# ALAMO COLLEGES DISTRICT
## St. Philip's College

# Distance Education Identification Report

# A Descriptive Analysis of Distance Education Trends from Fall 2015 through Spring 2020

## *St. Philip's College*

**Initial Submission: August 15, 2020; Revised Edition: November 1, 2021**

*Prepared by*
Diana Dimas
*Academic Program Coordinator/Interim Director,*
*Instructional Innovation Center*

*In Collaboration With:*
*Diane Gavin, Ph.D.*
*Interim Dean of Academic Services*

*Belinda Esqueda*
*Distance Learning Support Specialist*

*Shanna Bradford*
*Coordinator of Measurement and Evaluation*
*Department of IPRE*

*Revised by*
*Michelle Baland*
*Academic Program Coordinator*
*Center for Distance Learning*

Table of Content

# I.  Introduction

The purpose of the Distance Education Identification Report is to provide information for various internal and external constituencies regarding trends in the growth of online and hybrid courses, specifically trends in student online enrollment, online enrollment in dual credit and early college high school courses, online course sections, distance learning certified faculty, student success, and support for students. In addition, this report illustrates the percentage of distance education courses within academic program types. This report focuses on distance education courses at St. Philip's College offered during semesters Fall 2015 through Spring 2020.

This report provides descriptive, quantitative data on online and hybrid courses, in addition to St. Philip's College student duplicated enrollment and trends. As part of its preparation for the SACSCOC 2015 On-Site visit and the SACSCOC 2016 Special Committee visit, St. Philip's College conducted a four-phase process: Identification, Assessment, Awareness, and Continuous and Customized Improvement based on findings.

First, the institution identified distance education courses, followed by a descriptive assessment on courses identified. The awareness phase then allowed the institution to share the identification and descriptive assessment of data with internal and external St. Philip's College constituencies. Lastly and most importantly, data reviewed in this report allowed for customized improvement across educational programs and divisions.

This report has been updated to reflect current trends through Spring 2020, as well as updated information related to distance education at St. Philip's College.

# II.  Identification

A.  Distance Education Course Enrollment and Student Success

This report describes online and hybrid course enrollment, success rates, and number of course sections offered each semester starting with Fall 2015 and concluding in Spring 2020. The Office of Institutional Planning, Research and Effectiveness provided the data described in this report, unless otherwise noted.

B.     Institutional Memberships and College Ranking

In order to stay abreast of current trends and regulations in distance education, St. Philip's College maintains institutional memberships in the National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements.

| MEMBERSHIPS | |
|---|---|
| | As a member of NC-SARA, St. Philip's College ensures that it meets requirements related to students who reside outside of Texas and who are enrolled in our online courses. The college submits annual reports to NC-SARA with the number of out- of-state students enrolled in our online classes. |
| | As a member of OLC, St. Philip's College has access to up-to-date and high-quality faculty and staff development resources such as webinars, courses, publications, and conferences related to distance education. |
| | As a member of ITC, St. Philip's College has access to professional development, collaborative opportunities, research, and innovative practices in distance education. ITC is an affiliated council of the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC). ITC also tracks federal legislation that affects distance learning and conducts annual professional development meetings. |
| | Additionally, several faculty and staff are members of the Texas Distance Learning Association (TxDLA) and participate in annual conferences, webinars, or professional development programs. |

| RANKINGS | |
|---|---|
| | SR Education Group named St. Philip's College # 10 with the 2020 Best Online Community Colleges in Texas. Eligible schools were ranked according to their scores, and scores were calculated according to an internal formula that incorporates retention rate, online enrollment percentage, and the number of online associate degrees offered. https://www.guidetoonlineschools.com/online-schools/st-philip-s-college?lvl=32 |
| | St. Philip's College is a member of the National Association for College Admission Counseling, has ranked the college's Associate of Applied Science in Information Technology Cybersecurity Specialist as number eight (8) in the nation. This designation covers academic through 2020. https://www.nacacnet.org/ https://www.alamo.edu/spc/academics/academic-resources/academic-centers/cybersecurity-center/cyber-news/ |
| | St. Philip's College was named #11 at Best Colleges.com for having "the best online art programs." Quality online art programs being considered by students should be accredited and affordable while giving art students the tools and knowledge they need for success in the academic world and beyond graduation. |
| | Niche rankings are based on rigorous analysis of key statistics from the U.S. Department of Education and millions of reviews. St. Philip's College was rank the #11 best community college in Texas. https://www.niche.com/colleges/search/best-community-colleges/s/texas/ |

C.    Distance Learning Compliance

In order to facilitate maintaining compliance with distance education aspects of SACSCOC accreditation, the college established a Distance Learning Compliance Committee composed of faculty and staff and co-chaired by the Director of Teaching with Technology and the Dean for Academic Success whose division includes the Center for Distance Learning. The committee meets several times a year to review the status of online enrollments, programs, technology, online student support, and online faculty development.

D.    Center for Distance Learning

The college's Center for Distance Learning mission is to provide services and support to online students. The center includes a Coordinator, a Distance Learning Support Specialist, and part-time staff. They support students by email, by phone, or in person. The center also manages and facilitates the required Orientation to Online Learning (OLRN) course.

