor; and researching MIS system functions that would allow faculty to communicate most effectively with students.

In addition to working with faculty, the instructional designer assists in online student retention efforts by providing quality technical support to ensure student success and completion. She hosts online learning orientations at the beginning of each semester for students who have registered for their first online course at DACC. Orientations are free, non-credit, one-hour sessions that focus on technical and practical issues including: recognizing key characteristics of good online learners; identifying instructors' expectations of online students; making technical preparations, including demonstration of USB storage devices; accessing technical support; establishing an ID and password; contacting the instructor; locating and logging into courses; course navigation; communicating within courses; taking quizzes/tests; submitting assignments; and accessing library resources remotely. Currently these sessions are offered face-to-face only. An online student satisfaction survey is administered to all participants at the end of each session. She also provides technical support during her scheduled working hours via the student's preferred method: phone, e-mail, or in-person. Another of the instructional designer's goals for 2007-2010 is to re-structure the online learning orientation format to acquaint students with the newly adopted Blackboard platform. Additional goals are to re-design the student tutorial, the online learning web pages, the PowerPoint presentation, and pertinent handouts. In addition to the face-to-face orientations, it is anticipated that an online equivalent will be developed with the campus adoption of Blackboard. An online student satisfaction survey will still be administered to all participants in order to evaluate and measure the success of the sessions.

The instructional designer played a leadership role in the selection of the new learning management system (LMS) for online courses. Concerns over the Blackboard/

WebCT merger, the impact on instructional technology funding in terms of increased licensing, hosting, and local support costs, the limitations encountered by older software, as well as the continuing maturity of open-source options made this a mission-critical issue facing online learning at DACC. These issues necessitated the investigation and evaluation of next generation LMS platforms for future selection and implementation of a successor to the current LMS, WebCT 4.1, Campus Edition.

Through the Technology Team, as well as through faculty and constituent involvement, the investigation of viable LMS platforms began in February 2007. Several group discussions and a LMS features survey yielded a list of faculty needs and technical and functional requirements that were important to the individuals involved in online learning at DACC. These requirements and/or features included:

- transparency, ease of use, student friendly navigation
- a robust platform that includes internal e-mail, intuitive online grade book and student record management (including student tracking), online assessments, discussion board, calendar, assignment drop box, syllabus, built-in HTML editor, equation editor, template driven, selective release, content modules, integrated media capabilities (video & audio)
- ability to import Publisher Test Banks and/or Publisher Content
- 24/7 technical support for students and faculty
- online support tutorials
- Lightweight Directory Access Protocol (LDAP) integration
- Datatel integration
- hosted solution options

The evaluation phase continued with on-campus vendor product demonstrations which culminated in a matrix that aided in the decision making process by providing product feature comparisons as well as a rating scale of each platform investigated. The rating scale was determined through campus-wide input. EduTools, a web-based LMS comparison tool, was used as a guide throughout the development of the matrix (<http://www.edutools.com>). The timeline for implementation was as follows:

Date	Event	Responsibility	Completed ✓
Evaluation			
Summer/ Early Fall 2008	Continue evaluation process Determine deal-breakers Develop use cases according to faculty, student, and technicians' use of LMS Select rating scale and categories for matrix Develop and discuss matrix	DACC	✓
Pre-Implementation			
Sept/Oct 2008	Recommend and select LMS platform/vendor; Contact vendor	DACC	✓
	Vendor develops recommended solution, implementation steps, timeline and budget	Vendor	✓
	Vendor sends recommendation to DACC for review	Vendor	✓
	Conference call to review Vendor recommendation	Vendor/DACC	✓
Nov/Dec 2008	Decision by DACC on LMS platform/vendor	DACC	✓
	Contract preparation	Vendor	✓
	Contract review/revisions	Vendor/DACC	✓
	Approval of recommendation by Board of Trustees	DACC	✓
	Contract signed and purchase order issued	DACC	✓
	Agree on Success Criteria measurements/surveys	Vendor/DACC	✓
Implementation			
Jan 2009	Project kick-off	Vendor/DACC	✓
	DACC receives access to the LMS platform	Vendor/DACC	✓
Spring 2009	Initial faculty training sessions begin	Vendor/DACC	
	Limited pilot available for early adopter faculty	DACC	
Feb/Mar 2009	Automated integration / LDAP authentication is tested	Vendor/DACC	
June 2009	Larger pilot available for second wave of adopters	DACC	
August 2009	Full implementation of LMS platform	DACC	
On-going	Trouble-shoot and support online teaching faculty	Vendor/DACC	
On-going	Evaluate success criteria	Vendor/DACC	

Describe how the institution will make learning resources and support services available to students.

