Report on Existing Academic Programming Offered Through Distance Education

Three Rivers Community College
October 2007

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DESCRIPTIVE INFORMATION:
a. Person with institutional responsibility for the academic quality of distance education programming: Ann Branchini, Academic Dean. Person to be contacted with questions (if any) about the content of the report: Stephen H. Goetchius, Dean of Information Technology, (860) 885-2327, or email: sgoetchius@trcc.commnet.edu

b. URL(s), including passwords where necessary, where information about the institution's distance education activities is available and where on-line services can be accessed by both students (prospective and current) and faculty; include brief descriptors of each as appropriate:
1. Distance Learning index of services: http://www.trcc.commnet.edu/eLearn/DLHome.html
2. eLearning: What it takes to be successful: http://www.trcc.commnet.edu/Dist_Lrng/Animations/eLearning/ED-TECH_ELEARNING.html
3. CT Distance Learning Consortium services for students: http://www.ctdlc.org/Student/index.html
4. Course schedules & registration, student information access: http://www.online.commnet.edu/
5. Library resources: http://www.trcc.commnet.edu/Library/index.htm
6. Tutoring information: http://www.trcc.commnet.edu/ed_resources/tasc/Training/Resources_Distance_Learning.htm

c. Description of the technical infrastructure which supports the institution's distance education activities (include bandwidth, details of connectivity, network maintenance and support, course management software including the version of the software, help desk services, and staffing, security, backups, etc.): Three Rivers Community College uses the technical infrastructure of the Connecticut Distance Learning Consortium (CTDLC), whose capacity to serve as the distance learning partner of Connecticut higher education institutions was reviewed by NEASC during 2001. The CTDLC completed a self-study and hosted a team visit that produced a report (both are available at http://www.ctdlc.org/Evaluation/index.html).

The CTDLC supports Blackboard's Vista product for all 12 Community Colleges. The current version of Blackboard Vista is 3.0.7.17. The CTDLC also supplies Three Rivers Community College with a 7-day Help Desk to answer student and faculty questions about the CMS software, browsers, plug-ins and Internet Service Provider issues. The Help Desk supplies an online knowledge database, a ticket tracking system for help requests, web forms, FAQ's, and phone support.

The servers devoted to the Vista delivery are professionally hosted with guaranteed 99% uptime, fully redundant systems, generator backup, and nightly back-up of all files.

Below is a description of CTDLC's hosting solution:

Vista Servers:

- 6 Sun Fire v42x Application servers – Dual Processor – 8Gb RAM
- 1 Sun Fire V42x Admin server – Dual Processor – 8Gb RAM
- 1 Sun Fire V480 Database server – Quad Processor, 24Gb RAM
- 1 Sun Fire v24x Monitoring server – Dual Processor – 4Gb RAM

- Redundant F5 Load Balancers
- Redundant power supplies
- Redundant Network Cards
- Redundant Network Switches
- 1Tb dedicated storage

Hosting Facility:

- High Availability Firewalls
- UPS Backup System
- Backup Generator
- A/C System
- Security System
- Rack Enclosures
- High Bandwidth
- Nightly Backups with Data Vaulting
- Multiple Monitoring tools – both internal and external monitors.
- 24/7 On-call Emergency Response Team

Help Desk:

- 7 days a week; 12+ hours a day
- Ticketing System
- Support Portal – includes subscriptions to Alerts, Current Issues, FAQs, Calendar Events, Resources, and System Requirements.
- Toll-free number

d. A list of any consortial partners or contractual relationships that support the institution's distance education activities and a brief explanation of the nature of each relationship:

1. Connecticut Distance Learning Consortium (CTDLC): The mission of CTDLC is to (1) provide a single point of presence for Distance Learning offered by Connecticut public and independent education institutions; (2) provide a high quality infrastructure by maintaining a state of the art web-based delivery system that is available to all members; (3) coordinate the delivery of asynchronous education and worker training; (4) market CTDLC member courses and programs in Connecticut, nationally, and internationally; (5) improve the quality of Connecticut's distance learning products and services through rigorous assessment efforts including the implementation of a state wide assessment program; (6) provide a forum for discussion of distance learning in Connecticut and demonstrate new techniques for asynchronous delivery; and (7) provide faculty development opportunities. The consortium will operate as a learning collaborative that enables participating colleges and universities to fulfill their institutional missions while sharing in and contributing to the combined distance learning resources of the consortium.