## II. Data Analysis/Assessment

## A. Enrollment Data

| | Fall 2015 | Spring 2016 | Fall 2016 | Spring 2017 | Fall 2017 | Spring 2018 | Fall 2018 | Spring 2019 | Fall 2019 | Spring 2020 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| # of Online (Duplicate Enrollment) | 8584 | 10756 | 9931 | 10253 | 10662 | 10265 | 11071 | 10768 | 11183 | 11561 |
| # of Hybrid (Duplicate Enrollment) | 1462 | 754 | 1140 | 573 | 1059 | 573 | 590 | 601 | 964 | 953 |
| % of Online (Duplicate Enrollment) of Total DE | 85% | 93% | 90% | 95% | 91% | 95% | 95% | 95% | 92% | 92% |
| % of Hybrid (Duplicate Enrollment) of Total DE | 15% | 7% | 10% | 5% | 9% | 5% | 5% | 5% | 8% | 8% |
| # of Online Sections | 763 | 323 | 173 | 837 | 366 | 175 | 327 | 367 | 891 | 347 |
| # of Hybrid Sections | 203 | 117 | 33 | 214 | 46 | 15 | 84 | 58 | 166 | 60 |
| % of Online Sections of Total DE | 79% | 73% | 84% | 80% | 89% | 92% | 80% | 86% | 84% | 85% |
| % of Hybrid Sections of Total DE | 21% | 27% | 16% | 20% | 11% | 8% | 20% | 14% | 16% | 15% |
| # of Online Core Course Sections | 151 | 163 | 154 | 177 | 159 | 175 | 164 | 186 | 184 | 219 |
| # of Hybrid Core Course Sections | 6 | 4 | 5 | 4 | 4 | 2 | 2 | 4 | 10 | 17 |
| % of Online Core Course Sections of Total DE | 96% | 98% | 97% | 98% | 98% | 99% | 99% | 98% | 95% | 93% |
| % of Hybrid Core Course Sections of Total DE | 4% | 2% | 3% | 2% | 2% | 1% | 1% | 2% | 5% | 7% |
| # of Online Non-Core Course Sections | 172 | 178 | 169 | 189 | 168 | 192 | 183 | 191 | 189 | 249 |
| # of Hybrid Non-Core Course Sections | 111 | 60 | 93 | 42 | 80 | 56 | 58 | 48 | 74 | 61 |
| % of Online Non-Core Course Sections of Total DE | 61% | 75% | 65% | 82% | 68% | 77% | 76% | 80% | 72% | 80% |
| % of Hybrid Non-Core Course Sections of Total DE | 39% | 25% | 35% | 18% | 32% | 23% | 24% | 20% | 28% | 20% |

*Source Data: Institutional, Planning, Research and Effectiveness – Daily Argos Report - July 1, 2020, Uncertified*

As illustrated below, results indicate that the number of duplicated, online has slowly increased from Fall 2015 (8584) to Fall 2019 (9931). From Fall 2018 (11071) to Fall 2019 (11183), the number of duplicated, online, enrollment increased by 112. The online duplicated number from Spring 2016 (10756) to Spring 2018 (10265) fluctuated. From Spring 2019 (10768) to Spring 2020 (11561) the online duplicated numbers increased approximately by 793.

Duplicated, hybrid course enrollment increased significantly in Fall 2015 (1462) then compared to Fall 2016 (1140) and 2017 (1059) numbers fluctuated. From Fall 2018 (590) to Fall 2019 (964), the duplicated, hybrid course began to increase in enrollment by 374. For Spring hybrid course enrollment had a high increase in Spring 2016 (754) then remained the same in Spring 2017 (573) and Spring 2018 (573). Fromm Spring 2019 (601) to Spring 2020 (953) an increase of 352 occurred.
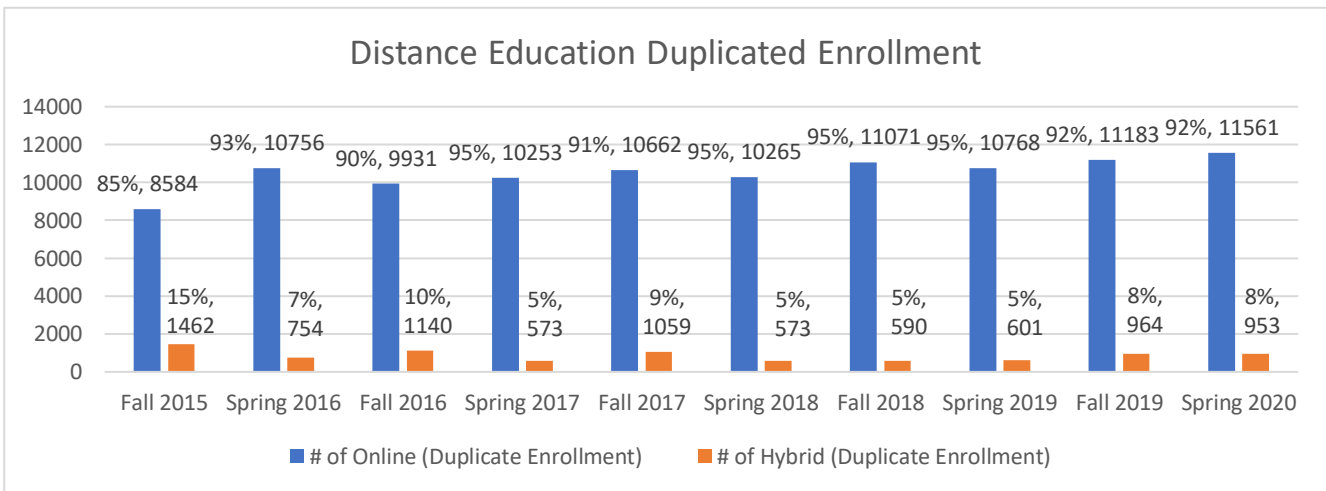


*Source Data: Institutional, Planning, Research and Effectiveness – Daily Argos Report - July 1, 2020, Uncertified*

