

Continuing Education Credit and Special Learning Activities (2.G., 2.H)

I. Purpose/Description

Overview (2.G.1)

We have a strong commitment to lifelong learning, as demonstrated in our institutional mission, that indicates we are committed to meeting the educational needs of Utah by:

- Helping students adapt throughout their lives to a changing world
- Preparing students for immediate employment or further study
- Offering innovative and conventional instruction as well as public service activities
- Developing learning-oriented partnerships with the community

We fulfill these mission priorities by offering credit and non-credit courses and programs in a variety of formats and locations. In sum, we provide lifelong learning opportunities to time- and place-bound students, anywhere at any time.

Organizational and Administrative Structure (2.G.1, 2.G.2, 2.G.3, 2.G.4)

We are a multi-campus university that offers a variety of continuing education and special learning activities in numerous locations and formats. We have multiple physical campuses, various university centers, and a strong Internet and distance learning presence. WSU Ogden is our larger and older location; this campus has 55 buildings and was established in 1953. WSU Davis has one building that was completed in the fall of 2003. WSU Davis does

not meet the definition of a branch campus as outlined by NWCCU criteria. This campus does not have its own faculty, administrative organization, budget, or hiring authority. The WSU Davis director reports to the provost, and the faculty and staff who are employed on that campus report to their division chairs and supervisors (the exception is the administrative assistant to the WSU Davis director who reports to the director). WSU Davis is not an independent entity but is part of the Division of Academic Affairs.

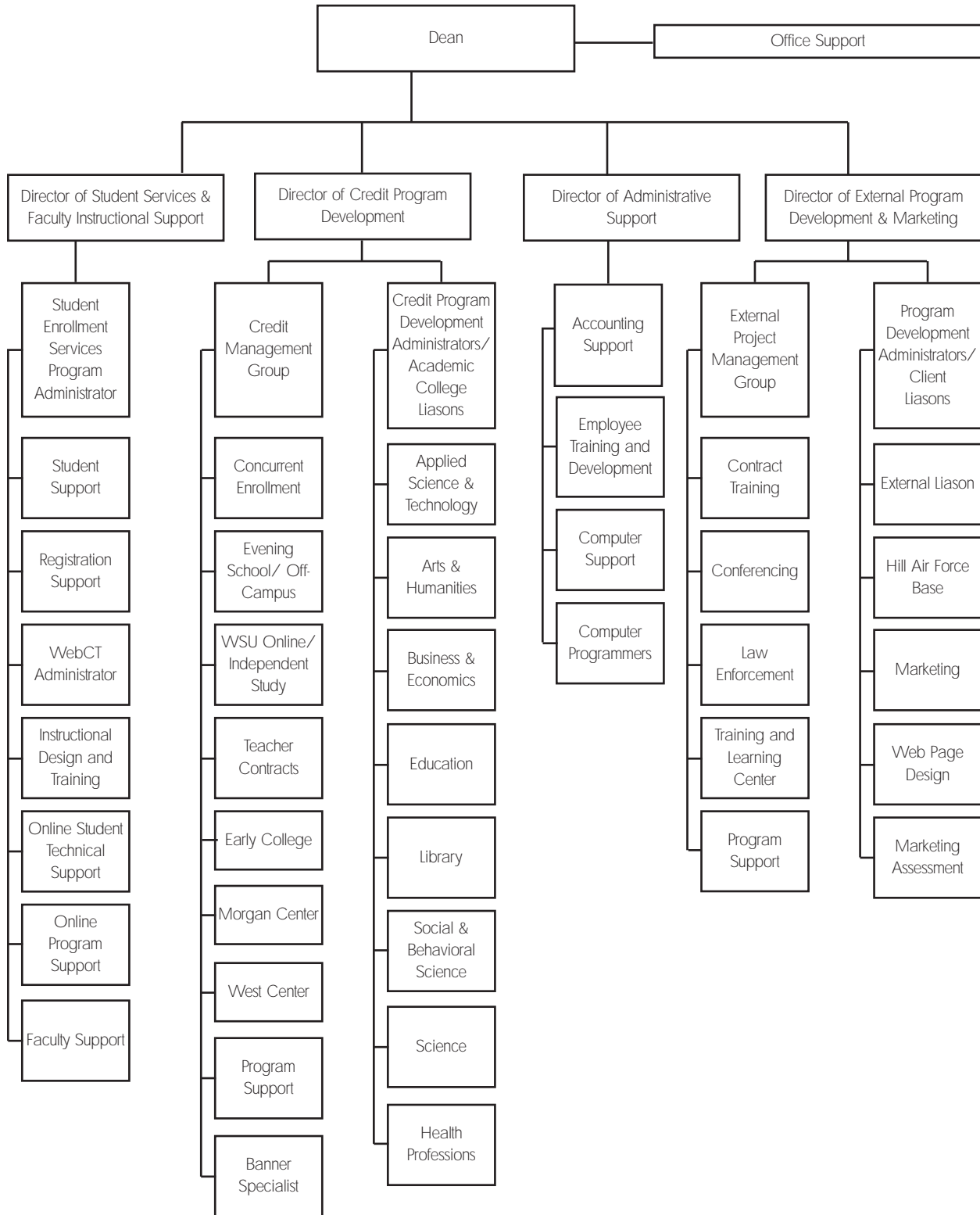
Administratively, all continuing education and special learning activities are housed within the Division of Academic Affairs and are managed by several entities within this division. Academic faculty, department chairs, and deans are ultimately responsible for the content of the credit courses and the individuals who are hired to teach these courses. All credit-generating courses were initially created through the standard curriculum approval processes of our Faculty Senate (see information in Standard 2 and Standard 4 for more detail). Continuing Education and Community Services (CE/CS) serves a facilitating role by assisting academic departments with hiring faculty and scheduling courses:

