**Best Practices in Concurrent Enrollment Programs (CEP**

**Barton Community College**

**Program Area:** Spring 2010 concurrent enrollment in the following disciplines: Mathematics, English, Graphic Design, History, Foreign Language, Social Science, Communications and Literature.

**Teaching Mode:** Addition of eCompanion shell for courses taught face-to face and ITV instruction supplemented with an eCompanion shell.

**Topic:** Training for implementation of eCompanion shells for all spring 2010 concurrent course offerings

**Learning Outcomes:** Increased student learning through availability of course grades, syllabus, assignments and handouts via an eCompanion shell that will be available to students 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

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Training sessions in the use of eCompanion shells were provided on Barton’s main campus for all associate faculty members, including concurrent faculty, on October 12th, October 14th, November 9th and November 10th, 2009. These sessions were led by Brian Howe, Assistant Dean of Academics. He was assisted by LaVonne Gerritzen, Executive Director of Workforce Operations and numerous full-time faculty members that are considered “champions” of both eCompanion shells and on-line learning. An additional training session was conducted at Hays High School on November 18, 2009 for six additional concurrent enrollment faculty members.

Barton Community College made an institutional commitment relating to the use of eCompanion shells for all courses taught through Barton regardless of delivery location or venue. This commitment was introduced to full-time faculty during the spring 2008 semester with implementation set for fall 2008. At that time, the following requirements were outlined:

* The eCollege electronic Grade Book
* Upload an online syllabus
* Post attendance data to document sharing
* Administer the CATs and Student Course Evaluation Survey Wizard data collection system

Implementation of eCompanion shells for associate faculty will begin with the spring 2010 semester. This implementation was first discussed with associate faculty during the August, 2009 Associate Faculty Meeting. Wynn Butler, Executive Director of Distance Learning, reviewed the potential benefit of this learning platform for students, curriculum, faculty, assessment and administration as outlined in order of importance below:

**Students**

Any course that uses eCompanion will provide students immediate access to any handouts used in the class. It allows instructors to post copies of any transparencies or PowerPoint presentations used in the course. A robust eCompanion shell might even include lecture notes, sample exams, self tests and additional tutorials to assist in student success. Communication tools included in eCompanion include an email portal that allows communication between students and student/instructor. Full use of the online grade book provided with eCompanion gives the student continuous progress reports throughout the term. Integration of the eCompanion system in all classroom presentation will enhance student success.

**Curriculum**

Commonality of the curriculum is one of the college’s major goals. Sharing of actual classroom material and course content is possible with the eCompanion system. Entire courses or just specific content (including exams) can be duplicated and shared between all faculty members regardless of location or venue. eCompanion will allow instructors to actually view in detail the material presented by their colleagues; something that is not currently possible without sitting through many hours of instruction. eCompanion allows administrators and instructors teaching in any of the many venues and locations to create and share “common curriculum” items as desired.

**Faculty**

Faculty using an eCompanion shell will find that the system is a great time saver and a perfect organizational tool. The system allows faculty to post syllabi, handouts, notes, etc. online, eliminating the need to provide Xerox copies to the students. Material posted to the eCompanion shell is readily accessible through the SMART classroom technology and can be used in classroom presentations. The email feature of the system enhances instructor student communication. The online grade book provides the instructor with the perfect tool for speedy student feedback – as both the instructor and student can view the grade book. The document sharing portion of eCompanion speeds up the filing and sharing of administrative items such as attendance records. The auto posting of student evaluations and classroom assessment data through survey wizard allows eCompanion to serve as an excellent course archive – eliminating paper copies and all filing requirements. Faculty can use the eCompanion exam features to provide online access to exams. Use of the auto grade feature will greatly reduce the amount of time spent in grading and can save class time in exam administration. Online exams also provide excellent student critique opportunities. The eCompanion system provides statistical analysis to the instructor for each exam. Course surveys can be automated using eCompanion, reducing class time and speed data collection/analysis.

**Assessment**

Course and program level assessment is cumbersome, because of the volume of data/documents that must be maintained. Using eCompanion document sharing to post data into a course saves instructor time and allows for ready access by administrators/assessment coordinators. Use of an auto graded Pre and Post test, combined with the eCompanion analysis capabilities provides an excellent data tool for course assessment. Separate eCompanion course shells can be established and used to share course data, program data or assist faculty and administrators in the quest for a common curriculum. eCompanion provides an online course evaluation system. Course surveys can be tailored/ launched in any configuration or combination. The online survey system also provides data analysis. Savings in class time and compiling data more than make up for the cost of the system. Use of the eCompanion survey system allows for comparison valid statistical comparison of online, on campus and hybrid courses. Currently CAT and Student Course Evaluations can be launched for all classes through eCompanion.

**Administration**

eCompanion provides the vehicle for ease of administration. Almost all filing can be done in the course shell. The course shell is an excellent archive with ease of accessibility. The shell also assists in fixing accountability. Some of the items that can be filed or are auto archived in the course shell: classroom assessment data, Student Course Evaluations, attendance records, the grade book, pre and post tests and the actual syllabus used for that course. Use of the eCompanion grade book as a standard tool across the college achieves constancy in how grades are reported and eliminates the cost of other electronic grade book software. Faculty and Deans use eCompanion to monitor and ensure the commonality of the curriculum – something that is nearly impossible with traditional class visits.

With the goal of increased student learning and the availability of course and program assessment through this media, it is imperative to train and include our concurrent instructors in this process. This will allow Barton to better assess student learning related to the college as a whole and also allow for assessment in the many different arenas of teaching.