The number of distance education class sections offered, as illustrated below shows growth increase and decrease from Fall 2015 to Spring 2020. Hybrid class sections also shows growth increase and decrease from Fall 2015 to Spring 2020.
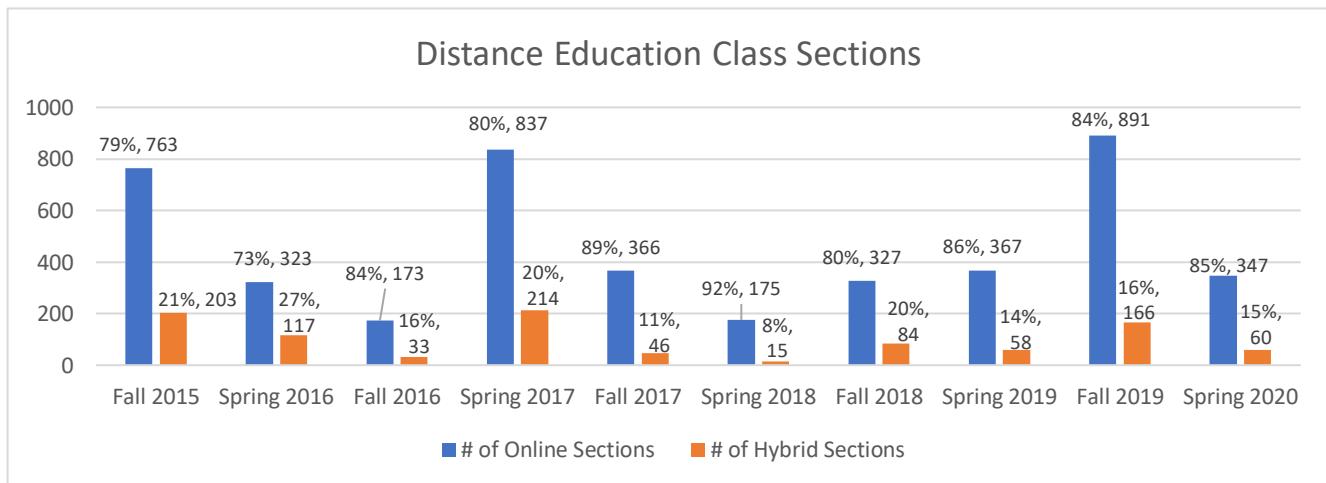


*Source Data: Institutional, Planning, Research and Effectiveness – Daily Argos Report - July 1, 2020, Uncertified*

Over fiscal year Fall 2019-Spring 2020, a total of 64 core courses were offered. There also has been an increase from Fall 2019 (184) to Spring 2020 (219) of approximately 35. Similarly, the number of hybrid courses had a slight increase.
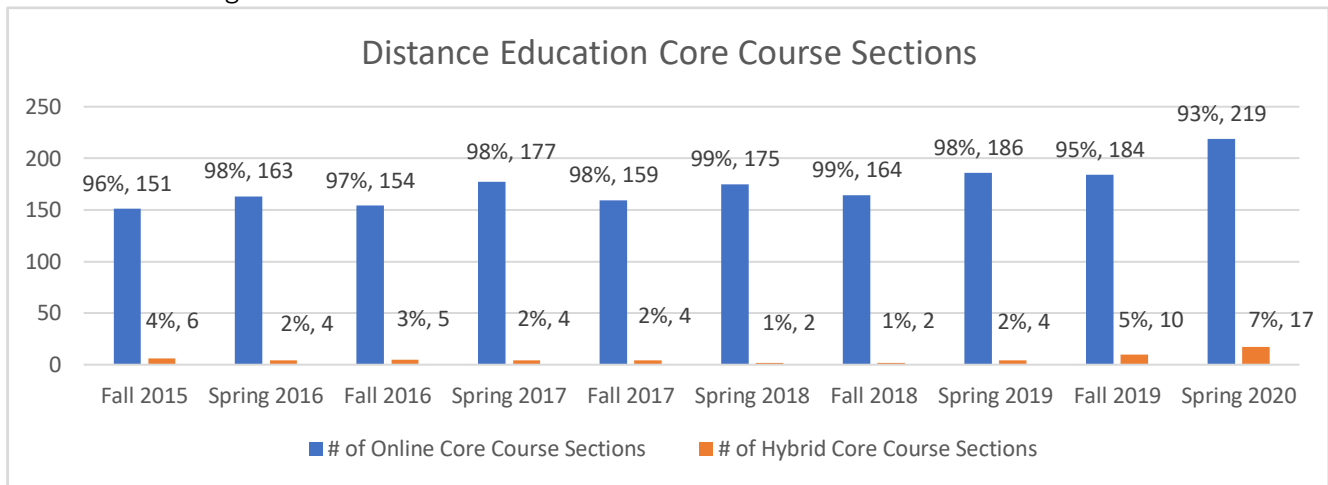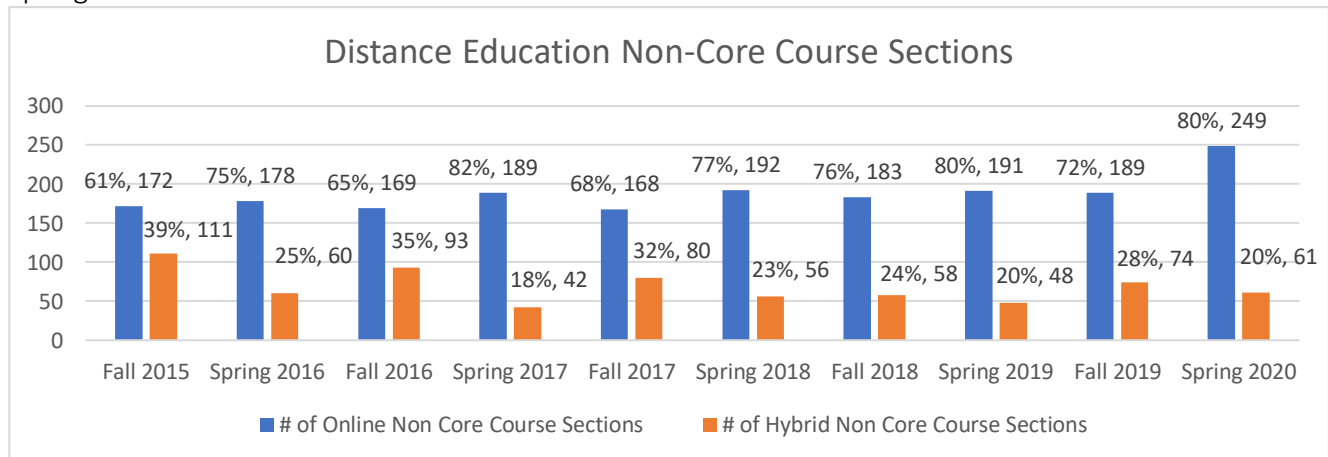