- At our Ogden campus and in local public high schools in the evening
- At WSU Davis (in conjunction with the WSU Davis director), university centers, and on other Utah college campuses during the day and evening
- Via the Internet and distance learning and at off-campus locations at work places

CE/CS is also responsible for managing non-credit offerings in a variety of locations and formats.

Because CE/CS has a lead role in facilitating the offering of our continuing education and special learning activities, this section of the self-study will focus on the operations of CE/CS. The mission of CE/CS is below and its organization chart is shown in Figure II on page 42 (see departments.weber.edu/ce/default.asp for more detail).

Standard 2: Figure II.
CE/CS Organizational Chart.



**Continuing Education and
Community Services Mission
Statement:**

Continuing Education and Community Services provides leadership in the development and delivery of quality lifelong learning opportunities that respond to community needs through strategic partnerships employing resources of the university and partners in a fiscally prudent manner.

Funding (2.G.2)

Most of the funding for our continuing education and special activities comes from legislatively appropriated monies (tax funds and student tuition); these monies are called Education & General (E&G) funds. E&G funds support courses and programs that are considered budget-related because they are the basis for our legislative allocations. Increases in our budget-related student credit hours from one year to the next make us eligible for enrollment growth funds from the legislature when these funds are forthcoming.

Along with E&G monies, continuing education and special learning activities operate with "self-support" funding that is generated when students pay for courses or programs that are not funded by state-appropriated monies. Self-support courses and programs are not factored into our legislative allocation, nor do increases in self-support student credit hours generate enrollment growth funds from the legislature.

In 2002-03, our continuing education and special learning activities were supported by \$7,092,832 in E&G funds. Of this amount, \$6,523,710 was allocated to CE/CS and \$569,122 was allocated to WSU Davis to support budget-related instructional costs and some staff positions. These E&G funds have increased as our enrollment has grown since the mid-1990s to provide more face-to-face and online course sections and to hire more part-time faculty to teach these sections. As a point of comparison, E&G funding in 1994 for CE/CS was \$4,963,623 (and this included funding for the fledgling WSU Davis).

In 2002-03, our non-E&G budget for continuing education and special learning activities totaled \$5,185,753; this budget was generated through self-support and non-credit programs, as well as by fees paid by distance education students. Distance education student fees have been used to provide technical support for our internet-based courses and programs. These fees have also supported our conversion of our online course management system from WSU Online to WebCT Vista. This conversion began in the summer of 2003 and is anticipated to be complete in 2005.

