Distance Education Strategic Plan

Vision Statement

Cultivate and Inspire Innovative Teaching and Learning in Distance Education Through Effective Implementation of Emerging Technologies and Research Based Teaching Practices.

Mission Statement

The mission of Distance Education at Austin Peay State University is to empower faculty and students to effectively employ emerging technologies and research based teaching practices to facilitate greater access to high quality and flexible higher education pathways.

Strategic Goals

Goal 1: Cultivate Online Leadership

Collaborate with internal and external institutional partners to streamline the responsible development and growth of quality online programs.

Objectives

1. Collaborate with administration regularly to identify and address challenges with developing and growing quality, and sustainable online programs.[1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8, 9]
2. Showcase and promote scholarly engagement of talented online faculty and support staff.[10, 11]
3. Embrace and advance innovative teaching and learning models within the institution.[2,4,5,10]

Goal 2: Enhance Online Learner Engagement and Success

Establish strong inter-departmental relationships to enhance online student engagement with the university community and support their success.

Objectives

1. Advocate for the equitable access of academic support services for students enrolled in mixed modality, technology rich learning environments.[6,7]
2. Remove barriers to student success in innovative learning environments.[2,4,6,7]

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[1] Priority Objective 1.1: Grow student population

[2] Priority Objective 1.2.3: Create infrastructure and support systems for new programs

[3] Priority Objective 1.2.4: Increase accessibility of popular programs and courses as identified by provost

[4] Priority Objective 2.1.1: Expand quality program development and curriculum options for students

[5] Priority Objective 2.1.3: Create engaging and high impact learning experiences for undergraduate students that support retention and student growth and development

[6] Priority Objective 2.1.5: Assess and enhance online instruction delivery and programming to increase student success

[7] Priority Objective 2.4.5: Make recommendations to create, and/or expand and assess student success interventions and initiatives

[8] Priority Objective 1.4.1: Support THEC degree enrollment programs

[9] Priority Objective 1.4.2: Support the enrollment of identified THEC focus populations

[10] Priority Objective 2.1.4: Explore innovative methods to increase student success

[11] Priority Objective 2.5.2: Create processes and robust communication plans to share supported interventions with faculty and staff through professional development

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3. Support and create opportunities for students to explore their readiness to participate in mixed modality, technology rich learning environments.[2,5,10,6,7]
4. Ensure online students have access to effective non-instructional support services.[2,6,7]
5. Provide effective, mixed modality, instructional technology training for the student learner.[2,5,10,6,12]
6. Explore and implement creative outreach opportunities for distance education students to feel part of the APSU community.[10,7]

Goal 3: Develop Flexible Training Pathways
Provide flexible, effective and efficient mixed modality, technology rich training pathways that lead to certification.

1. Deliver effective training and programming specifically to target first time faculty, full-time faculty, adjunct faculty, and graduate teaching assistants.[2,4,13,14]
2. Offer an online, flexible, professional development training library that leads to numerous professional development certification programs.[2,4,13, 14]
3. Promote and grow peer review and mentoring opportunities among distance education faculty.[2,4]
4. Market flexible training professional development library to external university and community stakeholders.[3]

Goal 4: Support Universal Design Principles
Promote and implement universal design principles throughout the institution's curriculum.

1. Create and disseminate useful tools and training for improving the employment of accessible course materials.[2,4,6, 15]
2. Collaborate with stakeholders to develop procedures and processes that encourage the responsible acquisition and implementation of instructional technology.[4,12]
3. Collaborate with stakeholders to create, disseminate, and promote streamlined procedures for assisting faculty in evaluating the accessibility of third-party provided instructional materials.[4,15]
4. Encourage appropriate stakeholders to implement a systematic audit strategy for improving the accessibility of online learning materials.[2,4,6, 15]

Goal 5: Support Sustainable Operating Practices
Regularly evaluate and maintain sustainable operating practices.

1. Measure and track how implemented technological resources adequately support innovative teaching and learning at the institution.[2,3,4,10,16,14]

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[12] Priority Objective 3.5.5: Assess and enhance information technology resources and infrastructure to support an increase in online enrollment and online student success
[13] Priority Objective 2.5.1: Provide professional development for faculty and staff to increase student success through teaching and learning and support services
[14] Objective 3.7.2: Assess and enhance the institutional effectiveness reporting process
[15] Priority Objective 4.4.3: Provide incentives for departments to collaborate on diversity initiatives
[16] Priority Objective 3.4.1: Review and assess best practices for resource allocation models to engage campus-wide communication for effective resource allocation

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2. Ensure the responsible acquisition and implementation of accessible, scalable, and sustainable instructional technology.[2,16,12]
3. Identify and pursue alternative funding resources for department initiatives.[17]
4. Conduct regular expense analysis to support yearly budget justification.[16, 18]
5. Develop regular reporting and review cycles of department metrics.[16, 14, 18]
6. Regularly assess gaps in data metrics related to department operations and initiatives and develop data collection and analysis plan.[14, 18]
7. Develop stakeholder feedback opportunities to inform decision making related to services and performance.[2,14,18,19]
8. Seek and enhance partnerships with other state institutions to inform practices, decision-making and shared resources and technology contracts.[20]

Goal 6: Provide Tactical Expertise Related to Distance Education Regulation

Inform university stakeholders of critical distance education reporting functions related to accreditation and governing agencies.

1. Monitor state, regional and federal distance education best practices, policies and procedures.[2,4]
2. Monitor, track and make recommendations for the collection of evidence that assists the institution in complying with accreditation and governing agencies.[2,14]
3. Collaborate with university stakeholders to ensure institution meets state authorization regulations.[2]
4. Regularly assess gaps in data metrics related to distance education regulation and develop data collection and analysis plan.[14]
5. Stay abreast of updates to accreditation and regulatory agency best practices, policies and procedures.[2,4]
6. Promote the responsible use of digital media in mixed-modality, technology-rich learning environments.[2,4]

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[17] Priority Objective 5.5.1: Create and facilitate relationships internally and externally for opportunities that will provide external funding for campus expansion efforts and education innovation (e.g. grants and sponsored research, advancement, academic departments)
[18] Priority Objective 5.4.2: Create inclusive planning environment with transparent processes
[19] Priority Objective 5.4.3: Provide annual opportunities for internal and external planning input
[20] Priority Objective 3.8.2: Develop communication pathways and collaborative programs with other Tennessee institutions of higher education to promote innovation and student success.

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