Welcome to our First Issue!

The staff of CDE brings you this first newsletter in hopes of keeping you better informed about the exciting growth and changes happening now and in the near future!

The demand for online education continues to grow as students seek alternative ways to begin, restart, or complete their education during these financially troublesome times. Distance education offers the flexibility and affordability that non-traditional students often desire. Our courses have no set meeting times to accommodate students with busy work and home schedules. Any student, regardless of degree, program, age, technological ability, university, or country can sign up for our courses.

However, affordable does not mean poor quality, nor does flexible equate to less academic rigor. Our Instructional Design Team works closely with instructors and other CDE staff to revise courses on a three-year cycle to ensure that students receive the most up-to-date information and instructors have access to the latest technology and pedagogy.

CDE values innovation and quality. We strive to improve our educational foundation, explore new and changing philosophies, support our instructors, and continually increase our outreach efforts to rural and non-Alaskan students.

All of our courses are vetted and approved by their home department on campus. This means our courses must adhere to a very high standard for both accreditation and instructional quality. CDE has also recently published its own internal standards for quality improvement.

CDE is available to provide you with a quality education, no matter the distance!

Did you know?

- CDE serves over 4,300 students annually
- CDE offers over 100 courses via web and/or print
- CDE’s enrollment has increased 8-10% each year since 2006
- Over 75 instructors contribute their teaching expertise to CDE
- CDE collaborates with 38 different academic departments at UAF

Upcoming events & deadlines:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>Oct. 5 &amp; 9, 2009</td>
<td>CDE to attend college fairs at Juneau &amp; Fairbanks</td>
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<td>Oct. 12-13, 2009</td>
<td>CDE to attend Anchorage college fair</td>
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<td>Oct. 15, 2009</td>
<td>Deadline for Fall Graduation application</td>
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<td>Oct. 19-20, 2009</td>
<td>CDE booth at AFN’s Youth &amp; Elders Conference in Anchorage</td>
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<td>Oct. 30, 2009</td>
<td>Last day for student &amp; faculty initiated withdrawals</td>
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<td>Nov. 9, 2009</td>
<td>Spring 2010 registration begins</td>
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Tuition & Fee Changes

Our tuition rate at CDE is the same as the main UAF campus, with one notable difference. We do not charge any additional tuition cost for out-of-state students! This makes CDE one of the most affordable distance education options in the country!

To continue providing students with quality educational services, our tuition rate is increasing along with the main campus:

- Lower division $141/credit
- Upper division $159/credit
- Graduate $316/credit

Additionally, to better reflect the ever-expanding resources and staffing at CDE, a $5/credit technology fee will also come into effect in Fall 2009 to replace the $25 service fee that was previously charged for year-long enrollments.

CDE works hard to continue offering students affordable, flexible distance education courses with a full complement of support service staff, cutting-edge course design, and engaging instruction by our faculty.
**Advising Corner: The Myth of the “Easy A”**

The popularity of distance education has lead to more than a few myths that stretch reality. One such myth is the belief that distance courses are easier than face-to-face classes. A follow-up to that myth is the perception that distance education is of substandard quality.

While for some students distance education is physically or financially easier, the academic challenge present is often highly underestimated!

Every class at CDE is developed with high expectations of rigor with targeted activities contingent upon specific learning outcomes. Each course is created in cooperation with the expertise of CDE’s Design Team, AND must receive approval by its academic department. Either party can decide that a course does not meet their standards for excellence, at which point the course may be revised or even closed.

As with face-to-face classes, students in distance education courses should expect to spend three hours per credit studying and completing assignments each week. That’s at least nine hours per week for just one 3-credit course!

Flexibility is a key facet of distance education, but students must remember that it takes organization and perseverance to succeed just as it does in traditional classroom work.

**Quality Improvement**

CDE has recently published a new set of guidelines and procedures that constitute our Quality Improvement program. They entail a more detailed look at the function of our instructors, relationship between instructors, students, and CDE staff, and a process for improving our courses through systematic review.

Formalizing standards is an important way for our organization to create and review its mission and goals. The new guidelines provide an opportunity to maintain high quality expectations and incorporate new pedagogy in the continually evolving field of distance education.

We hope to demonstrate the program’s effectiveness through observable metrics such as course completion and success rates.

To obtain a copy of the new guidelines and procedures, please contact us at (907) 479-4706 or distance@uaf.edu.

**Spotlight: Open Education at CDE**

In recent months, open education has become an important part of CDE’s vision for the future. Open education is a collective term referring both to opening up and sharing course materials freely with the public – resulting in Open Education Resources, or OERs – and engaging in teaching and learning activities out in the open, also known as "open teaching."

Benefits of participating in open education activities include:

- providing prospective students with a better understanding of courses before they enroll
- allowing them to prepare properly and choose wisely
- and contributing to the global open education community from which we and a variety of Third World and less advantaged people and organizations can benefit.


**Faculty Development: iTeach ‘09**

For the sixth consecutive year, the Center for Distance Education (CDE) offered InTeach as a weeklong, intensive faculty seminar in the development and delivery of online courses. As in prior years, participants were competitively selected based on their desire to create better online learning experiences for students.

This year’s workshop targeted faculty and adjunct faculty who teach for the College of Rural and Community Development (CRCD). It included educators from Interior-Aleutians Campus, Chukchi Campus, Nome Campus, Tanana Valley Campus, the Early Childhood Education program, and the Center for Distance Education.

iTeach 2009 topics included digital literacy, personal learning environments, learning outcomes, assessment, learning activities, asynchronous presentation, copyright, and classroom management.

Reactions of the participants were overwhelmingly positive, affirming the effectiveness of the intensive hands-on format. One participant reported:

“I have been to many, many trainings over the years. Many were so-so, some were good, often I left feeling exhausted and weary. After this experience I felt inspired, happily-tired, motivated, and excited to keep working on my course.”

The Instructional Designers at CDE appreciated the opportunity to provide faculty-development for such a fine group of educators.

**Center for Distance Education**

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