

Substantive Change Application

Distance Education – 50% of Students or Courses

Directions: Complete each section, keeping narratives concise and direct. Should you have any questions, please contact substantivechange@accjc.org and we will be happy to assist you.

Email completed application to substantivechange@accjc.org.

Institution name:	Hartnell College				
Address:	411 Central Avenue, Salinas CA 93901				
ALO name:	Dr. Gayle Pitman	Phone:	(831) 759-6087	Email:	gpitman@hartnell.edu

Select the type of Distance Education approval:

- ☐ 50 percent or more of all the institution's students enrolled in at least one course offered through distance education **(2023-2024 academic year)**

12,215 Total number of students | **9,161 (75%)** Total number of students enrolled in at least one distance education course

- ☐ 50 percent or more of all the institution's courses available to be offered in the distance education modality **(2023-2024 catalog)**

715 Total number of courses in catalog | **402** Total number of courses, not sections, available to be offered in distance education modality

It is the institution's responsibility to demonstrate the effect of a substantive change on the quality, integrity, capacity, and effectiveness of the total institution. The substantive change process requires evidence of institutional planning, resource commitment to the proposed change, and evidence that following the change, the institution continues to meet the Eligibility Requirements, Accreditation Standards and Commission policies. References to the Accreditation Standards are intended to help provide the institution with a framework for its response, and along with the required documentation, align with federal regulations for accreditation standards¹. Your thorough responses to the questions below and submission of required documentation will assist ACCJC in making its determination.

Describe how the distance education modality is consistent with the mission of the institution (Standard 1.1).

¹ 34 CFR § 602.16(a)

Our current [mission statement](#) reads as follows:

Focusing on the education and workforce development needs of communities in the Salinas Valley, Hartnell College strengthens communities by providing opportunities for students to reach career and/or academic goals (baccalaureate degrees, associate degrees, certificates of achievement, and transfer to four-year institutions) in an environment committed to student learning, achievement and success.

In fulfilling our mission, we offer courses and programs in various modalities (in person, online, and hybrid) as well as at our various campuses and educational centers. Distance education is a modality that tends to appeal to adult learners, particularly students who work full-time as well as student parents, largely because of the flexibility it offers. A number of our traditional age students also enroll in at least one distance education course in order to create flexibility in their course schedules, and to increase their ability to enroll full-time. We have a few programs that can be completed fully online, and these programs are designed to appeal to learners who would otherwise be unable to complete their educational goals in an in-person format.

An [environmental scan](#) conducted by our Office of Institutional Research revealed, among other things, that educational attainment rates among adults over the age of 25 in our region are very low. In the Salinas metropolitan area, approximately 35% of adults have earned a college credential; in more rural areas, that percentage dips as low as 11%. We also know from this scan that our population of traditional high school graduating seniors is in decline, and that decline will continue for the next several years. Our [strategic enrollment management plan](#), aligned with the mission of Hartnell College and designed to address our changing demographic landscape and the shifting educational needs of our community, includes distance education as a strategy for increasing enrollment and completion rates for adult learners and other non-traditional student populations. By offering a combination of in-person and distance education courses, our goal is to meet the educational needs of our diverse and changing student population, and to increase completion rates and post-graduation success.

Describe how distance education will be integrated into the institution's regular review of relevant and meaningfully disaggregated data to evaluate its progress and inform plans for improvement and innovation (Standard 1.3).

Our [Program Planning and Assessment \(PPA\)](#) process operates on a four-year cycle and includes an overview of each program, course-level data analysis, program data (including awards, time to completion, and units accumulated), and student learning outcome (SLO) and program learning outcome (PLO) assessment. In Year 2, faculty review course enrollments, success, and retention and answer a series of questions related to modality. In Year 4, faculty review learning outcomes data at the course and program level, disaggregated by modality where appropriate. These analyses help faculty identify curricular modifications and pedagogical changes, as well as resources needed to support improvement and innovation.

The Office of Institutional Research at Hartnell College has [data dashboards](#) to help us assess our effectiveness with our students, identify disproportionate impact, and inform our decision-making and continuous improvement processes. Our [Enrollment and Outcomes dashboard](#) includes filters allowing users to disaggregate outcomes by modality and other attributes such as race/ethnicity, gender, and age. These dashboards are used as part of the PPA process as well as for general review and decision-making at the college.