2. VitalStream Small Business Services (formerly Playstream, LLC): VitalStream's small business platform provides content delivery services for Three Rivers. VitalStream's technologies empower Three Rivers with advanced capabilities to manage, deliver and monitor audio, video, and multimedia content over the Internet. VitalStream's services for small businesses integrate the Industry's most popular formats: RealNetworks' RealMedia, Microsoft's Windows Media, Apple's QuickTime Media, MP3 and Java Streaming.

INSTITUTIONAL MISSION

Retrospective

For the past five years, the mission statement of Three Rivers Community College (TRCC) has been the following:

> Three Rivers Community College meets the diverse educational needs of the community by creating an environment that stimulates learning. The college provides educational opportunities that are affordable and accessible. Additionally, Three Rivers develops regional partnerships and initiatives that contribute to the educational, economic, and cultural growth of Southeastern Connecticut.
>
> In fulfilling its mission, Three Rivers Community College assists individuals in developing:
>
> · a capacity for critical thinking;
> · the ability to communicate effectively;
> · an appreciation of the sciences and humanities;
> · an understanding of the technological nature of modern society.

Present

A task force was created during the 2005-2006 academic year that resulted in the following revised mission statement:

> Three Rivers is an accessible, affordable, and culturally diverse community college that meets varied educational needs by creating an environment that stimulates learning.
>
> To accomplish its mission, Three Rivers Community College:
>
> • Offers post-secondary educational opportunities;
>
> • Encourages life long learning;
>
> • Provides a well-rounded and rewarding educational experience with an emphasis on critical thinking, effective communication, and the College's institutional values;
>
> • Fosters an appreciation of the natural and social sciences, humanities, technology and the arts;
>
> • Helps students achieve their goals;
>
> • Serves as a community resource for people and institutions within its service area;
>
> • Delivers its services efficiently and measurably; and

• Contributes to economic development of this region and the state.

The Vision Statement: Three Rivers Community College will be a college of choice with a reputation for innovation, quality, and accessibility, serving a dynamic student population.

Although the mission statement does not directly address Distance Education, Three Rivers believes that offering courses and at least one degree program on-line allows the college to provide greater access to students who can not, or choose not to, take advantage of on-campus offerings. Distance Education, as currently implemented by Three Rivers, promotes the use of technology to provide teaching, learning, and services to students efficiently and effectively. It helps foster an appreciation of technology.

Future
The mission statement is concrete and realistic while seeking to enhance the community it serves. The college will continue to evaluate its mission statement and the impact that distance education has on it on a regular basis.

Institutional Effectiveness
Three Rivers' process of examining the mission statement, charging a task force to assess its relevance and providing the opportunity for college-wide dialogue reflects a spirit of periodic review and continuous improvement. During the past few years, the community's discussions resulted in a revised mission statement which incorporated improved language and also incorporated a vision statement. The final approval process followed College Governance. The College's Governance Council approved it and sent it to the President's Cabinet which gave final approval.

PLANNING AND EVALUATION
Retrospective
Three Rivers Community College has a planning process which is guided by a one page strategy map which graphically represents the strategic plan itself. It depicts five strategic themes for the college: Academic Best Practices, Communications, Workforce Development, Innovation, and Excellence in Core Functions. Since the NEASC team visit in 2002, Three Rivers was able to hire the current Institutional Research Director. The presence of this position has made data more readily available to the college community. It has also fostered broader participation in initiatives such as the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE). This has resulted in improved data driven decision making.

Regarding specific planning and evaluation for Distance Education, Three Rivers Community College uses a "shared responsibility" approach where the Academic Division carries out activities related to the pedagogical aspects and the Information Technology Division coordinates the technological support aspects. Three Rivers relies extensively upon the services provided by the Connecticut Distance Learning Consortium (CTDLC) for Distance Education. Faculty use a variety of self and course evaluation techniques to assess the quality and relevancy of their Distance Education courses. For example, some on-line courses include an anonymous suggestion box for student commentaries. Three Rivers participated in a research project coordinated by CTDLC titled the "Closing the Quality Gap: An Integrated Approach to Online Learning". This project provided feedback and insight with regard to student technology skill needs and student – faculty interaction in online courses.

