

MEMORANDUM

To: Nick Chang

From: Faye Mueller

Date: September 14, 2010

Re: Support Services for DE Students through the DESC Office

This memo is in response to your email, September 12, requesting a description of the information and services provided Distance Education (DE) students through the College of Marin's Distance Education Support Center (DESC) Office. Below is a summary of the information and services:

Information

- Each semester a "How to Schedule DESC Tests" handout is distributed to COM DE instructors with the details of how to schedule an appointment for a test in the DESC Office. A copy of this handout should already be included with Accreditation Evidence DE materials. If it is not, please let me know so that I can supply it.
- One-on-one test scheduling assistance is available to DE students who email or are sent by their instructor to the DESC Office.

Services

- Initially, students emailed or dropped in or schedule time with the DESC Office for support and assistance to improve their online class performance. This work was and is highly individualized. For example, if a student expressed concern about not being able to remember the assigned information, reading/ writing/ study techniques to improve a student's comprehension and retention became the focus. But, if a student was not able to get through a textbook assignment (such as a long chapter in Biology textbook), the work with the student involved instruction and coaching in several techniques together; previewing, predicting, structuring the content and reviewing the textbook assignment content.
- These procedures have become more formalized. Students can sign up online by going to the DESC appointment website: www.comlearningcenter.com/desc and scheduling a tutoring appointment with DESC staff. In the future an additional column for tutoring signups will be available on the DESC signup webpage.

Abdulla Yahyah, who originally set up the appointment scheduling website, will program the additional entries.

- A self-assessment survey to guide students and DESC personnel work sessions is developed and ready for piloting. If you need a draft of that survey, please let me know. Ultimately this assessment will be available online for students to use. A list of recommended COM resources and/or next steps to improve the student's performance in the online class should then be developed.
- Work to support DE students would include such things as coaching and working on increasing students' abilities to improve their course performance. However, if a student needs tutoring to learn and understand the course content, this type of assistance has to be referred to Tutoring Center tutors who are knowledgeable about subject content.