We also evaluate our service areas on a cyclical basis through our non-instructional PPA process. As part of that process, service areas review whether the online services they offer are meeting the needs of our distance education students. As an example, our [Panther Learning Lab](#) (our tutoring center) offers both in person and online tutoring, and utilization rates and effectiveness are assessed regularly. Counseling is another area that offers both in person and online services, and they use the [Counseling PPA](#) process to assess and engage in improvement planning regarding their online services.

Describe how the distance education modality meets students and curricular needs and promotes equitable student learning and achievement (*Standard 2.6*).

Hartnell College approved Administrative Procedure, [AP 4105](#), which outlines the college's policies and procedures pertaining to Distance Education. The policy specifies that course quality standards for Distance Education shall be aligned with the expectations for face-to-face course delivery. Courses are approved for Distance Education modality by the college's [Curriculum Committee](#). The Curriculum Committee evaluates Distance Education standards by reviewing the [Distance Education Addendum](#) that is required for any course requesting Distance Education delivery. The Curriculum Committee has determined expectations for faculty to develop an [equitable curriculum](#). When completing the Distance Education addendum, faculty indicate details regarding methods of instruction and methods of assessments of student learning, which are evaluated according to the standards described in [AP 4022](#).

Describe how the institution designs and delivers equitable and effective services and programs (*e.g., counseling, advising, tutoring, library, etc.*) that support students in the distance education modality (*Standard 2.7*).

The institution offers library, tutoring, counseling and advising, and other student services that support them in the distance education modality. Information about these services is shared via the college's [Resources for Online Students](#) webpage.

Students can have immediate access to a librarian during open hours either by [online chat, text, phone, or email](#). Library orientation videos are available on the [Hartnell College Library Youtube Channel](#). A range of library resources are available on the Hartnell College Library website, including access to [library databases and other research resources](#), [citation help and information literacy handouts](#), and information about how to request materials through the [library lockers](#). In addition, there is a [library link in Canvas courses](#) that provides access to [commonly used resources](#), and LTIs in

Canvas allow faculty to provide streamlined access to [college resources](#) as well as relevant [articles](#), [videos](#), and [eBooks](#) for their students.

Students can get information about [drop-in and online tutoring](#) via the Panther Learning Lab website. Online tutoring services are available via Net Tutor. Students can access the [Net Tutor link](#) from the canvas shell for the class. All individual tutoring support is also available online and students can access these by sending an email to pll@hartnell.edu.

[Drop-in/Express Counseling](#) is offered online/Zoom as well as through phone Monday - Thursday, 9am - 12pm/1pm - 6pm, and Fridays 9am - 12pm /1pm- 5pm. 30 minute and 60 minute online appointment slots are available Monday - Thursday 8am - 6pm, Fridays 8am - 5pm, and Saturdays 8:30am- 1pm. The institution currently uses [Calendly](#), an online scheduling system, where the student selects the modality (online vs in person) and the best date/time. All online appointments have zoom integration, screen and document sharing. During the appointment, counselors utilize zoom document sharing and email to exchange documentation needed. Students can access their unofficial transcripts and their archived educational plan using [PAWS Self Serve](#) and Ed Planner. The general counseling@hartnell.edu mailbox is checked regularly to support students seeking online support services.

Describe how the institution ensures that “regular and substantive interaction” occurs between students and instructors (*Policy on Distance Education and Correspondence Education*).

According to [AP 4105](#), all Distance Education courses are required to maintain regular and effective contact with the student. This is evaluated by the curriculum committee at the time of approval of the [Distance Education Addendum](#) for course approval. The Hartnell College Academic Senate recently approved a comprehensive [Distance Education Plan](#) that includes training and infrastructure support to help faculty meet RSI requirements. Faculty syllabi, including these examples from [Communication Studies](#), [Business](#), and [Administration of Justice](#), include information about expectations for students taking distance education courses, as well as assignments and activities that involve regular and substantive interaction.

Describe how the institution authenticates students in distance education courses (*Policy on Distance Education and Correspondence Education*).