Present
Short and long term planning is presently dominated by the construction of the consolidated campus. Planning for and evaluating courses taught via Distance Learning are carried out by the Academic Division. The Educational Technology Committee seeks to review and share best practices for using technology to enhance teaching and learning. The Director of Distance Learning is also a member of the Connecticut (CT) Community College System Distance Learning Council which seeks to identify and plan for the resources needed to support Distance Learning courses and programs at all of the CT Community Colleges. The System Vista Teaching and Learning Team drafted Effective Teaching Practices and continues to plan the Effective Online Teaching conferences in the summer.

Future
Three Rivers looks ahead to establishing a vision for planning and evaluation at the college, creating an inclusive culture for data driven decision-making. The short term logistical requirements associated with providing high quality services while construction and renovations are ongoing at both campuses are expected to present challenges through 2010.

Institutional Effectiveness
In order to establish awareness of the importance of institutional effectiveness measures, the college plans to do the following:

1. Increase faculty and staff knowledge of and participation in assessment activities.
2. Increase availability of information on student success and outcomes assessment.

3. Increase the number of work units having an assessment plan.

These college-wide initiatives are meant to support existing divisional planning and evaluation by encouraging increased systematic inter-divisional and institutional analysis of data and dialogue for the purpose of improving overall institutional effectiveness.

ORGANIZATION
Retrospective
Within the existing Three Rivers organizational structure, the Academic Division has primary responsibility for Distance Education. The Curriculum committee, under the direction of the Academic Division, sets program policies and approves courses that are proposed for delivery via Distance Education. The Curriculum Committee ensures that every course or program proposal is consistent with the academic mission of the College, includes program outcomes, and is congruent with College policies, resources, and student needs. Any degree or certificate programs that can be completed by more than 50% through technologically mediated instruction must be approved by the CT Department of Higher Education. The Information Technology Division coordinates support resources for Distance Education. The coordination of this support is a primary responsibility of the Director of Distance Learning. The CT Distance Learning Consortium (CTDLC) has provided most of the technological infrastructure for Distance Education at Three Rivers.

Present
The Academic Dean with input from the Ed Tech Committee recently developed the First Run Online and Hybrid Course Policy that was implemented this fall. The Ed Tech Committee is reviewing this policy and attempting to exact a mechanism for ensuring quality in existing online and hybrid courses. With regard to Distance Education, Three Rivers' organizational structure, decision-making processes, and policies are clear and consistent with its mission and support institutional effectiveness. Three Rivers' system of governance involves the participation of appropriate constituencies and includes regular communication among them.

Future
Three Rivers does not plan to make any significant changes in organizational structure or governance with regard to distance education in the foreseeable future.

Institutional Effectiveness
Three Rivers' organization and governance structure assures the integrity and quality of academic programming conducted via distance education. Over the next five years, as the college implements a formal institutional effectiveness plan, organization and governance structure for distance education will reviewed more intensively and changes will be instituted as necessary.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMING

Retrospective

Three Rivers has offered two Distance Education programs: Associate of Arts Degree in General Studies and a Certificate in Laser and Fiber Optic Technology. The Laser and Fiber Optic Technology certificate could be completed entirely on-line, entirely on-ground, or as a combination of the two. This program has been only offered by Three Rivers faculty members. The Associate degree in General Studies has been offered by a combination of CT community colleges but not all degree requirements have been offered by Three Rivers faculty. Therefore, students who may have wanted to complete this degree completely on-line would have had to take one or more courses from another institution of higher learning in addition to on-line courses taught directly by Three Rivers. Three Rivers has offered between 12 and 24 courses on-line each semester. Information about all College programs has been available in the printed catalog, on the College's website, and in material disseminated during the admissions and academic advisement processes. All academic programs offered by the College emerge from an academic department and must be approved by the College's Curriculum Committee, which is chaired by the Academic Dean and includes representation from each academic department, the Department of Continuing Education, the Library, Tutoring and Academic Success Center, and Student Services. At this time, the two programs that Three Rivers offers via Distance Education are not identified as independent programs.