**Distance Education Core Course Sections**

Source Data: Institutional, Planning, Research and Effectiveness – Daily Argos Report - July 1, 2020, Uncertified

For Fall 2015-Spring 2019, the non-core course sections show a range of 168-192. In Spring 2020 we had a significant growth of 60. Hybrid non-core courses have fluctuated up and down from Fall 2015 to Spring 2020.
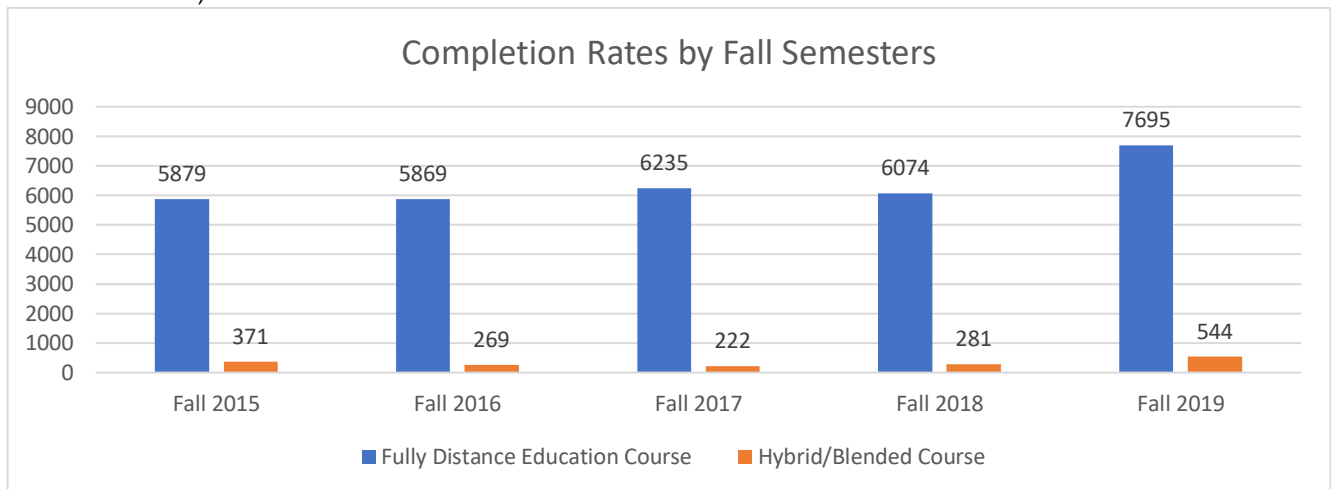


**Distance Education Non-Core Course Sections**

*Source Data: Institutional, Planning, Research and Effectiveness – Daily Argos Report - July 1, 2020, Uncertified*

B. Completion Rate and Success Rate

The Center for Distance Learning tracks trends in completion rates and successful completion rates of online students. Completion rates reflect students who did not drop from a class, whereas successful completion rates reflect students who completed a class with a passing grade. A comparison of Fall and Spring semester completions rates from 2015 to 2020 for Fully Distance Education courses and Hybrid/Blended courses is illustrated below.

The Completion Rate for fully distance education courses and hybrid/blended courses fluctuated for Fall 2015-2018, then increased in Fall 2019.



*Source Data: Institutional, Planning, Research and Effectiveness – Daily Argos Report - July 9, 2020, Uncertified; Chart Revised on October 11, 20212021, by Michelle Baland with corrected data.*

The Successful Completion Rate for fully distance education courses and hybrid/blended courses also fluctuated for Fall 2015-2018, then increased in Fall 2019.
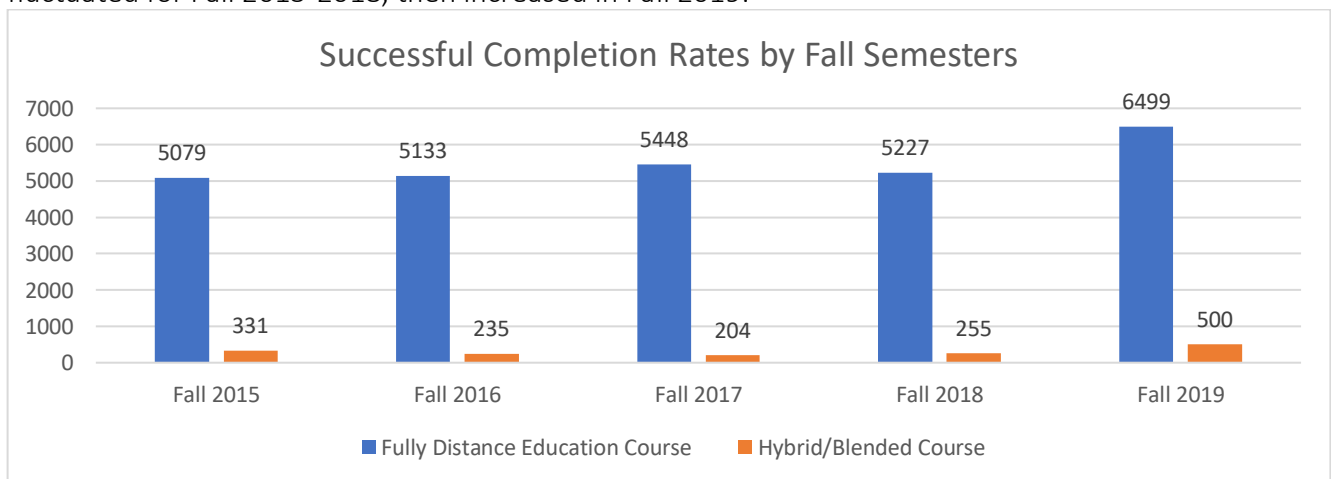


