

available. The on-campus percentage for courses taught by full-time faculty at Troy is 83%. It is important to note that the majority of part-time faculty are employed to teach lower-division and survey courses; the percentage of faculty teaching the graduate courses at both Dothan and Montgomery is a highly desirable 81%.

The bottom line for all Troy University campuses is that adequate faculty members, to include full-time faculty members, are assigned to support the programs now and will support the merged programs on August 1, 2005. This statement is further supported by two essential points. First, the faculty at all three institutions have been actively involved in the redesign of programs and courses for their disciplines in this transition to one university (faculty lists will be available to the Visiting Team.) In addition, the scholarship, research, and university/community service accomplished by faculty at all three institutions would not be possible if full-time faculty coverage was insufficient to provide faculty with the time and resources needed to participate fully as tenured or tenure-track professionals.

For distance learning programs, describe processes in place to ensure that students have structured access to faculty.

Troy University is in the process of unifying all of its distance learning (DL) offerings under one administrative unit. This initiative will be accomplished by August 1, 2005 and the new structure will be available for review by the Visiting Team. The distance learning options presently available at each of the three institutions differs, and therefore methods of providing structured access to

faculty for DL students also differs somewhat for the three institutions (Troy, Dothan, and Montgomery.) A summary of the present processes is provided in the following paragraphs.

Troy University (Troy, Phenix City, University College)

DL students are given student services equitable to those traditional students receive. The distance education program has dedicated student service representatives, advisers, and other staff members available to ensure the DL students have assistance with admissions, financial aid, academic advising, and delivery of course materials. Students who are admitted into the DL programs are counseled by their dedicated adviser who is a full-time faculty member. Upon admission into a degree program, the full-time faculty member adviser's information is given to the student and the full-time faculty adviser receives the student's information via e-mail. In all cases, the list of advisees is available to all full-time faculty members via Trojan Web Express. Thus, distance education students are treated just as traditional Troy University students. This includes access to the same channels for communication, as well as for resolving complaints, as traditional students. DL students also have access to placement and counseling services via web links to main campus online services (that can and do include live interactive links).

Faculty members teaching DL courses are subject to the same standards as the faculty of traditional courses. To help ensure these standards are maintained, the DL program provides instructional support to faculty via several available training workshops held throughout each academic year. These

workshops are designed both to teach additional skills and reinforce those which already exist. Additionally, all faculty who teach distance learning courses for Troy University undergo a faculty online orientation (operated within a BlackBoard course "shell") which provides them policy and procedural information, as well as development tips, guidelines, best practices and pedagogical foundation and instructions to help enhance faculty-to-student and student-to-student interaction within all DL courses. In this orientation, they also have the opportunity to post and share tips and information via a Discussion Board with mentoring professors who have experience in DL methodologies and established exemplary best practice techniques.

DL courses at Troy University are designed to provide for the timely and appropriate interaction between students and faculty, and among students, through the integration of BlackBoard Learning Management Systems into Online DL courses. All Online DL courses utilize BlackBoard. This system allows for mass email, Discussion (bulletin) Boards, and even live interactive chats. The use of this medium to construct interactive, multi-dimensional courses that can include timed and password-protected exams also helps to ensure the integrity of student work and the credibility of the degrees and credit that Troy University awards.

At Troy's Phenix City branch, DL courses are offered via the Live Class on Tape (LCOT) format. LCOT classes are traditional live classes that are taped for viewing at a later time. Most LCOT students live within driving distance of the campus, and many students take a combination of LCOT classes and live

classes. LCOT students can and do take advantage of the on-campus faculty office hours for meetings with their instructors. All students have access to faculty via telephone and e-mail, and the BlackBoard system is also utilized to facilitate communications. A toll-free telephone number is available for student use, and faculty are assigned Troy e-mail addresses. All students are assigned to a full-time faculty adviser.