Present

Distance Learning credit programs at Three Rivers have not changed in the past five years although the number of courses being offered via distance learning has increased over the past few semesters. The Registrar has expressed belief that the supply of distance education courses being offered still has not met the demand. A major challenge facing the college now is enrollment caps for online and hybrid courses, relative to on-site courses (20 versus 35 student enrollments). Also, Three Rivers Continuing Education Department now offers a number of non-credit courses via Distance Learning.

Future

Three Rivers is planning to modify its Certificate Program in Laser and Fiber Optic Technology by seeking to make it more responsive to student and industry needs. These changes will be presented to the Curriculum Committee. A slight increase in the number of courses being offered via Distance Learning is also expected for the future.

Institutional Effectiveness

Three Rivers has demonstrated an acceptable system of academic oversight, assuring the quality of the academic programs offered via distance learning. Over the next five years, as the college implements a formal institutional effectiveness plan, educational programming for distance education will reviewed more intensively and changes will be instituted as necessary.

FACULTY

Retrospective

Three Rivers Community College has recruited and developed a faculty body that is well suited to fulfill the institution's mission as related to distance education. The faculty have rendered Distance Education instruction competently and have successfully performed responsibilities outside of the classroom.

Present

During the 2006-07 academic year, there were a total of 76 full-time faculty, and 164 adjunct faculty. Of these, a total of fifteen faculty taught distance education courses with the following departmental composition:

Discipline	Full Time	%	Part Time	%
1. Business	3	26.7	0	0
2. Engineering	2	13.3	0	0
3. Humanities	1	6.6	0	0
4. Mathematics	2	13.3	0	0
5. Nursing	2	13.3	0	0
6. Science	0	0	0	0
7. Social Science	3	20.0	2	13.3
Total	13	86.7	2	13.3

Three Rivers is proud of the quality, competence, and diversity represented by its faculty, whose variety and breadth of expertise reflect and accommodate the complexities of the community and underpin distance learning instruction. Faculty unions have been working with the Community College management to update the contracts for "protocols for distance learning". These are still under negotiation. Three Rivers utilizes faculty mentors (experienced distance learning instructors who receive release time) as a means to help assist other faculty with online learning initiatives. The faculty mentor program fosters technical competence, collegial support and enthusiasm for on-line instruction.

Future

Three Rivers does not anticipate any major changes to faculty with regard to distance education. It is hoped that professional development opportunities associated with the Title III grant will further enhance distance learning faculty proficiencies.

Institutional Effectiveness

Over the next five years, as the college implements a formal institutional effectiveness plan, the faculty assessment efforts for distance education will become more formalized and implemented changes clearly documented.

SERVICES *

Retrospective

As Three Rivers Community College has become more technologically savvy, new challenges have arisen for an increasingly diverse student population. Recognizing these challenges, the college hired a Director of Distance Learning in 2005. Later that same year, the college hired a Technical Support Specialist who provides direct service to students studying at a distance. The Technical Support Specialist's responsibilities are orientating students in the WebCT environment (which is the on-line course management system utilized by all Connecticut public colleges), troubleshooting computer problems, in-class student orientations about WebCT, and teaching students technical readiness on all levels. The Director of Distance Learning creates strategic plans, trains faculty regarding students' needs, and provides assistance to students. Additionally, the Connecticut Distance Learning Consortium (CTDLC), an independent enterprise, provides an array of support services that supplement the college's own services. CTDLC is responsive to students when they call the Help Line or utilize the on-line Help Desk for technical assistance within the WebCT environment.

Over the past five years, Three Rivers has made remarkable progress in providing support services to students studying at a distance. Academic advising of distance learners now is done remotely via e-mail or telephone as well as in person. E-mail addresses and telephone numbers for faculty are made available to all students and found on the college's web site http://www.trcc.commnet.edu/stu_services/Counseling_services/AcadAdvis.pdf . Faculty contact email also available on the CTDLC Course Offerings page: www.ctdlc.org/courseoffer/search.cfm. Once a student has met with an academic advisor and earned 12 credits, students may register for classes via the Internet. This access is restricted to returning students as they have a fundamental familiarity with the college. Distance learners who have not earned 12 credits can utilize e-mail or fax to apply and enroll in courses.