As described in [AP 4105](#), faculty are expected to authenticate students in Distance Education classes. Federal regulations pertaining to federal financial aid eligibility require that distance education courses and programs include processes to verify student identity and protect student privacy. The authentication approach currently used by the District is a [secure credentialing/login and password](#) through the campus student information system. Additionally, faculty are required to drop students if they have not submitted a meaningful discussion board post, or completed an assignment, or communicated with the instructor by email either initiated by the

student or as a response to the instructor's email within 72 hours of the start date. This information is available to through the [Faculty Handbook](#) (p. 8).

To mitigate potential fraudulent applications and enrollments, we have developed a [Fraud Enrollment Prevention, Identification, and Mitigation Strategy](#) that allows us to identify fraud at various stages in the application, financial aid, and enrollment process. A steering group of employees from Student Affairs, Enrollment Services, Financial Aid, Institutional Research, and Information Technology are responsible for managing and refining this process, particularly as the tactics used by bad actors change and become more sophisticated. To assist us in our efforts, we are in the process of purchasing and implementing a software tool called [Socure](#) to help us address fraud more quickly and efficiently. We are currently developing a workflow process that incorporates the use of this tool, and our goal is to be able to implement it fully in Spring 2025.

Describe how the institution employs qualified faculty, staff, administrators, and other personnel to support and sustain the distance education modality (*Standard 3.1*).

[Article 22](#) of the Hartnell College Faculty Association Collective Bargaining Agreement outlines standards and expectations for faculty who teach distance education courses. Faculty teaching Distance Education courses must complete an [orientation](#) to the course management software (CMS) before or during online course development. Employees who support distance education include the [Dean of South County and Online Learning](#), the faculty [Distance Education coordinator](#), and the [Learning and Innovation Technologist](#).

Describe the institution's fiscal resources to support and sustain the distance education modality (*Standard 3.4*).

The college has committed to approximately \$500,000 in building a Distance Education infrastructure (this excludes the cost of the salary and benefits to cover the cost of Distance Education instruction). In addition to funds to support the personnel described in Standard 3.1, funds have also been allocated for the [Distance Education Hub Pilot](#) which the college has started during the Fall 2024 semester. These funds are utilized for tutoring support, stipends for faculty participating in the pilot, and supplies such as book vouchers and calculators for students in Distance Education classes.

Dean of South County & Distance Education: \$200,303
Administrative Assistant: \$ 95,698
Program Coordinator: \$109,730
Distance Education Pilot: \$8,650
Special Project Assignment for Faculty Coordinator: \$11,710
Release time for Distance Education Coordinator: \$30,000

Describe the institution's physical resources including, if applicable, equipment and supplies, to support and sustain the distance education modality (Standard 3.8).

Hartnell College provides a variety of [IT services](#) to faculty, staff, and students. This includes reliable and high-speed internet connectivity across all campuses to support faculty and staff engaged in the development and facilitation of online courses. The institution's [Learning Management System \(LMS\)](#), Canvas, is hosted on a secure cloud platform, ensuring 24/7 availability for students and instructors. Hartnell College also offers integrated tools such as Zoom and other services specific to individual faculty needs. The college provides faculty with necessary technological tools, including laptops, webcams, and microphones, to facilitate the creation and delivery of online courses.

Hartnell College ensures students have access to essential resources for online learning. This includes [loaner laptops](#) and access to on-campus computer labs. The library is equipped with modern technology, offering students access to [electronic databases, eBooks, and virtual research support services](#). Recently, the college has piloted a [Distance Education Hub](#) which is a physical space at the King City Education Center where students can engage in their online classes. Students are provided with a computer lab with internet access as well as on-site tutors who assist students with their classes.

Describe the institution's technology resources to support and sustain the distance education modality (Standard 3.9).