Assessment (2.G.1)

Assessment occurs in two main ways for our continuing education and special learning activities. First, we solicit student feedback on the CE/CS-scheduled courses they complete, including face-to-face and online courses, both credit and non-credit. This feedback is provided to both the course instructor and to the chair of the academic department that houses the course. In 2002-03, we completed student evaluations in 279 of our face-to-face credit courses (credit course data are not aggregated or kept within CE/CS). Second, in 2002-03, we administered course evaluations to approximately 2,700 students enrolled in our non-credit courses. On a one to five scale (low to high), approximately 80 percent of the students rated their WSU non-credit experience at a level of four or higher.

We have paid particular attention to gathering student feedback from our online courses and programs since this is a growing and important part of our university. Faculty helped design a form to gather student feedback on the quality of instruction in online courses as well as feedback on the quality of the technical support provided by our online staff. In 2002-03 a total of 12,423 students completed surveys to measure their satisfaction with online courses. Over 90% of the respondents indicated that the course was "satisfactory to very effective," the instructor was "satisfactory to very effective," the respondents had enough initial information to get started with the class, and they would take another online course. Eighty-nine percent of the respondents

indicated they were satisfied with the technology used in the course, and 78% felt the instructor feedback was timely, helpful, and meaningful.

In addition to assessing student satisfaction with courses, CE/CS has initiated a comprehensive outcomes assessment process to measure the overall impact of the services they provide. The process used by CE/CS paralleled that used by the academic departments (see Standard 2 for details on the outcomes assessment model used within Academic Affairs). The following outcomes have been identified. CE/CS will:

- **Develop appropriate student and faculty support services based on learner needs.** In 2002-03, data from student and faculty evaluations indicated that additional assistance was needed for student and faculty support. As a result, CE/CS organized Student Services and Faculty Instructional Support to meet student needs and provide for online faculty support.
- **Monitor institutional priorities and establish partnerships, which benefit the local communities, schools, government agencies, business, and industry.** In 2002-03, we reviewed data from contracted market research, satisfaction surveys to partner agencies, and the number of businesses/organizations served. These data helped us identify programs to suspend, as well as future potential users of our facilities. From 80-100% of our partner agencies indicated satisfaction with our services. We saw a 26% increase in the total number of businesses, organizations, and schools served from the prior year.
- **Foster a positive working climate for all staff.** In 2002-03, we conducted employee satisfaction surveys and identified percentages of personal growth opportunities pursued by CE/CS staff. Satisfaction levels of the CE/CS employees averaged a 3.0 on a 1 to 4 (low to high) scale. Ninety percent of CE/CS employees pursued and completed a personal growth opportunity in the last year.

Academic Credit Courses and Programs (2.G.5, 2.G.6, 2.G.7, 2.G.8, 2.G.9, 2.G.10, 2.G.11, 2.G.12, Policy A-6, Policy A-7, Policy 2.3, Policy 2.4, Policy 2.6)

A significant number of our budget-related student credit hours and full-time equivalent (FTE) student enrollments are generated by CE/CS-scheduled courses. Institution-wide in 2002-03, CE/CS generated 415,162.5 budget-related student credit hours (SCH). Of this number, 138,506 SCH (33%) were the result of courses scheduled and/or funded by CE/CS. Within CE/CS, budget-related courses constitute 76% of the overall 183,025 SCH production; the remainder (44,519) are the result of self-support credit courses.

Another way to look at the contribution made by CE/CS to our enrollment is to analyze the number of full-time equivalent students enrolled in CE/CS-scheduled and/or funded courses. In 2002-03, CE/CS courses enrolled 4,661 budget-related FTE students (a 14% increase over the prior year). Overall, our budget-related FTE students in 2002-03 totaled 13,492, and CE/CS's portion constituted 33% of this number.