*Source Data: Institutional, Planning, Research and Effectiveness – Daily Argos Report - July 9, 2020, Uncertified; Chart Revised on October 11, 2021, by Michelle Baland with corrected data.*

The Completion Rate for fully distance education courses and hybrid/blended fluctuated for Spring 2015-2018.

## Completion Rates by Spring Semesters

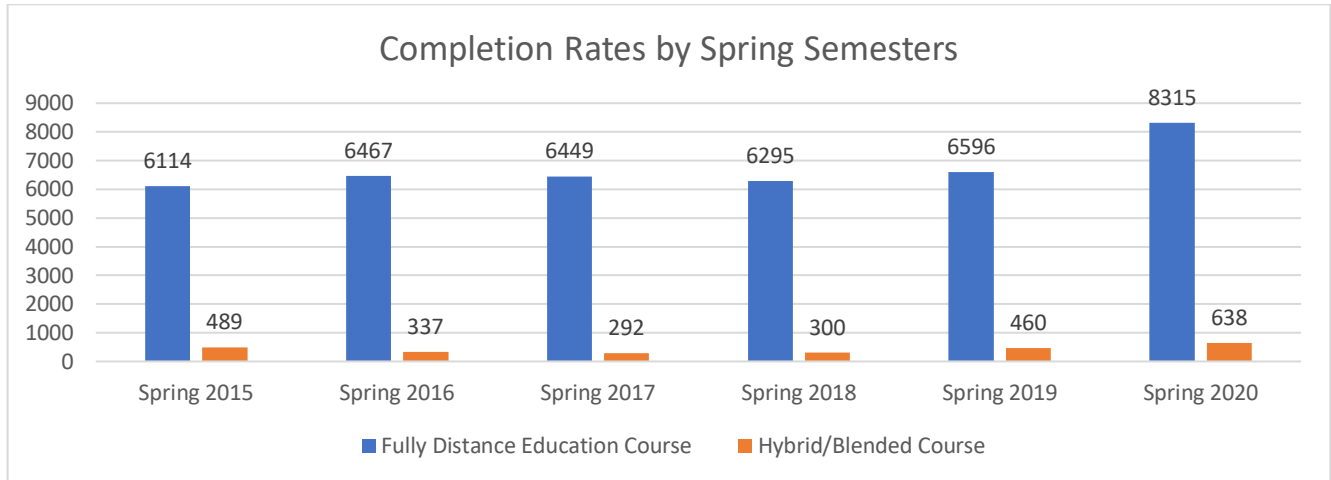| Semester | Fully Distance Education Course | Hybrid/Blended Course |
|---|---|---|
| Spring 2015 | 6114 | 489 |
| Spring 2016 | 6467 | 337 |
| Spring 2017 | 6449 | 292 |
| Spring 2018 | 6295 | 300 |
| Spring 2019 | 6596 | 460 |
| Spring 2020 | 8315 | 638 |

*Source Data: Institutional, Planning, Research and Effectiveness – Daily Argos Report - July 9, 2020, Uncertified; Chart Revised on October 11, 2021, by Michelle Baland with corrected data.*

The Successful Rate for fully distance education courses and hybrid/blended fluctuated for Fall 2015-2016 then a growth increase in Fall 2017 to Spring 2020.

## Successful Completion Rates by Spring Semesters

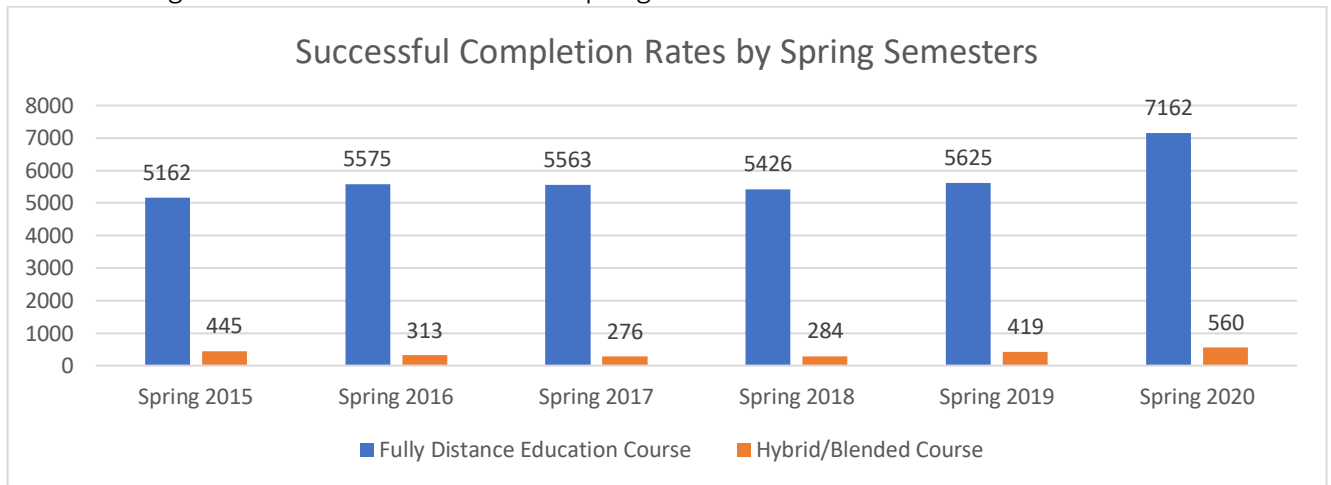| Semester | Fully Distance Education Course | Hybrid/Blended Course |
|---|---|---|
| Spring 2015 | 5162 | 445 |
| Spring 2016 | 5575 | 313 |
| Spring 2017 | 5563 | 276 |
| Spring 2018 | 5426 | 284 |
| Spring 2019 | 5625 | 419 |
| Spring 2020 | 7162 | 560 |