A positive development for students studying at a distance has been the smoother integration between the financial aid offices of Three Rivers and other institutions e.g., University of Connecticut, Mitchell College, etc. This has resolved registration difficulties for students taking on-line courses at multiple institutions simultaneously. Three Rivers students are also able to make their tuition payments online as well as review their billing and financial aid information. Moreover, students can update their e-mail addresses online, locate their advisors, download their unofficial transcripts, view their demographic information and check final grades each semester.

Present

According to the college Registrar, distance learning courses are growing. In Fall 2002, 208 students were enrolled in 12 distance learning classes and in Fall 2006, 344 students were enrolled in 18 classes. The Registrar believes the supply of courses has not met the demand. A major challenge facing the college now is enrollment caps for online and hybrid courses, relative to on-site courses (20 versus 35 student seats).

Services for distance learners are now comparable to services received by on-site learners. For example, students can peruse Three Rivers' course offerings online via

http://www.online.commnet.edu . Individuals who wish to enroll can do so via the internet and access registration forms at: http://www.trcc.commnet.edu/SecTier/stuserv.html . An icon for WebCT is found on the Connecticut Community College's home page (www.online.commnet.edu); the icon generates student friendly instructions about WebCT. Last year, 50 entering students participated in an online, new student orientation. The official college catalog and student handbook are web-based.

Learner support services also are offered to students studying at a distance. The college's Writing Center and Tutoring and Academic Success Center (TASC) offer web-based services. For example, students submit drafts to The Writing Center via e-mail and receive a response within two business days.

Student course withdrawals are a concern for the college. In response to various faculty and administrators concerns, the college's Educational Technology Committee built a web-based presentation to help students determine if distance learning is the right venue for their computer equipment, learning style and personal lifestyle. The orientation can be found at http://www.commnet.edu/academics/webct_student/docs/Ed-Tech_eLearning.html

Future
The Connecticut Community Colleges developed a document entitled, "Effective Teaching Practices for Web-Enhanced, Hybrid and Online Classes." The Three Rivers' Educational Technology Committee hopes to use the document and formulate best practices in distance education for the college.

In addition, Three Rivers plans to offer an online, virtual tour of the college on its home page which will aid all students, especially distance learners. A Welcome Center website is being developed with Frequently Asked Questions, and academic information that is easy to navigate.

Institutional Effectiveness
Three Rivers has not developed any specific goals directly related to student support services for distance learners. We are currently in the midst of a comprehensive analysis of these services. However, information from program reviews, student and graduate surveys and student focus groups has been used to make service improvements. For example, distance learners are now able to apply for admission and financial aid online. Goals related to support services for distance learners will be incorporated into the institution's future assessment plan.

* *Note*: this Area was identified by the Commission as an Area for Special Emphasis and has been copied from the main report for completeness purposes.

LIBRARY AND TECHNOLOGICAL SUPPORT

Retrospective

The Library has fulfilled the institution's and Library's mission statements by providing to faculty, students, staff and the surrounding community resources that are current, diverse, educational and intellectually stimulating. Since 2002, the library has kept pace with students' expectations of remote electronic access to materials. In order to address concerns raised in the 2002 Self-Study Report, the Library has added full-text subscriptions to several online databases: Academic Search Premier, Business Source Premier, ERIC, Health Source: Nursing Academic, Newspaper Source, MasterFile Premier and Opposing Viewpoints Resource Center.

The institution has been distinguished by its strong support for classroom technology aided by the availability of the course management systems (e.g. Blackboard / WebCT). Classrooms have been equipped with computers that are integrated with document projectors, audio and video capabilities, and many are also equipped with Smart Boards (electronic whiteboards). An aggressive faculty technology training program has been a strength of the institution. Since 2001, Information Technology (IT) personnel have offered faculty and staff 204 classes regarding the use of classroom technology, course management systems, and software programs.

