

Recommendations from the Online Task Force - Fall 2018

The Task Force Members:

Janice Alexander
Ben Barckholtz
Chris Clouse
Jodi Harms
Connie Hitchcock
Pam Klein
Susan Matter
Ami Mezahav
Amber Paulson
Julie Robertson
Allison Smeltz
Amelia Ward

Our Vision:

Students are actively engaged in exceptional and comprehensive online learning that maintains the FVCC community experience.

Our Current Online Program: (Fall 2014 - Fall 2017)

97% of our students are Montanans; 77% are in district.
2,833 individual students
76% are degree-seeking
66% also take face-to-face classes
Average online GPA is 2.83; average face-to-face GPA is 3.0
7,048 total students in courses
F, I, U, W or WI grades account for 19% of those 7,048 students.

Our recommendations:

1. FVCC should do the necessary work to comply with SARA (State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement) standards for post-secondary distance education and programs. This will, in turn, allow FVCC to meet accreditation requirements of the NWCCU for distance education.
2. Each division should have an online specialist that shall:
 - Help facilitate best practices in that division.
 - Offer support and guidance to faculty. This support extends to all classes that have a presence in Eagle Online (includes hybrid and face-to-face).
 - Meet minimum qualification of (a) being current with Brightspace, (b) have previous online teaching experience and (c) have completed EDU 291x and EDU 291y.

3. The online division specialists sit on the e-Learning committee along with the instructional designers and a representative from Student Support Center (Disability Coordinator is recommended).
4. The e-Learning committee shall:
 - Be co-chaired by a faculty member and an instructional designer. They will be selected by the committee in consultation with the Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs (VP).
 - Work with the VP to create and manage policies, procedures, and measures for online learning that will lead us to SARA compliance.
 - Develop a schedule for online courses.
 - Establish best practices to be followed in all online/hybrid courses.
 - Develop a cyclical review process for all courses.
 - Develop a cyclical professional development plan for all online educators.
 - Recommend changes to current practices.
 - Recommend changes to professional development for online educators.
 - Recommend tools, apps and other support to be implemented in online courses.
 - Mentor online instructors.
 - Meet with the VP to make recommendations for improving online programming.
5. Enhance the existing student support services for online students including tutoring, advising, and technical help. We may want to develop a “dummy course” for students to try out online learning without penalty.