*Source Data: Institutional, Planning, Research and Effectiveness – Daily Argos Report - July 9, 2020, Uncertified; Chart Revised on October 11, 2021, by Michelle Baland with corrected data.*
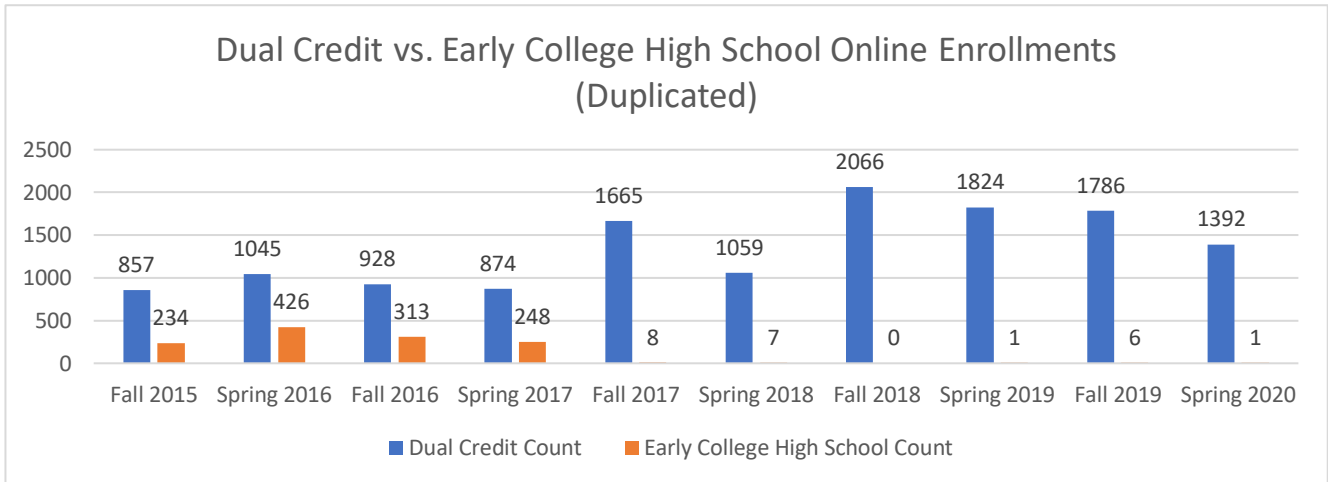
C. Dual Credit and Early College High School Enrollment

Dual Credit (DC) and Early College High School (ECHS) students can enroll in online and hybrid courses during the Fall and Spring semesters. A comparison between Dual Credit and Early College High School online enrollment is shown below.
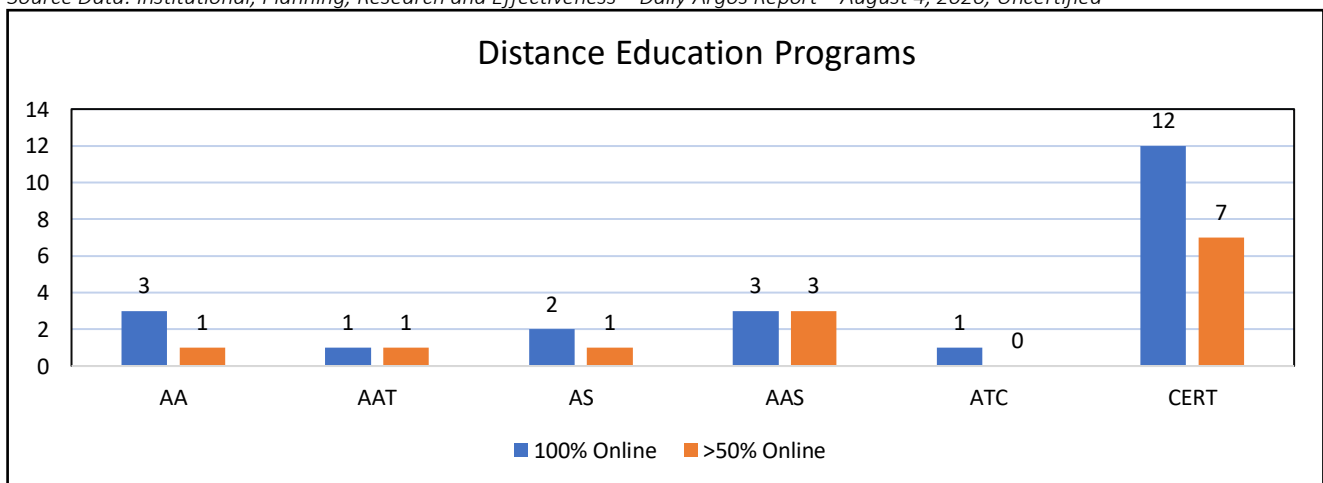
**Dual Credit vs. Early College High School Online Enrollments (Duplicated)**

| Semester | Dual Credit Count | Early College High School Count |
|---|---|---|
| Fall 2015 | 857 | 234 |
| Spring 2016 | 1045 | 426 |
| Fall 2016 | 928 | 313 |
| Spring 2017 | 874 | 248 |
| Fall 2017 | 1665 | 8 |
| Spring 2018 | 1059 | 7 |
| Fall 2018 | 2066 | 0 |
| Spring 2019 | 1824 | 1 |
| Fall 2019 | 1786 | 6 |
| Spring 2020 | 1392 | 1 |

