Work Proposal for Online Student Services and Support Team

1. Background

Valencia began offering alternative delivery courses in the early 1990’s, and as technology evolved and student demand grew, Valencia continued to increase the number of course and program offerings in both hybrid and online modalities (Meiller and Associates, 2013). Throughout the last decade, Valencia’s online learning practices evolved organically amongst our academic community, while federal and state regulations and requirements increased as the national demand for distance learning escalated and concerns regarding the quality of online learning grew (Allen and Seaman, 2014).

In 2013, Valencia commissioned Diane Meiller and Associates to perform a current state assessment of online learning which was completed in June 2013. This report was intended to “provide us with a shared understanding of where we are today, and lay the foundation for our collaborative planning of how best to move forward in ways that are consistent with Valencia’s learning-centered culture, while embracing the elasticity for change that may be required” (Sandy Shugart, 2014). During the assessment, several recurring themes emerged through interviews, group sessions, survey results and data analysis (Meiller and Associates, 2013). These themes represent several areas where we have opportunities to improve, particularly in terms of providing a consistent experience to students and faculty. To explore these areas, the Learning Leadership Council will commission short-term work teams to design and in many cases implement strategies, processes, practices and/or tools that will increase online student success, decrease the gap in success between instructional modalities, and improve the student experience in online and hybrid courses.

2. Charge and Work Products

Review online student support services and practices at Valencia, in consideration of current literature and accreditation guidelines, to identify strategies for growth and enhancement of support that will enhance student learning in online and hybrid courses. For the purposes of this work team, the scope of student services will be minimally defined by the definition of student services referenced in the SACS Distance and Correspondence Education Policy Statement and will also include areas specifically referenced in the Distance Learning Report, specifically tutoring, technology support, online library and learning resources, and ADA compliance.

3. Known Constraints, Criteria, or Design Principles

Design Principles:

- Work teams will focus on strategies, interventions or improvements that will increase online student success, decrease the gap in success between instructional modalities, and improve the student experience in online and hybrid courses.
- Work teams will analyze Valencia’s current processes, practices and tools in order to recognize effective strategies and identify areas of improvement; as well as explore new opportunities from the literature and other successful models.
- Work teams will use data to inform recommendations and seek support from the Online Data and Evaluation Team as necessary.
- Work teams will function as short-term design teams. Implementation teams (consisting of a subset of the original design team and other necessary partners) will be formed to implement the approved plans and work with the Online Data and Evaluation Team to assess the strategy.
• Work teams will examine the feasibility of recommendations in relation to budget, staffing, technology requirements, and interactions with existing college systems.
• Work teams will “fast-track” recommendations that are immediately actionable strategies, as necessary.
• Other design principles will be determined by each work team.

4. Relevant Strategic Goals
This work is in direct support of Valencia’s Strategic Learning Plan goals Build Pathways and Learning Assured.

5. Council Overseeing the Work
Learning Leadership Council

6. Sponsors of the Work
Joyce Romano, Vice President, Student Affairs and Bill White, Chief Information Officer (CIO)

7. Decision-making Authority
Learning Leadership Council

8. Internal Stakeholders or Constituents
Faculty, Deans, Student Affairs, Learning Support, Office of Information Technology (OIT), Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD), Faculty and Instructional Development

9. Preliminary List of Team Members
• Co-chairs - Cheryl Robinson (Dean of Students), TBA (Dean of Learning Support)
• Dean of Students (appointed by IAC)
• Dean of Learning Support (appointed by IAC)
• Academic Dean (appointed by IAC)
• Three faculty members (including one Librarian and one counselor; appointed by FC)
• Other Student Affairs representatives (appointed by VP, Student Affairs)
• Office for Students with Disabilities member (appointed by VP, Student Affairs)
• OIT/LTS members (appointed by CIO)
• TBA, Campus Director of Faculty & Instructional Development
• Karen Borglum or designee (for SACS)
• Page Jerzak (Online Teaching and Learning)
• Wendi Dew
10. Deadline for Work Products

The timeline is as follows:

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<tr>
<th>February 2015</th>
<th>March to June 2015</th>
<th>September to December 2015</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Share draft work plans with Learning Leadership Council</td>
<td>March to June – Work teams conduct analysis; design and develop strategies and products; communicate with and seek feedback from stakeholders</td>
<td>September – Work teams finalize plans</td>
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<td>Contact co-chairs</td>
<td>April and June – Co-chair Team meets to discuss progress</td>
<td>September – Co-chair Team meets to discuss progress</td>
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<td>Form work teams via application process (based upon skills and interest); partner with Campus Presidents, IAC, FC, VP of Student Affairs, and CIO for membership</td>
<td>June – Work teams report progress to Learning Leadership Council and seek feedback</td>
<td>October – Work teams provide final reports to Learning Leadership Council</td>
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<td>Convene Co-chair Team</td>
<td>May or June – Convene Online Learning Summit/Symposium; work teams communicate progress and seek feedback</td>
<td>November – TBA Implementation teams begin work according to approved implementation plans</td>
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*Note: Work teams may work and produce recommendations faster than articulated in the draft timeline.

11. Proposed Meeting Times

Twice per month in March through June, then monthly from September to November, with exact meeting dates and times according to membership.