HIGHER LEARNING COMMISSION

FORM

Change Visit Report

Substantive Change Recommendation Form

After the team reaches a consensus, the team chair completes this form to summarize and document the team's view. Notes and evidence should be essential and concise.

Submit the completed report as a single electronic document (in PDF format) on hlcommission.org/document_upload/.

Institution: Oakland Community College   City, State: Bloomfield Hills, MI   Date Submitted: 06/08/2015

Change Requested: Distance delivery of courses and multiple programs

Peer Review Team: (List names, titles and affiliations of each peer reviewer)
Chair: Dr. Marlene Miner, Associate Dean of Academic Affairs, University of Cincinnati Blue Ash College
Dr. Susanne Bajt, Professor of CIS, William Rainey Harper College, Palatine, Il 60067

Part A: Analysis (See Part 1: General Questions in change application)

1. Classification of Change(s) – Purpose of Visit
   ☒ Complete
   ☐ Incomplete
   Notes or additions if marked incomplete:

2. Special Conditions – Institutional Context
   ☒ Complete
   ☐ Incomplete
   Notes or additions if marked incomplete:

3. Required Approvals
   ☒ Complete
   ☐ Incomplete
   Notes or additions if marked incomplete:

Audience: Peer Reviewers
Form
Published: 2015 © Higher Learning Commission

Process: Substantive Change
Contact: changerequests@hlcommission.org
Page 1

4. For Contractual/Consortial Arrangements
   ☐ Contractual   ☐ Consortial   ☒ Not Applicable

   Check all that apply:
   ☐ on-ground delivery   ☐ distance education   ☐ correspondence education
   ☐ off-campus delivery   ☐ other:

   ☐ Complete
   ☐ Incomplete
   Notes or additions if marked incomplete:

   4a. Key Services Provided by Partner
       ☐ Complete
       ☐ Incomplete
       Notes or additions if marked incomplete:

   4b. Level of Programming and Enrollment Affected
       ☐ Complete
       ☐ Incomplete
       Notes or additions if marked incomplete:

   4c. Overall Proportion of Affected Programs Provided by Partner
       ☐ Complete
       ☐ Incomplete
       Notes or additions if marked incomplete:

5. Direct Assessment Competency-based Programs: credit hour equivalencies for the program and for student learning of the proposed change.
   ☐ Acceptable
   ☐ Acceptable if Modified
   ☐ Not Acceptable
   ☒ Not Applicable
   Evidence:

6. **Essential Elements**. The categories below relate to the evidence expected across subsections of Part 2 of the change application.

   6a. Planning and Design of the proposed change, including preparation for and fit of the proposed change to the institution.

Audience: Peer Reviewers
Form
Published: 2015 © Higher Learning Commission

Process: Substantive Change
Contact: changerequests@hlcommission.org
Page 2

☐ Acceptable

☒ Not Acceptable

Evidence:

The Chancellor and his cabinet are committed to distance education as it is in the best interest of OCC students to offer multiple delivery modalities. Discussions with the Vice-Chair of the Board of Trustees confirm the commitment of the Board to distance learning. The faculty share this commitment, as evidenced through interviews, in their passion to serve the students and deliver a high quality educational experience. The three-year Educational Master Plan includes the development of a strategic program of distance learning as one of its twelve objectives. OCC will soon be entering Year 3 of the Plan. However, discussions in multiple meetings with administration and faculty revealed that the accountability measures listed for Year 2 have not yet been completed.

A"Master Information Technology Plan" was developed in 2013 before the Strategic Planning Master Plan. The committees with responsibility for the technology plan have since been restructured, with a new advisory committee established. A number of items listed in the plan have not been funded since these are being revisited.

One necessary milestone is the hiring of the Associate Dean for Distance Learning, but this position has not yet been posted. While plans are in place to have this position filled before the Fall Semester of 2015, the filling of this position is pivotal in the administration of a robust online learning program. The Action Plan Update (5/5/15) of the Educational Master Plan, as well as discussions with administration and faculty, confirm that online mandatory training for students and faculty, online student advising, online tutoring, and online book purchasing using financial aid are each being piloted in Summer, 2015. Meanwhile, the standardization of online course design, the review process for existing online courses, the development of online course evaluations, and the marketing plan for online courses and programs have not been completed. While many plans are in place to implement a comprehensive distance learning program that includes online degrees, several of the key elements are not yet implemented or completed for OCC to effectively offer online degrees.

6b. Capacity for the proposed change, including resources and commitment of the institution. Provide an evaluation of the sufficiency, qualifications and experience of the faculty teaching the discipline and at the level of the proposed change.