During the SACS Reaffirmation Visit to Troy University in April 2003, the Visiting Team recommended that two specific University College sites “provide distance learning students with structured access to and interaction with full-time faculty members.” In response, the Troy University Provost, in a September 1, 2003, policy memorandum to deans and department chairs (see Appendix A-25), significantly broadened the recommendation and directed that all DL courses taught by part-time faculty will provide contact information including office and departmental telephone and fax numbers, office location and mailing address, and the e-mail address of one or more full-time faculty members assigned to the originating location in the academic discipline. As a result, students have multiple modes of access to this faculty resource. This policy-directive promotes interaction and sets the stage for open communication between students and faculty as well as demonstrates a partnership between the part-time and full-time faculty of the University. The success of this procedure is fully documented in Troy University’s *Follow-up Report*, submitted to the Commission on September 22, 2004.

Troy University-Dothan Campus

The development of distance learning (DL) at Troy-Dothan was structured so that almost all of the courses were designed and delivered by full-time faculty. This has been the case since the introduction of telecourses in the mid-1990's (some of which remain popular on campus today) through the present delivery systems of on-line and CD (Tegrity) learning systems. The focus on development of quality programming has led all three colleges on the Dothan campus to limit the number of courses that can be offered, and to restrict such development to full-time faculty. In addition, nearly 100% of students who participate in Dothan's distance courses reside within a 25-mile radius. With courses taught by full-time faculty, all of whom have scheduled office hours, and with students living within easy commuter distance to the campus, access for students is not a problem. In addition to posting on-campus hours, each faculty member teaching via distance uses BlackBoard as a major communication tool. Threaded discussions, chatrooms, and postings provide significant opportunity for student/faculty interaction. Students are given both a telephone number and an e-mail address for distance faculty who are expected to respond to questions/concerns in a timely manner. Review of the student evaluations of all distance courses each term indicates that students are able to communicate with faculty about coursework and course management issues. Student evaluations are completed for each DL course, each term. These are compiled by the Coordinator for Distance Learning on the Dothan Campus, and are read/reviewed by the Department Chair, the campus Dean, and the President. Faculty are provided with summarized, compiled versions of these evaluations

after grades are submitted. The evaluations for each term since the initiation of distance delivery at Troy-Dothan will be available for review by the Visiting Team.

Troy University-Montgomery Campus

At Troy-Montgomery, the Division of Distance Learning and Extended Academic Services manages and facilitates the adaptation and integration of the content and outcomes of traditional classroom-based instruction into DL experiences. The Division cooperates with the academic colleges to offer courses using Internet, public and cable television, and print (learning contracts). The Division subscribes to the Southern Regional Education Board's Principles of Good Practice as developed by the Educational Technology Cooperative's Electronic Common Market.

The online instructional method of delivery is Web-based instruction on the Internet, using the instructional software, BlackBoard, as the platform for instructional delivery and management. Structured interaction with faculty is monitored by DL administration and technical staff to assure that interaction between students and faculty occurs throughout the instruction cycle. Faculty are also required to complete EQUIP training to instruct faculty how to teach online, including the necessity for frequent faculty-to-student interaction. BlackBoard records and retains student-to-faculty and student-to-student contacts including the content of the interaction and permits the faculty and distance staff to monitor all interactions through the BlackBoard platform.

Students also are able to contact their instructors through various modes of communication using e-mail, telephone, fax, or regular mail.

Televised instruction is delivered through a local cable channel and therefore is a local closed system delivered to students within the viewing (and commuting) area. Examinations and other activities require students to interact with faculty, staff or identified monitors in order to complete their televised instruction. Students are required to come into contact with the instructor or the university DL staff via campus visits, e-mail, telephone and fax.

The Learning Contract method of instruction is a print-based, independent study version of residence courses. The Learning Contract method of delivery is available for most general studies and approved academic concentration courses. Structured interaction with students is facilitated through required contacts, as stated in the course syllabi, with contacts being made in a variety of methods including onsite meetings, e-mail, letters, telephone, and the internet.

At Montgomery, the methods of communication are listed in each syllabus, including required interaction.

For graduate programs, document scholarship and research capability of faculty.

The primary mission of the merged Troy University is teaching. A strong secondary focus is on scholarship rather than pure research or publication in refereed journals for graduate faculty. Much of the research conducted by Troy University faculty is considered "applied research" and is highly valued by community, state, regional, and national organizations. Graduate faculty at Troy