Present

The Library has created Electronic book collections which includes over 750 titles. Students have access to InfoAnytime, a 24/7 reference service. Students can access online databases remotely or on campus. The Library tries to ensure the quality of materials purchased by collaborating with faculty and reading reviews in journals, books and brochures. The faculty continue to play a direct role in the ordering process: each department is given $5,000 per year from the library budget. Faculty submit requests for purchase of library materials and the library notifies them when the materials are received and makes provisions to expeditiously catalog and process newly arrived materials. The Library Director serves on the Curriculum Committee in order to keep informed of changing curricula and new programs. The Library holdings include 42,208 books, CDs, and DVDs. The Library subscribes to 338 journals in both paper and microfilm format. The Library added 1,521 new items to the collection in 2005.

The Course Management System (CMS) supporting Three Rivers Distance Learning courses is hosted at the Connecticut Distance Learning Consortium (CTDLC). Distance learning students who experience technological difficulties are normally referred to the Help Desk run CTDLC which provides service 7 days per week. In addition, the IT Help Desk responds to students experiencing password / login problems and the Instructional Support Specialist deals with students on an individual basis for more detailed problems when necessary. The Instructional support Specialist responded to an average of 10-15 requests per day during a the 2006-2007 academic year. The CMS (Blackboard's Vista version) has been integrated with the Student Information System (Banner) so that as student's register for courses, they are automatically entered in CMS rosters.

Future

The Library will continue to periodically assess, evaluate, and acquire the services to provide the best possible mix of offerings to our students given the availability of resources. The CT Community College System is moving ahead with the implementation of a portal system that will tie together the CMS, with online access to the Student Information System, and library databases via a single login. This portal, named "myCommnet" is planned for a November 2007 release. More information on this project can be found at:
http://www.commnet.edu/portal/

Institutional Effectiveness
Over the next five years, the college will be implementing a formal institutional effectiveness program to be overseen by a college wide Institutional Assessment Committee. This process will ensure that the college systematically evaluates the adequacy, utilization, and impact of the library along with other areas requiring technological support at the college to ensure that the library is providing the most effective services possible.

FINANCIAL RESOURCES

Retrospective

The Board of Trustees distributes operating fund budget authorizations to each college based on established formulas. After establishing revenue goals for all of the colleges, the system office distributes funds based on formulas that incorporate different parameters such as plant size, number of staff, number of students and program mix. Funding methodologies are constantly being fine-tuned to give each college a more equitable share of the resources. Larger schools contribute monies back to the system office to support smaller schools and shared system office expenditures. Three Rivers Community College is currently the seventh largest school in the Community College System.

Present

Three Rivers' financial planning, including contingency planning, is integrated with overall planning and evaluation processes. It reallocates resources as necessary to achieve its purposes and objectives. Distance learning courses go through the same level of scrutiny and analysis to ensure that they are cost effective to run. The CT Community College System centrally coordinates and funds the hosting of distance learning support services with CTDLC thereby eliminating substantial duplication of efforts if colleges had to negotiate and pay for these individually. Three Rivers is in very good financial shape and able to respond to most any eventuality.

Future

Although Three Rivers has been successful in maintaining a solid financial position throughout fiscal year 2006, this may not be an easy task in the next two fiscal years. As Three Rivers looks forward to the newly expanded and consolidated campus, there is a growing awareness of the numerous complex steps still ahead before the completion of new facilities in academic year 2008-2009. The task of outfitting 300,000 square feet of new laboratories, classrooms, offices and other support facilities is daunting in and of itself. Additionally, the construction underway at both campuses is imposing new unfunded operating costs over which the institution has virtually no control. With regard to specific financial impacts to Distance Learning, it is uncertain if funding for the Instructional Technology support position and the faculty mentoring for Distance Learning instructors will continue beyond the 07-08 academic year.

Institutional Effectiveness

Over the next five years as the college implements a more formal institutional effectiveness plan, an effort will be made to make fund reporting more accessible to a broader cross section of the college community so that the integration of budgeting with planning and assessment will be a more visible and deliberate process.

DEALING WITH STUDENTS, PROSPECTIVE STUDENTS, AND THE PUBLIC

Retrospective
Three Rivers Community College presents itself accurately and honestly in a number of publications, the web, and in advertising. The catalog and the college web site contain the institution's mission, objectives, educational outcomes, requirements, procedures, and policies related to admissions and the transfer of credit, student fee charges and refund policies, rules and regulations for student conduct, withdrawing from the institution, academic programs, academic policies and the requirements for degrees.