CE/CS-scheduled and/or funded credit-classes are taught at numerous locations (WSU Ogden, WSU Davis, Hill Air Force Base, university centers, other college campuses, local high schools, abroad), at various times (day, evening, weekends), with multiple delivery methods (face-to-face, online, independent study/correspondence, interactive audio/video), and to different audiences (high school students, post-high school degree and non-degree seeking students). We do not lend our accreditation prestige or authority to any non-regionally accredited organization for any of our credit offerings regardless of the location or modality of these offerings. **WSU is in compliance with NWCCU Policy A-6 Contractual Relationships with Organizations Not Regionally Accredited.**

The data in table XVI on page 45 indicate that the primary method of delivering CE/CS-scheduled courses is face-to-face (lecture/laboratory). In 2002-03, nearly two-thirds of cours-

es were in this format (3,519 FTE or 62%). However, from 2000-01 to 2002-03, our most rapid growth was in the delivery of online courses from 1,054 FTE to 1,883 FTE (78% growth).

When comparing data on course location, CE/CS-scheduled courses at WSU Ogden were relatively stable from 2000 to 2003. All off-campus locations experienced growth during this time frame. In the future, we anticipate the greatest growth will occur at WSU Davis as a result of the new building that opened in the fall of 2003. (See Table XVI below.)

Credit (2.G.7, 2.G.8, 2.G.9, 2.G.11, Policy 2.3)

As mentioned earlier in this self-study, all credit courses and programs and the faculty who teach them are approved by the home academic department through existing faculty governance procedures prior to being scheduled by CE/CS. Courses offered for credit remain under the sole and direct control of our academic departments.

The awarding of credit was described earlier in Standard 2; credit attached to courses scheduled by CE/CS is awarded according to established Utah State Board of Regents and WSU policies and guidelines; these guidelines are consistent with NWCCU standards. For face-to-face courses, a minimum of 15 contact hours is required for one hour of credit. Credit may also be awarded as a result of successful performance on standardized exams (CLEP, AP), on special departmental examinations, and by petition. When credit is measured by outcomes alone or other nontraditional means, the demonstrated student learning is believed to be comparable in breadth, depth, and quality to the results of traditional instructional practice. (Our policy on awarding credit by examination can be found at:

documents.weber.edu/ppm/4-21a.htm.) **WSU is in compliance with NWCCU policy 2.3 Credit for Prior Experiential Learning.**

Tuition, Fees, and Refunds (2.G.6)

The budget-related tuition and fees that are attached to CE/CS-scheduled credit courses are consistent with Utah State Board of

Standard 2: Table XVI. CE/CS Delivery Method & Location.

	2000-01		2001-02		2002-03	
	Students	FTE	Students	FTE	Students	FTE
Delivery Method						
Lecture/Laboratory	15,434	2,747	16,847	3,171	17,905	3,519
Internet (WSU Online)	5,561	1,054	7,406	1,427	9,142	1,883
Independent Study	1,131	194	996	160	1,079	166
Educational Network (EdNet)	1,065	90	675	89	933	105
Total		4,084		4,848		5,672
Course Location						
WSU Ogden	9,471	1,531	9,994	1,624	10,290	1,618
Utah High Schools	5,910	882	6,558	1,036	6,821	1,061
WSU Davis	2,426	440	2,471	482	2,602	523
Other Instate	1,970	241	1,991	338	2,018	471
Out of State	185	151	278	205	323	299
Weber State University Centers	174	24	532	58	980	130

Regents guidelines. Self-support course tuition and fees vary depending on the cost of delivering the courses or programs. We follow established institutional guidelines for refunding tuition and fees for both budget-related and self-support courses and programs.

Distance Delivery of Courses and Programs (2.G.5, 2.G.10, Policy 2.6)

We offer external degree programs via traditional distance education delivery methods and via the internet. Our distance delivery and online academic programs are established and approved by faculty, have a clearly defined purpose, and are consistent with our institutional mission and purpose. We offer the following degree programs via distance delivery:

- General Studies, Associate of Applied Science
- Healthcare Coding & Classification, Institutional Certificate
- Health Information Management, Bachelor of Science



"Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world."