*Source Data: Institutional, Planning, Research and Effectiveness – Daily Argos Report - July 27, 2020, Uncertified*

D. Distance Education Programs

The following chart shows the number of distance education programs by degree type: Associate of Arts (AA), Associate of Arts in Teaching (AAT), Associate of Science (AS), Associate of Applied Science (AAS), and certificates (CERT). Institutional Summary Form that lists all educational programs that are available 25-49% online, greater than or equal to 50% online, or 100% online.

*Source Data: Institutional, Planning, Research and Effectiveness – Daily Argos Report – August 4, 2020, Uncertified*
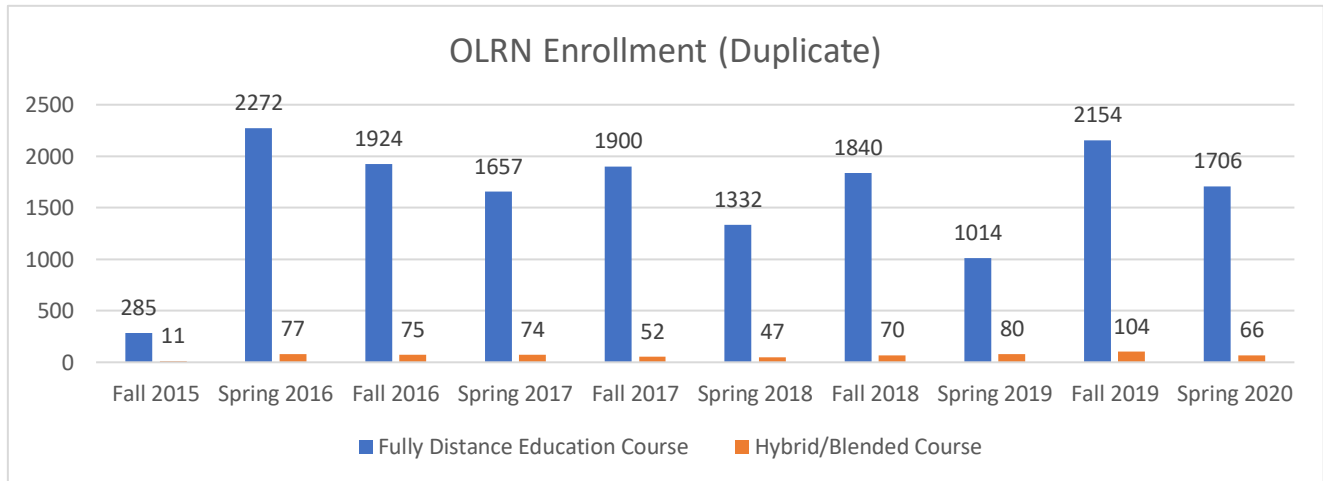
**Distance Education Programs**

| Degree Type | 100% Online | >50% Online |
|---|---|---|
| AA | 3 | 1 |
| AAT | 1 | 1 |
| AS | 2 | 1 |
| AAS | 3 | 3 |
| ATC | 1 | 0 |
| CERT | 12 | 7 |

E. Orientation to Online Learning (OLRN)

The Orientation to Online Learning (OLRN) course helps students prepare to take online courses by providing them with an overview of the Canvas Learning Management System, as well as techniques and resources that will help them be successful online learners. The Center for Distance Learning staff manage OLRN courses and respond to all inquiries from students and faculty. Each semester several OLRN course sections are made available. Students register for the free, non-credit OLRN 0001 course the same way as they register for any other course. The chart below shows student participation in the course.

**OLRN Enrollment (Duplicate)**

| Semester | Fully Distance Education Course | Hybrid/Blended Course |
|---|---|---|
| Fall 2015 | 285 | 11 |
| Spring 2016 | 2272 | 77 |
| Fall 2016 | 1924 | 75 |
| Spring 2017 | 1657 | 74 |
| Fall 2017 | 1900 | 52 |
| Spring 2018 | 1332 | 47 |
| Fall 2018 | 1840 | 70 |
| Spring 2019 | 1014 | 80 |
| Fall 2019 | 2154 | 104 |
| Spring 2020 | 1706 | 66 |

*Source Data: Institutional, Planning, Research and Effectiveness – Daily Argos Report - July 13, 2020, Uncertified*

## IV.  AWARENESS

The awareness step allows St. Philip's College to share the identification and descriptive assessment of data with all internal and external SPC constituencies. This updated report will be shared at all internal St. Philip's College leadership meetings to include Cabinet meetings, Division meetings, Leadership Council meetings, Faculty Senate meetings, Staff Senate meetings, Curriculum Committee meetings and Chair Academy sessions, as well as with the College Distance Education Compliance Committee.

Internal dissemination and presentation of the findings will include all internal constituencies to include academic and non-academic areas/divisions. This report also will be shared at external venues, including, but not limited to, dissemination at local, state, regional and national conferences.

## V.  IMPROVEMENTS

The Center for Distance Learning and the Instructional Innovation Center, in conjunction with distance education faculty and the Distance Education Compliance Committee, will use the data presented in this report to recommend possible improvements in how we support online students. The data analysis will ensure that the institution is meeting its responsibility of providing the same level of student support to online students as it does to face-to-face students. Recommendations for improvements also may be made to how we train and prepare faculty to teach online courses.

