

7. REGIONAL ACCESS

There are several regions throughout the state of Oregon with adequate populations to support additional face-to-face (branch) services such as local advisors, face-to-face lectures, laboratories or field experiences, and student services. Regional access funds will be focused in Central Oregon, Salem, and the Southern Coast.

Goal 7A. Establish a distance education branch facility in Bend with a classroom, faculty offices, and a program director office. This facility will serve both credit and non-credit programs and will provide a laboratory setting for determining the best facility and staff composition and organization for distance learners in remote locations.

Central Oregon. OSU's primary initiative in providing access to educational programs in Central Oregon was the establishment of the OSU Central Oregon office, located on a highly visible intersection on the main highway entering Bend. This office, opened in July of 1999, with Grand Opening on September 23, 1999, provides the opportunity for Central Oregonians to access a variety of information about OSU and houses classrooms and offices where advising, meetings, and classes take place. In addition, a computer workroom provides students the opportunity to finish assignments, access information and student records over the Web, apply for admission to OSU, or correspond via email.

OSU has a strong presence on the campus of Central Oregon Community College located in Bend. Working closely with the University Center, OSU provides an array of face-to-face, interactive television, and other distance delivered courses to enable students to complete four bachelor's degree programs. In 1999-2000, OSU established two faculty positions with full-time faculty located on the COCC campus. Bob Ehrhart is the Distance Degree Program leader for the Natural Resources program. In this role, he recruits and advises students, teaches on site and distance courses, develops courses for distance delivery, and administers the program. Karen Wolf Wilkins is an assistant professor in Speech Communication, and supports the Liberal Studies curriculum by offering two courses in communication each term. She advises students in the Communication minor.

In addition, we have two academic advisors for a total of 1.3 FTE. (Diane Bohle and Les Joslin) These advisors maintain regular office hours at their offices on the COCC campus, and have also worked extensively out of the Central Oregon University Center office as well as county extension offices.

Key activities in Central Oregon for 1999-2000, in addition to the regular academic program, included:

- July, 1999- Opening of OSU Central Oregon office, with interim Director Melanie Fahrenbruch finalizing facilities, establishing staffing, and working with on-campus units for utilization, program development, and marketing.
- August, 1999- Participation in annual meeting of University Center partners and Information Festival. Advising by on-campus advisors.
- September, 1999- Grand Opening of OSU Central Oregon facility. Announcement of new minor in Computer Science to be offered in Bend beginning Fall 2000.
- September, 1999- Two new certificate programs began in Bend: Supervisory Leadership (20 enrolled) and Organizational Leadership (20 enrolled).
- October, 1999- Diane Bohle assumed role as interim director of Central Oregon programs, pending selection of permanent director.
- Fall, 1999 Distance and Continuing Education held a retreat in Central Oregon to enable the entire staff to become familiar with our facilities, staff and programs in the area.
- November, 1999- Les Joslin hired as .25 advisor, replacing Loretta Slepikas who resigned in October.
- November, 1999- Program advising sessions held with advisors from Corvallis campus participating
- January, 2000- Linda Johnson hired to begin position of Director of Central Oregon Programs.
- March, 2000- Graduation ceremony held at High Desert Museum to honor Professional Certificate program graduates. President Risser presented the certificates.
- April, 2000- Participated in Business and Trade Fair, Deschutes County Fairgrounds to promote OSU programs.
- May, 2000- Search conducted for new Computer Science faculty to teach minor courses and develop short courses in computer topics.
- Spring, 2000- OSU began planning process for responding to the OUS request for proposal to establish a branch campus in Central Oregon. (Linda Johnson, Director of Central Oregon programs, headed up the effort which culminated in submission of a final proposal to the Chancellor on December 1, 2000.)
- Throughout the year on a monthly or quarterly basis, OSU staff attended Chamber of Commerce meetings in the communities in Central Oregon.
- Winter/spring 2000- Linda Johnson established the Central Oregon planning team, and this group met frequently to establish goals and communication between the partners involved in the Central Oregon outreach efforts. Participants included OSU Extension, staff of OSU Central Oregon office, Barbara Moon, Gary Cross, and Diane Bohle.

Specific areas of activity addressing project categories:

- Salary for the Director of Central Oregon programs is directly supported by the grant funds. The activities of the director and other OSU staff to

promote access to OSU programs, provide local services for students, develop relationships with community organizations, and assess the education and training needs of local employers all support the objectives of the grant.

Setbacks, barriers, changes and recommendations:

Bend. Major barriers and setbacks in Central Oregon revolve around these issues:

- Politics and the competition for establishing a branch campus
- Personnel changes

The focus over this past year has been on establishment of a broader and deeper presence by OSU in Central Oregon. The planning process for the future branch campus has consumed enormous energy and resources. The positive side of these activities has been to involve a much larger group of people in the mission of OSU in Central Oregon. This includes faculty and administrators from the Corvallis campus, who now have a much stronger tie to our programs in Central Oregon, and who have made an investment in extending services and programs to off-campus students. We see this as a positive by-product of the branch campus proposal process, regardless of who is awarded the Branch Campus (OSU or the University of Oregon).

DCE has, however, backed away from some new program development in an effort to avoid direct competition with institutions partnering with DCE in the branch campus proposal. Local interest in teacher licensure prompted OSU to develop a proposal for a program in Central Oregon, but we have placed that proposal on hold until the resolution of the branch campus.