— Nelson Mandela

- Health Information Technology, Certificate and Associate of Applied Science
- Health Promotion, Bachelor of Science
- Health Services Administration, Bachelor of Science
- Advanced Radiography, Certificate
- Diagnostic Medical Sonography, Certificate
- Nuclear Medicine, Certificate
- Radiation Therapy, Certificate
- Respiratory Therapy, Bachelor of Science, Associate of Applied Science, and Associate of Science

In addition, we have approval from the Board of Regents and the NWCCU to offer ten online programs:

- General Studies / A.S.
- Medical Records Technology / A.A.S.

- Licensed Practical Nursing Certificate
- Nursing / A.A.S.
- Nursing / B.S.
- Health Administrative Services / B.S.
- Clinical Laboratory Science / A.A.S.
- Clinical Laboratory Science / B.S.
- Computer Engineering Technology / B.S.
- Electronic Engineering Technology / B.S.

These courses and programs are offered in ways that are consistent with NWCCU Policy 2.6 Distance Delivery of Courses, Certificate and Degree Programs, specifically because:

- These were existing degree programs at WSU at the time we sought approval to offer them online or via distance education.
- The curriculum was designed and has ongoing review by our faculty.
- The courses are designed to promote optimal faculty/student interaction.

- We offer training and support services for faculty to develop and teach distance delivery and online courses.

- We have existing copyright policies in place that clarify intellectual property

ownership and fair use practices, although these policies have not been adapted specifically to the online teaching environment nor to meet the provisions of the TEACH Act (there is ongoing work in this area).

- We provide student support services for distance and online students, including admissions, registration, advising, and tutoring (See Standard 3).
- We provide student access to extensive online library resources (library.weber.edu - see Standard 5).
- We have current and appropriate technology to support our online course offerings, and this technology is largely funded through the use of distance education student fees.

- Overall, we have sufficient monies to fund our distance education and online offerings.
- We have ongoing assessment processes in place for distance education and online programs.

To provide additional clarification on our expectations for online and hybrid courses, our faculty have developed a document entitled "Standards of Good Practice and Review of Online/Hybrid Courses." This document contains criteria that must be met as online/hybrid courses are developed, including use of a/an:

- Common home page format
- Complete syllabus
- Course orientation module
- Interactive learning community
- Timely feedback to students
- Appropriate electronic media
- Course equivalence with face-to-face courses

As each online course is developed, it is reviewed and approved by a faculty committee for online delivery.

For our independent study and correspondence courses, we also have a faculty handbook that contains standards of good practice for developing and teaching these courses. **WSU is in compliance with NWCCU policy 2.6 Distance Delivery of Courses, Certificate and Degree Programs.**

Study Abroad (2.G.12, Policy 2.4, Policy A-6, Policy A-7)

Our study abroad programs are budget-related, credit-generating academic experiences that include travel to another country that is organized and/or sponsored by one of our academic departments and is related to a university-approved program of study. In 2002-03, we offered seven study abroad programs with a total enrollment of 79 participants; these programs generated 556 budget-related academic credits.

Our study abroad programs meet the same academic standards, award similar credits,

and are subject to the same institutional controls as are academic programs offered on our campuses. A proposal to offer a study abroad program must be submitted to and approved by the relevant academic department chair and dean before it can be offered. Study abroad manuals are available online and in print for our faculty and students to ensure that these programs follow university policies (see programs.weber.edu/international). Specifically, our study abroad guidelines require these programs to:

- Have a clear academic focus and purpose
- Be led by one of our current faculty members
- State expected student learning outcomes and assessment criteria
- Specify required student selection criteria
- Provide a pre-departure orientation and debriefing at the conclusion of the program
- Identify risk management issues and an emergency management plan
- Describe the budget and payment and refund policies

We do not lend our accreditation prestige or authority to any non-regionally accredited organization for any of our study abroad offerings. **WSU is in compliance with NWCCU policy 2.4 Study Abroad Programs, Policy A-6 Contractual Relationships with Organizations Not Regionally Accredited, and Policy A-7 Principles of Good Practice in Educational Courses and Programs Offered Outside the United States.**

Non-credit Programs and Courses (2.H.1, 2.H.2, 2.H.3, Policy A-9)

In addition to providing a wide array of credit courses and programs through CE/CS, we also offer multiple non-credit courses and programs. The majority of our non-credit activities are self-supported (versus budget-related), and they are managed by CE/CS. A small number of non-credit programs are offered through our Small Business Center and the Technology Assistance Center. Prior to offering a non-credit course or program, the respective department must approve the course and instructor.