Students who enroll in the online courses and degree and certificate programs at DACC have access to a wide range of comprehensive educational services through the Student Services Division, including WebAdvisor. They also have access to support and resources through the technology specialist and the library.

The academic advisement and counseling office provides many resources online. These include curriculum guides, listings of general education electives, transfer course information, course schedules, course descriptions, syllabi and textbook information, online course readiness assessments, counselor schedules and e-mail address, student news, instructions for new students, and a checklist for graduation and transfer requirements. There are also links that list advisement tools, financial assistance, and career services. One of the most valuable services is the transfer articulation link that allows students to view articulation tables and guides that outline how courses will transfer as general credit or specific courses to four year institutions in Illinois. These guides help to minimize difficulty with transferring credit hours.

The admissions and records office webpage provides a great deal of information for online as well as traditional students. The DACC application is available, as well as the list of records needed for admission to the College. Students can find out how to register for classes, how to proceed after registration, how to withdraw from or drop a course, and how to request a transcript. The site also offers information on the DACC grading scale and how to calculate grades. Students can access residency information and how to change residency, as well as pre-applications for international students. Through its website career services offers a summary of services available to students. These include links to website pages on job postings, online career assessments, summaries of various careers, and job search information. Students can post resumes and maintain a resume portfolio through College Central network.

The financial aid office website offers information on need-based programs, scholarships for students, the federal family educational loan program, standards of academic progress, school refund policy, the FACTS payment plan program, and campus security report. The website also provides links to other financial aid resources, including the Federal Application for Financial Student Aid (FAFSA), which students can complete and submit online. Students can learn about and access many services through the Student Success Center's webpage. They can request a tutor, apply to be a tutor, or review the tutor job description. They can also access information about learning and physical disabilities, workshops and seminars offered, faculty and student resources, and complete intake and release of information forms.

As a result of the College's migration to the Datatel/Colleague management information system, all students have access to WebAdvisor. They can now register for classes, check their schedules, and view their academic and financial records, among other things, online. This resource is especially beneficial to online students who otherwise would have to come to campus to access some of these resources and services. In addition to these online services, students receive assistance from the web technology specialist, primarily through telephone and e-mail correspondence. As previously described, the specialist is trained in Blackboard, WebCT, and other online course delivery platforms

and helps online students with problems they encounter accessing or participating in their online courses.

The DACC library provides online students with direct access to the collections of seventy-five other academic libraries throughout the state, including the multimillion volume collection at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. The library also provides online students with an excellent selection of electronic resources, all accessible via the web. This e-resource collection gives DACC online students access to approximately 17,000 newspapers, magazines and scholarly journals in full text as well as a rich cross-section of electronic reference encyclopedias and other reference materials, primary source collections, a test databank and e-books. Reference librarians provide several ways in which online users can request help. In addition to traditional face-to-face and phone reference, users can contact the librarians via email or by means of a real-time instant messaging (IM) chat through the library's home page.

Provide financial data/information that documents DACC's capacity to implement and sustain the proposed change.

DACC provides the following financial profile to substantiate its ability to develop and sustain the proposed online degree and certificate program. The fiscal year 2009 unrestricted budget details that DACC had sufficient funds to meet all of its obligations. The total unrestricted budget for 2009 is \$18,177,462. This budget provides for reputable faculty, state-of-the art computer technology, and diligent student services personnel. The restricted budget for fiscal year 2009 is \$9,450,013. These funds are for the most part state and federal grants that must be expended for a particular project, service, or student aid. These monies could indirectly impact the success of online degrees and certificates by providing programs and services to students enrolled in online programs of study. For example, the TRiO Student Support Services program provides tutoring, counseling, special workshops, and additional grant aid to eligible students, who can be online. For fiscal year 2009 online support is budgeted at \$127,535. This includes funding for the online learning platform, administrative and technical staff, and academic support. This budget also covers the development of up to ten new courses over the fiscal year.

