Endorsement of the California Community College "Online Community College" Proposal
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The CCC system was chartered to provide quality, affordable career education to California adults. To continue fulfilling that mission, at this point, requires a major reorientation in how online CCC courses are developed and delivered. Only the Online Community College Proposal holds forth the realistic near-term hope of accomplishing this.

"100% online" course models are now the recognized drivers of "hybrid" course excellence, and are increasingly recognized to be the future determinants of F2F course quality (as F2F counterparts trend toward "flipped classroom" hybrid models). Meanwhile, the current CCC model for developing, maintaining and delivering online courses is balkanized and disjointed, the legacy of a pre-internet world wherein campuses did not compete for enrollment because of commuting logistics, and could not effectively coordinate course development and delivery across any broad geography.

While that model worked well for the world in which it arose, continuing it in the new and fast-evolving world of online education - as even OEI is forced to do - is not appropriate. For example, we do not see 114 Amazon, Google and Facebook sites all competing for the same customers and visitors, duplicating their administrative, technical and development teams.

Although OEI is an important bridge to the future, its charter is not broad enough to deal with the depth of innovation now required. As humanities degrees continue losing demand, the demand for CTE coursework remains vibrant and is expanding. Meanwhile, it's becoming clear that remaining competitive in CTE sectors will require adopting innovative new CBE ("Competency Based Education") models. Neither the independent CCC campuses nor OEI can accommodate that at present, yet the new Online Community College plans to. This is now a needed safeguard regarding future competitiveness for the overall system.

The current model of online course development and delivery - even as OEI gains traction - positions all 114 CCC campuses to compete against each other. Ultimately, this does not serve the California public, students, nor CCC faculty and staff. What's needed is a more cooperative and appropriate process to develop and maintain a GREATLY EXPANDED overall catalog of online CCC courses - their far-flung hybrid and F2F counterparts all benefiting - with far greater intra-catalog COORDINATION and higher average COURSE QUALITY than is realistically now possible.

No flexibility to modify and adapt curricula need be lost in the process, as such will still revolve around course outlines. Meanwhile, a new OCC model could offer higher quality and more frequently updated course outlines - and course curriculum and functionality - due to switching to a more appropriately coordinated model. This accomplished, instructors will also have more time than per the present model for student tutoring and mentoring - where the rubber really hits the road re: the benefit of qualified, experienced instructors - as they will inherit regularly updated high-quality curriculum requiring less of their time to maintain.

In my view, only by assuring that the Online Community College proposal proceeds can the CCC system safeguard its future and remain true to its charter. That done, the system will have more and more fulfilling future jobs than if the OCC proposal is defeated. How any such future pie will be divvied up, we don't know, but I urge all who care about the system to support the Online Community College Proposal.