In 2002-03, we had a total of 3,451 students enrolled in non-credit courses and programs. These activities include professional develop-



"A mind once stretched by a new idea never regains its original dimension."

— Oliver Wendell Holmes

ment programs, conferences, workshops, and travel programs. The focus of professional development programs is to help individuals improve their job performance or advance their careers through instruction in such content areas as customer service, human resource management, leadership and supervision, and manufacturing and quality control. Conferences and workshops are often connected with our academic departments, and include our Families Alive Conference, National Undergraduate Literature Conference, Western Conference of the Association for Asian Studies, and Storytelling Festival. Our travel programs (versus study-abroad programs) are designed primarily to provide non-credit travel opportunities for community members. These programs may be associated with an academic department, our Alumni Relations Office, or an external vendor. In 2002-03, we had 167 participants in seven travel programs.

We follow the University Continuing Education Association standards for granting Continuing Education Units (CEUs) for non-credit courses (i.e., 10 contact hours for each CEU). Students must make arrangements for the awarding of CEU prior to the start of the course and no retroactive CEUs are awarded. We maintain permanent records of individual participation in non-credit courses that result in the awarding of CEUs, and notification of the CEUs is available to participants upon request.

Consistent with our institutional policies, we record and report all non-credit courses as part of a student's permanent record, although it is a challenge to gather data from non-credit

programs that are offered outside CE/CS (such as our Small Business Center and Technology Assistance Center). In addition, as students move from a non-credit to a credit status, these changes are not always automatically captured in our existing administrative computing systems. These concerns will be addressed as we migrate to a new student information system. Participants who complete a non-credit course or program are issued a "Certificate of Completion" (not an Institutional Certificate).

II. Significant Changes Since 1994

- We began the online delivery of courses in 1997 using a locally developed course management system (WSU Online) that was designed and managed by CE/CS. In the summer of 2003, we began the migration to a commercial system (WebCT Vista) that is anticipated to be complete in January 2005. Since 1997, our online course enrollment has grown from 167 annualized student FTE in 1997 to 1,883 annualized student FTE in 2003, a 1,028% increase.
- In October 2002, CE/CS was transferred from the Division of University Relations to the Division of Academic Affairs.
- In 2002, we began the migration to new administrative computing systems (finance, human resources, alumni/ development, and student information). The total migration is anticipated to be complete in the spring of 2005.
- In March 2003, the Utah Commissioner of Higher Education named WSU as the "Educational Integrator" for training programs at Hill Air Force Base. In this role, we communicate and collaborate with the other Utah colleges and universities to provide Air Force employees with quality training programs.

- The new WSU Davis location opened for classes in August 2003. Approximately 3,000 students enrolled in classes at WSU Davis that first fall semester.
- We began a significant reorganization effort to improve our ability to better assess new market niches.
- We shifted to single point of contact through college and community liaisons responsible for initiating and sustaining close working relationships with CE/CS clients.
- Create online course intellectual property policies
- Establish compliance with TEACH Act
- Implement procedures to more accurately capture non-credit student data during student information systems migration
- Refine outcomes assessment procedures within CE/CS
- Design and implement outcomes assessment procedures for WSU Davis
- Begin strategic planning process for WSU Davis in 2003-04

III. Strengths and Challenges

Strengths include:

- Strong role played by off-campus programs in our overall budget-related enrollments
- Growth in distance learning and online degree programs
- CE/CS is respected regionally and nationally

Challenges include:

- Migration of WSU Online to WebCT Vista
- Non-credit program student data
- Intellectual property policies that directly relate to online courses
- Outcomes assessment procedures
- Lack of a strategic plan for WSU Davis

IV. Next Steps/ Action Items

- Complete WebCT Vista migration
- Establish policies and procedures for hybrid and technology-facilitated courses