Specify the timeline used to implement the proposed change.

DACC's Associate in General Studies Degree is ready to be offered entirely online, and, if the College's request for change is approved, will be offered online as early as fall 2009. Two of the programs the College is considering offering entirely online are Criminal Justice and Health Information Technology. Upon Commission approval of this change request, the College will take the suggestion to offer these degrees and certificates completely online to the respective advisory committee meetings in fall 2009 for discussion. The College is in the process of developing a new Associate of Arts in Teaching degree, which could be offered completely online. It is also investigating a

new certificate program in homeland security that could be entirely online. These must be approved first by the ICCB and IBHE but could be available online as early as fall 2010.

Question 6:

What are DACC's strategies to evaluate the proposed change?

Describe the measures DACC will use to document the achievement of its expected outcomes.

DACC will employ a comprehensive program review and institutional accountability process to document and report upon the progress and achievement of expected outcomes of all online programs. The program review process is mandated by the ICCB and facilitates the review of all academic programs of the College on a five-year cycle. This review requires an exhaustive assessment and evaluation of the viability, feasibility, adequacy, and necessity of the program under review. The reviewed program must also demonstrate a comprehensive system of assessment to ensure that student learning outcomes are embedded in the curriculum. The assessment data collected from the review is used to determine improvement strategies (curriculum, sequencing, teaching method, teaching style, textbook, etc.). As a result of the formal review process ICCB will choose to: continue the program at its current level of activity, with minor modifications, or with significant modifications; discontinue the program; or schedule the program for further review in the coming year.

In addition to the program review, ICCB requires that the College identify and report progress made on mission-specific core indicators of effectiveness. This type of institutional accountability ensures that all divisions and departments of the College set goals and objectives that are aligned with the mission of the college. The annual report documents how these core indicators were addressed throughout the year, what strategies have been developed to remedy shortfalls and what actions will be taken in the coming year to meet or exceed these indicators of effectiveness. The data from the indicators are used to drive decision-making of the College relative to the budget, staffing, new program development, etc. For example, successful performance in developmental education and subsequent related courses is one of DACC's core indicators of effectiveness. One measure of success is the percentage of developmental education students who successfully complete their developmental education courses. The College looks at the percentage for all sections of a particular course, but pays particular attention to the percentages for online sections of that course as compared to traditional, face-to-face sections.

Describe how the assessment of student learning is integrated into the institution's assessment program.

The deans, along with the Assessment Committee and the Assessment Champions (both of which are discussed in Chapter Five, Student Learning and Effective Teaching) work with faculty in each program area to continually update and assess the effectiveness of the program plans and track student academic achievement in these program areas. Full- and part-time faculty are required to assess at least one course each semester. Faculty routinely assess their online courses, as well as classes offered in a traditional format. Based on faculty responses to a survey administered in fall 2007 and on assessment reports submitted by faculty, it is evident that faculty use a diverse assortment of assessment tools in their classrooms. They are learning more and more about outcomes assessment and their level of understanding has evolved greatly in the assessment of writing, reading and critical thinking. Faculty indicate that assessment is important to their specific program areas and their academic divisions. Participation in departmental assessment activities has grown tremendously, and assessment has become top priority all across campus. Faculty integrate assessment into their daily instructional routines and systematically link assessment results to decision making.

Conclusion

DACC respectfully submits this request for institutional change to offer degrees and certificates online as the College deems appropriate. The change is clearly in line with the College's mission and core values, the College has the capacity to support this change, and the College has already been successful in the delivery of a limited number of degrees and certificates online. Offering additional degrees and certificates online will result in greater access to education for the students of the College and will allow for more members of the workforce to complete their education while still being employed. Approval to offer degrees and certificates online as the College deems appropriate will allow DACC to broaden its educational offerings and respond in a timely manner to needs identified by those it serves.