The schedule of classes, available to students every semester at pre-registration, also sets forth student fees, charges, refund policies, and items relating to withdrawing from the institution. Both the catalog and the schedule also give Three Rivers' status as an accredited college, information on child care, academic advising, and other services. Neither the catalog, which has been revised every one or two years, nor the schedule, which is revised each semester, list courses that are not taught at least once every few years. The catalog lists faculty, their status, degrees, departmental affiliation; as well as administrators, board members and advisory councils. A Student Handbook contains detailed information on students' rights, responsibilities, activities, services, and procedures for action, such as filing a complaint.

Three Rivers has established a broad array of policies and procedures which exemplify high ethical standards in the management of its affairs and in its relationships with students, employees, external agencies, and the public. The College annually publishes a strong statement of Student Rights and Responsibilities and provides a grievance process for students. The College's stated policies pertain to fairness in the balance between the rights of the institution and individual students and faculty/staff. A document stating The Code of Ethics for Appointed Public Officials and State Employees is available in the President's Office.

Three Rivers is committed to the free pursuit and dissemination of knowledge. Both published policies and teaching practices assure faculty and students the freedom to teach and study in a given field and to question assumptions. Three Rivers is committed to maintaining academic freedom, both in teaching and research. This commitment to academic freedom is formalized in the respective contract agreements. In addition, the College has a Policy on Racism and Acts of Intolerance that further defines constitutionally protected expression in a collegiate environment. Students are guaranteed fairness and due process through a series of policies, including: Aids and Other Communicable Diseases, Policy on Drugs and Alcohol, Policy on Persons with Disabilities, Policy on Racism and Acts of Intolerance, Policy on Sexual Harassment, Policy on Student Rights and Responsibilities, Weapons on College Campus Policy, and Policy on Student Discipline.

Present
Three Rivers publications are reviewed for accuracy on their own publication schedule. The college has hired a full-time Publicist in an effort to create a single publication point for college materials. Three Rivers provides consistent and accurate information to all constituencies through print and electronic media. The efforts of the marketing and recruitment teams as well as the implementation of new programs designed for a particular workforce have allowed Three

Rivers to more efficaciously reach prospective students, their families, and the community more effectively. The Distance Learning section of the college's website has been recently re-vamped to provide information in an easy-to-find and more visually appealing design.

Future
With regard to public disclosure of information, including distance learning, plans for the future are ambitious. The institutional research office is looking at implementing an institutional research web site for long-term, strategic plans. Discussions are underway about streamlining the tiers of the college's web page for ease of navigation and information retrieval.

Institutional Effectiveness
As in other areas, it is anticipated that the systematic review and follow-up of results will be improved with the implementation of the college's institutional effectiveness plan. Specific goals and measures will be developed relative to public disclosure about distance learning so that assessment results can be used to make improvements to the availability and accuracy of all college publications.

CONTRACTUAL RELATIONSHIPS

Retrospective and Present

a. The consortial relationship with the Connecticut Distance Learning Consortium (CTDLC) is consistent with NEASC's Policy on Good Practices in Contractual Relationships. The partnership with CTDLC enables Three Rivers to fulfill our institutional missions while sharing in and contributing to the combined distance learning resources of the consortium. This relationship allows Three Rivers to leverage the services and resources provided by CTDLC while continuing to be responsible for any activities conducted in the name of Three Rivers Community College. This arrangement helps Three Rivers reduce costs and provide higher capacity services than if provided separately.

b. The contractual relationship with VitalStream Small Business Services (formerly Playstream, LLC) is a standard service to allow content delivery of audio, video, and multimedia content over the Internet. These services allow Three Rivers to provide standard delivery of this content without having to acquire the equipment to provide this service in-house. This arrangement helps Three Rivers reduce costs, provide higher capacity services than if provided separately, and reduce bandwidth demand on the Three Rivers data network

Future

There are no plans to change the current contractual relationships which Three Rivers has in place for distance education.

Institutional Effectiveness

As in other areas, Three Rivers will continue to evaluate our contractual relationships involving distance education to attempt to identify better alternatives if available.