☒ Acceptable

☐ Not Acceptable

Evidence:

The Academic Technology Group (ATG) and Technology Management Committee (TMC) work together to provide training and professional development for online faculty. Meetings with members of both of these groups confirm that faculty who are engaged in online learning share ih the goals of OCC through the TMC and provide input to the administration regarding policies that affect online learning. Faculty who teach online are required to hold the same degrees and credentials as those who teach in the classroom, as indicated by the review of faculty credentials.The ATG, consisting of only three staff members, has helped to create a culture of continuous improvement fand professinal development for faculty teaching online. The ATG is currently devising a five-day orientation for online faculty, which will be piloted in Fall, 2015. This group is also developing an online orientation for students enrolled in online courses using licensed simulation software. The resulting interactive orientation, demonstrated at the meeting with ATG, will be required for all online students. Although the ATG has experienced a considerable reduction

Audience: Peer Reviewers
Form
Published: 2015 © Higher Learning Commission

Process: Substantive Change
Contact: changerequests@hlcommission.org
Page 3

in human and physical resouces, the progress they have made in supporting faculty in professional development is noteworthy.

The faculty and staff at OCC are committed to the delivery of online classes at a level of quality comparable to traditional face-to-face classes. A review of a sample of 11 online courses from various disciplines within the D2L learning management system indicate attention to educational quality. Four of the online courses are currently offered in Summer, 2015, and the other 7 courses were offered in Winter, 2015. Online students complete the D2L orientation and may take the online orientation quiz multiple times. It is unclear whether students need to complete the online orientation quiz with a perfect score in order to gain access to course materials. Syllabi from these courses list clear learning outcomes and a variety of assessment measures. Issues of academic integrity are discussed in the online orientation and in syllabi. All online courses at OCC use the same course management system, D2L. The use of this single platform provides a consistent framework for students and faculty while allowing faculty members to exercise their academic freedom to contribute to the learning environment by designing their courses in a manner appropriate for the discipline, level, and student population. The course management system allows for appropriate synchronous and asynchronous interaction. A review of a variety of online courses confirms that the course design supports active discussion board participation. Weekly assignments, as well as a variety of online and in-person assessments, illustrate the rigor of online courses designed and delivered by qualified faculty.

6c. Services and Support for the proposed change
    ☐ Acceptable
    ☒ Not Acceptable

Evidence:
OCC provides online access to selected services and information for online students. A review of the OCC website indicates that the distance learning link provides students with information for D2L Help Guides, D2L Login, and the D2L Student Help Desk, as well as to the Student Technical Helpdesk. It was confirmed in meetings with administration and staff that OCC contracts with D2L to provide the student help desk and with BlackBoard Student Services for the Student Technical Helpdesk. Although a recent review of these services indicated improved student satisfaction, discussions with staff confirmed that this feedback was derived from instant feedback surveys and was somewhat anecdotal in nature since no formal data analysis had been conducted. OCC also provides online access to the bookstore, library services, admissions, and financial aid. A student orientation is available online which covers general topics about OCC. This orientation will be replaced with an interactive online orientation which will be mandatory beginning in Fall, 2015.

OCC does not provide online access to tutoring or to counseling services. Discussions with administration and staff confirmed that the Academic Support Centers are piloting the use of Zoom conferencing for peer tutoring. It is unclear how tutors are selected, what level of credentialing is required for tutors, and whether there is an oversight process. OCC is also planning to provide counseling services using Zoom collaborative software. There is also no online placement testing. The college currently uses COMPASS on site but is in the process of considering changing this instrument. Access to Michigan state library services has presented challenges, and OCC librarians are exploring a possible solution.

The OCC website does not contain information about the nature of online learning environment or an assessment to help students determine whether they posess the necessary skills to be successful in online learning. Furthermore, online students who cannot come to campus cannot be

Audience: Peer Reviewers
Form
Published: 2015 © Higher Learning Commission

Process: Substantive Change
Contact: changerequests@hlcommission.org
Page 4

assessed since COMPASS has not yet developed an online version of its suite, and proctored, off-campus testing sites would need to be established in order to serve the distance learning student.

Although OCC provides online access to some student services, students in online classes need to have adequate access to the same student services as students taking classes in the classroom. OCC is clearly in the planning stages of increasing effective online access to support services, but these services need to be in place before expanding online offerings.