We are committed to supporting and sustaining distance education through our technology resources. Faculty members are provided with [laptops](#) to ensure they have the necessary tools to deliver online instruction. Training is offered on the Learning Management System (Canvas), and this training is offered both in person and online. These trainings include [basic support](#) as well as a [collection of training modules](#), including [Canvas Basics](#), [Creating Modules](#), and [Creating Assignments](#). The institution also offers regular trainings through our [Professional Development Center](#) to help faculty develop online teaching skills. The institution has employed a [Learning and Innovation Technologist](#), who conducts trainings and serves as a resource for faculty who teach distance education courses. To stay up-to-date and network with other distance education professionals, the Learning and Innovation Technologist regularly attends the [Online Teaching Conference](#), [Instructure](#) conferences, and other professional development opportunities. For students, the institution ensures equitable access to essential academic applications through [AWS AppStream](#), a cloud-based streaming desktop service. This platform allows students to utilize applications commonly available in on-campus labs from any device, including Chromebooks and tablets, ensuring seamless learning experiences regardless of location or technology access. Additionally, the institution offers online [technical support](#) via chat, providing real-time assistance to resolve technical issues efficiently, further enhancing the accessibility and effectiveness of our distance education offerings.

Describe how the institution's decision-making structures support innovation and equitable student outcomes in the distance education modality (Standard 4.3).

Prior to AY 2024-25, the infrastructure for Distance Education was under the office of the college's Information Technology division. However, after review of the President's cabinet and college's governance councils, a decision was made to realign this to the Academic Affairs area. This change was approved by the Hartnell College Board of Trustees at the [May 7th 2024 meeting](#). Currently an interim administrator is in the role of Dean of South County Services and Online Learning. The recruitment for a permanent Dean has concluded and was approved at the [December 17, 2024 Board of Trustees meeting](#). The Dean is supported by an Administrative Assistant and a Program Coordinator, both of whom are part of the Distance Education infrastructure. In addition, the college also has a faculty-run [Distance Education committee](#) which is part of the college's Academic Senate. The Distance Education committee is led by an elected faculty chair who receives reassigned time for their leadership. In addition the office of Academic Affairs also provides a [Special Project Agreement](#) for the committee chair's additional duties as it pertains to online course quality improvement.

Required Documentation

Provide a hyperlink or include documentation for each item below. Be sure to provide a clear, descriptive name for each document.

- Documentation of the institution's advertising and recruitment policies, demonstrating alignment with the [Policy on Institutional Advertising and Student Recruitment](#).
[Hartnell College 2024-2025 Catalog](#)
The Hartnell College Catalog includes all of the information required by the Policy on Institutional Advertising and Student Recruitment. This includes general information, including contact information; accreditation status; institutional mission; information about our programs, degrees, and certificates; admissions and financial policies; and other major policies impacting students.
- Policies/processes for student complaints, demonstrating how the institution communicates process to students and handles complaints with due process.
Standards of student conduct are outlined in the [Hartnell College 2024-2025 Catalog](#) (pp. 60-67). They are also codified in the following Board Policies and Administrative Procedures:
[AP 4031](#) - Academic Dishonesty
[BP 5500](#) and [AP 5500](#) - Standards of Student Conduct
[AP 5520](#) - Student Discipline
[BP 5530](#) and [AP 5530](#) - Student Rights, Grievances, and Complaints
- Documentation of institution's implementation of the required components of the Title IV Program (if applicable), including:
 - Findings from any audits and program/other review activities by the U.S. Department of Education (ED)
 - Evidence of timely corrective action taken in response to any Title IV audits or program

reviews

See [*Policy on Institutional Compliance with Title IV*](#)

Findings of our most recent U.S. Department of Education Program Review Report, the institution's responses, and the Final Program Review Determination can be found in the following documents:

[Hartnell College Program Review Report - September 26, 2022](#)

[Hartnell College Response - November 30, 2022](#)

[Hartnell College Response - December 16, 2022](#)

[Hartnell College Response - January 13, 2023](#)

[Hartnell College Response - January 27, 2023](#)

[Hartnell College Response - February 3, 2023](#)

[Hartnell College Response - February 8, 2023](#)

[Hartnell College Response - February 15, 2023](#)

[Hartnell College Response - March 29, 2023](#)

[Hartnell College Final Program Review Determination - April 13, 2023](#)

Supporting Evidence

Please provide any evidence that supports the narrative above as separate files. Please link evidence where appropriate in the narrative. Do not embed evidence files into the application.