CIHE DATA FORMS FOR REPORT ON DISTANCE EDUCATION PROGRAMS

INSTITUTION:

TABLE 1.   Program and Certificate Description

Note :   For Enrollment and other data, use data from current or most recently completed semester for which data are available.

Programs and Certificates in which 50% or more of the courses may be completed entirely on-line

Program or Certificate Name	Level of Degree (A, B, M, D) or Certificate (C)	Initiation Date (First Enrollment) (Year Only)	Number of Required Credits	No. of Credits Which May be Completed On-Line
General Studies	A	2000	60-61	60-61
Laser and Fiber Optic Technology	C	2002	14.5	14.5

Insert additional rows for more programs, if needed.

Scroll down to next table

CIHE DATA FORMS FOR REPORT ON DISTANCE EDUCATION PROGRAMS

INSTITUTION:

TABLE 2.   Students

Note :   For Enrollment and other data, use data from current or most recently completed semester for which data are available.

Programs and Certificates in which 50% or more of the courses may be completed entirely on-line

Program or Certificate Name	Matriculated Students	Degree or Certificate Completers to Date	Total Number of Students Taking Courses on Ground*	In-State Students Taking Courses On-Line	Out-of-State Students Taking Courses On-Line	Students Based in Other Countries Taking Courses	Total Number of Students Taking Courses On-Line
General Studies	1197	133	1116	81	7	0	**88**
Laser and Fiber Optic Technology	1	0	1	0	0	0	**0**
							0
							0
							0
							0
							0
							0
							0
							0
							0
							0
							0
TOTAL	**1198**	**133**	**1117**	**81**	**7**	**0**	**88**

Insert additional rows for more programs, if needed.

*Students enrolled in programs described in this table.

Scroll down to next table

CIHE DATA FORMS FOR REPORT ON DISTANCE EDUCATION PROGRAMS

INSTITUTION:

TABLE 3.   Faculty

Note :   For Enrollment and other data, use data from current or most recently completed semester for which data are available.

Programs and Certificates in which 50% or more of the courses may be completed entirely on-line

Program or Certificate Name	Faculty Teaching in The Program (Headcount)				FTE Faculty in Program	Number with Highest Degree	
	Faculty Employed Full Time at The Institution		Faculty Employed PT at The Institution	Total Faculty in Program			
	FT in Program	PT in Program				Ph.D or Equivalent	Masters or Equivalent
General Studies	*	*	*	0	*	*	*
Laser and Fiber Optic Technology	1	0	0	1	1	0	1
				0			
				0			
				0			
				0			
				0			
				0			
* This is a CT Community College system program				0			
that crosses multiple disciplines including Humanities,				0			
Social Sciences, Natural Sciences and Mathematics.				0			
There are no faculty assigned directly to the program.				0			
				0			
				0			
TOTAL	**1**	**0**	**0**	**1**	**1**	**0**	**1**

Insert additional rows for more programs, if needed.

Scroll down to next table

CIHE DATA FORMS FOR REPORT ON DISTANCE EDUCATION PROGRAMS

INSTITUTION:

TABLE 4.   **Course enrollments and completions**

Note :   For Enrollment and other data, use data from current or most recently completed semester for which data are available.

Programs and Certificates in which 50% or more of the courses may be completed entirely on-line

Courses Offered On-Line	Fall	Spring	Year Total*	Fall	Spring	Year Total*	Fall	Spring	Year Total*
Undergraduate	2004	2005	04-05	2005	2006	05-06	2006	2007	06-07
Total Number of courses	17	17	48	17	16	48	18	20	49
Total on-line enrollments	367	325	897	335	353	905	402	442	1048
On-line course completions	270	258	702	257	279	736	316	338	843
Graduate									
Total Number of courses									
Total on-line enrollments									
On-line course completions									
TOTAL									
Total Number of courses	**17**	**17**	**48**	**17**	**16**	**48**	**18**	**20**	**49**
Total on-line enrollments	**367**	**325**	**897**	**335**	**353**	**905**	**402**	**442**	**1048**
On-line course completions	**270**	**258**	**702**	**257**	**279**	**736**	**316**	**338**	**843**

 * For year total, include all offerings, including Fall and Spring terms, short-terms, summer, and non-term-based offerings