6d. Evaluation, Assessment and Improvement Processes for the proposed change
   ☐ Acceptable
   ☒ Not Acceptable

Evidence:
OCC has not yet implemented a system to evaluate and assess distance learning. The five-year program review process does not compare the differences in common course outcomes by modality. Discussions wih the Executive Director of Institutional Effectiveness, as well as with other administrators and faculty, confirmed that OCC plans to use the same instruments and procedures for assessment and evaluations across instructional modalities. Faculty currently collect data on common course outcomes for classes, which are then entered into the Assessment Results Tracking Information System. However, the aggregate data are not delineated by course modality. It is unclear whether the results are analyzed and used to inform strategies for course improvements. While student course evaluations are routinely administered in face-to-face classes, there is no corresponding online course evaluation for distance learning classes. Discussions with administrators and faculty, as well as a review of the current evaluation questions, confirmed that some of the questions on the evaluation need to be modified in order to be appropriate for online learning. However, this issue has not been addressed in detail so that online evaluations may be implemented. OCC needs to have processes in place to evaluate the effectiveness of its online courses, including the extent to which common course outcomes are achieved, and the results of the evaluation should be used to improve online learning offerings.

6e. Quality and Integrity of the proposed change, including potential positive or negative effects
   ☐ Acceptable
   ☒ Not Acceptable

Evidence:
A review of a sample of syllabi for online courses show that the expectation for any required face-to-face meetings, assessments, or other on-ground work is clearly stated. A further review of online course content and interviews with faculty confirm that students in some online courses are required to take in-person assessments and must provide identification at the time of testing. Interviews with faculty and IT staff confirm that student privacy and authentication are safeguarded through secure login and password procedures to the institutional portal and on-campus proctored testing. Student identity is further confirmed in D2L with class rosters updated regularly, ensuring that only students who are enrolled in online courses have access to the course materials. OCC's online learning courses have built-in safeguards to maintain student authentication.

However, the quality of online courses and the assessment of student outcomes are not documented. There are currently no standards in place to implement distance learning best practices. Discussions with the ATC confirmed that OCC is expanding faculty training for online courses beginning in Fall 2015 to offer a new D2L training course, as well as a training course covering best practices. Using elements from the Michigan Colleges Online rubric for assessment

Audience: Peer Reviewers
Form
Published: 2015 © Higher Learning Commission

Process: Substantive Change
Contact: changerequests@hlcommission.org
Page 5

of online courses will promote the implementation of best practices into curriculum development. There is also no assessment of student satisfaction for online courses. Discussions with administration and faculty revealed the need to adopt appropriate questions and create a tool for online students to submit feedback. The adoption of MCCVLC standards, student evaluation of online courses, and expanded faculty training should be in place before expanding online offerings.

A potential positive effect of expanding online learning is better service to the all OCC students. Not all students at OCC who take online courses are exclusively online students. Many students may take an online course while simultaneously enrolled in face-to-face courses. Such opportunities demonstrate the options students have in creating a schedule that matches their needs while balancing work, school, and life. Furthermore, the expansion of online student services may have a positive effect for all OCC students since the proposed online tutoring, counseling, and other services available to distance education students would be available to all students. Further, faculty members may use the D2L LMS for their non-online courses as a complement to their face-to-face work. Using these resources to serve all students show a universal-design philosophy at the institution.

A potential negative effect of the change on other institutional operations is continued concerns about success and retention rates. The team encourages OCC to monitor these data and look for mechanisms to support students in online courses. More pre-emptive and appropriate careful counseling/advisement for placement into online courses, coupled with more education for students about what distance education entails, may help improve the success rates for students in online courses.In addition, OCC has requested to take 47 programs online. There is not yet a plan for staging the implementation. Such decisions are to be the responsibility of the Associate Dean of Distance Learning once that position is posted and filled.

Part B: Recommendation and Rationale

Recommendation:

- ☐ Approve Request
- ☐ Approve Modified Request
- ☒ Deny Request

Rationale for the team's recommendation to approve: If the recommendation is a modification of the institution's request, make clear how the team modified the original request.

Rationale for the team's recommendation to deny: If recommending denial of the request, explain what was inadequate.

OCC has been engaged in extensive planning to prepare for the requested expansion to offer online programs. The college has made advances toward increasing online access to support services, but these services need to be in place before expanding online offerings. Some areas such as online mandatory training for students and faculty, online student advising, online tutoring, and online book purchasing using financial aid, are in the early pilot stages or pilots are being planned for the near future. As these are being developed, consideration should be given to training and oversight of peer tutors working within an online format and to specialized advising of students enrolled in a fully online program. The college needs to establish online placement testing

Audience: Peer Reviewers
Form
Published: 2015 © Higher Learning Commission

Process: Substantive Change
Contact: changerequests@hlcommission.org
Page 6

(or testing centers to accommodate online students.) Readiness assessments for students considering an online program should also be in place. Although the three-member Academic Technology Group has provided outstanding support for faculty teaching online, additional resources will be needed in order to sustain and grow this level of support as online programs are developed. The hiring of an instructional designer, as well as the development of a multimedia studio housed in a dedicated space for faculty in the Teaching and Learning Technology Center, would enable OCC to increase their capacity to offer quality online programs.