## VI.  Summary

Distance education is a significant part of the academic landscape at St. Philip's College, and there continues to be a need to monitor all aspects of distance education as they relate to SACSCOC requirements to ensure we remain in compliance. The Distance Education Compliance Committee, along with the staff of the Center for Distance Learning, the Instructional Innovation Center, and the Office of Institutional Planning, Research and Effectiveness, will ensure distance education is regularly and systematically reviewed and that a close-out report is compiled annually and distributed to all associated constituencies. This report will enable the college leadership to track the growth and effectiveness of its distance education programs, to highlight successful programs and to recommend strategies to improve all programs. Student success will be evaluated to determine areas in which the college can help improve successful completion.

Support for distance education students is crucial for their success, so the Center for Distance Learning will continue providing support services and training opportunities to students. They also continue efforts to build awareness of the Orientation to Online Learning course. Additionally, the Instructional Innovation Center will continue providing professional development opportunities related to best practices in teaching in a distance education environment. These opportunities will include training for department Chairs and Program Directors to enable them to effectively evaluate online and hybrid courses within their departments.

# Glossary

| | |
|---|---|
| Alamo Colleges | The collective reference to all five colleges within the Alamo Community College District. The term Alamo Colleges includes Northeast Lakeview College, Northwest Vista College, Palo Alto College, San Antonio College and St. Philip's College. For additional information visit the Alamo Colleges at http://www.alamo.edu.Source: IRES https://www.alamo.edu/siteassets/spc/about-spc/offices-and-departments/planning--research/glossaryofterms.pdf |
| Completion Rates | In IRES Grade Distribution report, the measure of completed grades relative to total enrollment expressed as a percentage (A+B+C+D+F+IP+I+P/Total Enrollment). Source:  IRES https://www.alamo.edu/siteassets/spc/about-spc/offices-and-departments/planning--research/glossaryofterms.pdf |
| Core Curriculum | The common part of every undergraduate curriculum that introduces students to a broad range of areas beyond their major and helps students develop basic intellectual competencies in reading, writing, speaking, listening, critical thinking, and computer literacy. In Texas the core curriculum usually consists of 42-48 semester credit hours of course work distributed among the disciplines of communication, mathematics, the natural sciences, the arts and humanities, and the social and behavioral sciences. State law mandates the transfer of core curriculum courses between all public institutions of higher education. Source: IRES https://www.alamo.edu/siteassets/spc/about-spc/offices-and-departments/planning--research/glossaryofterms.pdf |
| Core Course | A course that is part of the 2019-2020 St. Philip's College Core Curriculum. Source: https://myspccatalog.alamo.edu/content.php?catoid=177&navoid=10919 |
| Distance Education | The formal educational process that occurs when students and instructors are not in the same physical setting for the majority (more than 50 percent) of instruction. Source:  IRES https://www.alamo.edu/siteassets/spc/about-spc/offices-and-departments/planning--research/glossaryofterms.pdf |
| Dual Enrollment or Dual Credit | The simultaneous enrollment of a student at a high school and in a college course which is offered through regular campus schedule or at the high school. Source:  IPR https://www.alamo.edu/siteassets/spc/about-spc/offices-and-departments/planning--research/glossaryofterms.pdf |
| Duplicate Enrollment | Indicates enrollment by the same student in more than one course. |
| Enrollment data | Data representing the number of students enrolled in each course section. Enrollment data used in this report includes duplicate numbers in that individual students may be enrolled in more than one distance education course section. An IRES report that provides same day, year-to-year enrollment comparisons by college and term. Source:  IRES https://www.alamo.edu/siteassets/spc/about-spc/offices-and-departments/planning--research/glossaryofterms.pdf |

| | |
|---|---|
| Hybrid Course | A distance education course in which a majority (more than 50 percent but less than 85 percent) of the planned instruction occurs when the students and instructor(s) are not in the same place. (Source: Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board Distance Education Policies, 2015) |
| Non-Core Course | A course that is not part of the 2019-2020 St. Philip's College Core Curriculum. Source: https://myspccatalog.alamo.edu/content.php?catoid=177&navoid=10919 |
| Online Course | A fully distance education course which may have mandatory face-to-face sessions totaling no more than 15 percent of the instructional time. (Source: Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board Distance Education Policies, 2015, THECB Web site - http://www.txhighereddata.org then go to Resources/glossary, retrieval date – August 14, 2019) |
| Orientation to Online Learning (OLRN) | The OLRN 0001 course is required of all students who are new to online courses. The free, self-paced, online course familiarizes students with the learning management system, Canvas, and presents topics to help students succeed in their online courses. Source: Distance Learning web page, https://www.alamo.edu/spc/academics/distance-learning/ |
| Section Count | The sum of course sections. A specific course offered for credit. Sections range from one to four semester credit hours (SCH). Source:  IRES https://www.alamo.edu/siteassets/spc/about-spc/offices-and-departments/planning--research/glossaryofterms.pdf |
| Successful Rates | In IRES Grade Distribution report, the measure of success grades relative to total enrollment expressed as a percentage (A+B+C/Total Enrollment) Source:  IRES https://www.alamo.edu/siteassets/spc/about-spc/offices-and-departments/planning--research/glossaryofterms.pdf |
| Trends | A reporting technique that measures one or more variables over a specified period of time to identify changes. Source:  IPRE https://www.alamo.edu/siteassets/spc/about-spc/offices-and-departments/planning--research/glossaryofterms.pdf |
| True First Time in College | The IRES methodology used to calculate first-time-in-college students with no previous Alamo Colleges academic history. IRES uses the standard THECB FTIC methodology to establish the base FTIC Cohort, then checks to see that the student is not in any other term prior to the FTIC term, excluding dual credit terms. Source: IRES https://www.alamo.edu/siteassets/spc/about-spc/offices-and-departments/planning--research/glossaryofterms.pdf |