Personnel changes continue to challenge DCE's programs in Central Oregon. We have replaced one advisor during this report year, and have hired a new non-credit program coordinator. In addition, the new director of Central Oregon programs did not begin until January, thus resulting in multiple responsibilities for our advisor, Diane Bohle for Fall 99. Support staff turnover at the Central Oregon office has resulted in the need for continual re-training and orientation. The result has been that we have not had the ability to develop an adequate level of experience in serving customers and students who contact that office for information about our programs. The recommendation for the coming year is that we develop a more systematic and thorough approach to ongoing training of staff in Central Oregon, including staff at the county Extension offices.

Goal 7B. Establish face-to-face program advisors in Central Oregon, Salem, and the Southern Coast.

Regional Access and Advising

Salem. Area advisor Susan Conniff spearheaded a number of activities in her role as full-time on-site academic advisor/program coordinator for OSU educational activities in the Salem area. OSU leases office space at Chemeketa Community College, enabling OSU to liaison with the community college faculty, advisors, and administration for more closely articulated programs. Key activities from the 1999-2000 year included:

- Over 100 contacts with state agencies and community college representatives to build relationships and increase access to OSU programs offered via distance education and on-site in Salem.
- Initiated discussions with Chemeketa Community College for articulation of Natural Resources and General Agriculture degree programs.
- Met with the Chemeketa President and other key administrators to discuss implementation of dual admission/dual enrollment agreement with OSU. Determination was made to wait an additional year, following CCC's implementation of the Banner system.
- Additional meetings held to discuss joint promotion of our on-line programs, targeting the Liberal Studies degree as the pilot program.
- Launched first Professional Development Certificate program in Salem in Organizational Leadership. Twenty-two students enrolled, with 17 completing all requirements for the certificate.
- Responded from Salem office to 132 inquiries related to distance degree programs.
- Met with students for individual advising (68 sessions).
- Coordinated offering of on-site Liberal Arts courses for students in the Liberal Studies program, including those students completing the Chemeketa/OSU Careers in Teaching program.
- Celebrated the June 2000 graduation of 3 students in the Liberal Studies program (2 in the Careers in Teaching program).

Coos Bay. OSU Distance and Continuing Education has an office on the campus of Southwestern Oregon Community College, in the suite occupied by the University Center. Sally Atkin is OSU's advisor, and has a .50 FTE appointment with responsibilities for student recruitment, advising, community college relationships, and community outreach.

Key areas of achievement in the south coast area for 1999-2000 were:

- Dual admission and dual enrollment agreement with SWOCC was extended to all OSU majors.

- Established articulation with SWOCC and Southern Oregon University to offer their Web-based criminal justice courses as part of the OSU Liberal Studies major to meet the needs of students pursuing careers in social services and law enforcement fields.
- Continued to strengthen relationships with SWOCC administration and faculty, increasing understanding of OSU programs available to students locally.
- Locally advised approximately 65 students for Liberal Studies, 14 new students in Natural Resources, and a total of 51 other students interested in a variety of programs, with the largest number interested in Education and teacher licensure.
- Offered at least three on-site courses per term, with the Winter 2000 course HST 362 Women in U.S. History having the largest enrollment of any Coos Bay course to date (17).
- Graduated three students in the distance degree program.

Specific areas of activity addressing the project categories:

While all of the above activities in Salem and Coos Bay are not directly funded by the grant, all of the activities support delivery of courses, regional access to distance learning programs, and services to students.

Setbacks, barriers, changes and recommendations:

Salem. A major challenge in 1999-2000 was to establish a physical presence on the campus of Chemeketa Community College in Salem, and to gain acceptance with the community college faculty as viable partners in delivery of credit programs. The DCE office location was in a building removed from the central campus, and this made visibility and liaison work more difficult. In July 2000, the DCE office was moved to a more central campus location and we hope that visibility will improve. Change in OSU leadership for DCE made it difficult to establish relationships and agree upon goals at the top level, but this too has improved this spring. We are confident that joint marketing of our dual enrollment programs will commence this in 2000-2001.

The second area of challenge for Salem has been in determining what the population needs in both credit and non-credit programs. The large pool of government and agency workers in the area has not resulted in establishment of significant markets for our programs. We have done some market analysis, met with representatives from government and private sector employers, increased our advertising, and yet we have not increased our enrollment significantly during the past year. We are hopeful that new market research in the coming year will enable us to pinpoint our market more successfully.

Coos Bay. Challenges in Coos Bay center around the small population and the depressed natural resources-based economy. We predict a limited market in the

area unless new economic development efforts succeed. In addition, the largest area of interest has been in developing a teacher licensure program. OSU was not able to respond to this need in a timely way, due to organizational challenges within our school of education during the past year and also due to the length of time required to process requests for establishment of off-campus programs (i.e., Category I Proposals for program approval can take up to two years to process). This resulted in loss of students to other institutions' programs. It is DCE's intention to perform new market research, and explore new ways of promoting programs, and this will result in increased program offerings and enrollment during 2000-2001. Our advisor in Coos Bay is serving as a representative and initial contact for students wishing to participate in the dual admission program, regardless of whether they plan to stay in Coos Bay as a distance student or move to Corvallis to become a residential student.