OCC needs to have processes in place to evaluate the effectiveness of its online courses and programs, including the extent to which common course outcomes are achieved, and the results of the evaluation should be used to improve online learning offerings. Currently, the following have not been implemented: standardization of online course design, the review process for existing online courses, the development of online course evaluations, and assessment of student satisfaction with online courses. While the college has a process for collection of academic assessment data, to date there is no way to distinguish and thus compare acheivement of student learning outcomes in different modalities.

The college is working to centralize various aspects of online learning, and to do so they plan to hire an Associate Dean of Distance Learning. A number of actions, including decisions about which of the 47 programs will move completely online and how this movement will be staged, are postponed until that position is filled. Support for hiring this position was voiced in interviews with faculty and other staff and administration, as was support for establishing greater centralization of distance learning, as long as the structure of shared governance is followed where appropriate, such as when choosing members of the Technology Management Committee and the Data Governance Team. While the new associate dean position description is completed, the position has not yet been posted. This hire needs to be completed and the individual given time to accomplish the planned tasks before the college should expand its distance learning as requested.

In conclusion, OCC has made impressive progress in its preparation to offer online programs, but the change request seems to come slightly too early, before plans, structures, and support systems are in place. Once they are, OCC will be in a strong position to offer online programs.

Stipulations or limitations on future accreditation relationships: If recommending a change in an institution's level for review of future changes (locations, programs, delivery, etc.), state both the old and new level and provide a brief rationale for the recommended change. Check the Institutional Status and Requirement Report (ISR) for the current wording.

Monitoring: In limited circumstances, the team may call for a follow-up interim monitoring report. (Note that some types of substantive changes have built-in follow-up reviews; for example, the Campus Evaluation Visit.) If the team concurs that monitoring is necessary, indicate the topic, timeline and expectations for that monitoring.

Interactions with Institutional Constituencies and Materials Reviewed: List the names and titles of constituencies and the principal documents, materials and web pages reviewed.
Dr. Timothy Meyer, Chancellor
Dr. Timothy Sherwood, Associate Vice Chancellor of Academic Services

Audience: Peer Reviewers
Form
Published: 2015 © Higher Learning Commission

Process: Substantive Change
Contact: changerequests@hlcommission.org
Page 7

Nancy Showers, Executive Director of Quality, Planning & Accreditation, HLC Accreditation Liaison Officer
Dr. Jacqueline Shadko, Vice Chancellor of Student Services
Peter Provenzano, Vice Chancellor of Administrative Services
Kayla LeBlanc, Director of Academic Technologies
Kelly Hyduk, Manager of Online Learning Technologies
Kerry Daniel, Instructional Technologist
Distance Learning Implementation Team
Shirley Bryant, Board of Trustees Vice Chair
Martin Orlowski, Executive Director of Institutional Effectiveness
Kevin Bratton, Dean of Social Sciences and Human Services
Tom Hendricks, Dean of Business/Information Technologies
Debbie Bayer, Dean of Engineering, Manufacturing and Industrial Technology
Robert Montgomery, Vice Chancellor of Information Technologies, CIO
Sharon Miller, Vice Chancellor of External Affairs
Shawn Dry, Professor on History, President of Faculty Senate
online student - recent graduate

https://www.oaklandcc.edu/
https://oaklandcc.desire2learn.com
https://www.oaklandcc.edu/ATG/studentresources/default.aspx
https://bbcrm.edusupportcenter.com/ics/support/default.asp?deptID=8102
www.micollegesonline.org
http://cbtcollegeconsulting.com/
OCC and OCCFA Faculty Master Agreement 9/1/2012-8/31/2015
2014-2015 Approved General Fund Budget
Rifs Panel Classroom Technology Survey – March 2010
Mission/Vision statement
Release Time/Supplemental Contract Posting – Online Course Development
Educational Master Plan – Objective #12 – Action Plan Updated 5.5.15
Master Information Technology Plan Revision 2013-2016
Proposed Online Course Definitions
Online Student Support Services Draft
Standardization Distance Learning Subcommittee Draft Minutes
Associate Dean of Distance Learning Position Job Description
Proposed DL Program List
Latest EMP Action Plan
MCO Rubric
CBT Report
Worksheet for Proposed Online Courses and Approval Form
FMA (Distance Learning)
UM Report and IR Graduates Completion of Online Credits
Sample Assessment Documents
Online Student Orientation Draft

Audience: Peer Reviewers
Form
Published: 2015 © Higher Learning Commission

Process: Substantive Change
Contact: changerequests@hlcommission.org
Page 8

Audience: Peer Reviewers
Form
Published: 2015 © Higher Learning Commission

Process: Substantive Change
Contact: changerequests@hlcommission.org
Page 9