

## Developing Online Programs at Chico State

### Overview:

Chico State faculty and administrators have expressed an interest in developing new or expanding existing online programs. The following is a non-policy guiding document designed to provide support for those who are interested in the strategic development of online programs: why, how, and when to develop self-support or state-support online programs.

Chico State online programs (undergraduate degree completion, graduate, certificate, credential) and hybrid programs (e.g., partially online, low residency, accelerated) provide an opportunity for a broader and more diverse community to access a Chico State education. Through online and hybrid programs, the University has a greater capacity to respond to student demand; fulfill regional, state, and national workforce needs; and support the University's strategic priorities and enduring commitments.

### Goals and Objectives:

1. To serve existing students and reach new student populations whose access to face-to-face programs may be limited.
  - a. Expand opportunities for transfer students to access online degree completion opportunities, particularly targeting Chico State's rural northern California service area.
  - b. Build on Chico State's success serving traditional first-time freshmen and traditional age transfer students by creating adult-learner focused pathways for additional academic access and degree attainment.
2. To invigorate and expand our undergraduate and graduate programs.
  - a. In collaboration with faculty and college deans, identify new program opportunities.
  - b. Increase internal infrastructure to support quality online course development.
  - c. Provide program development resources to support faculty.
  - d. Actively engage faculty in strategic decisions through the shared governance process.
3. To respond proactively to current and future regional, state, and national labor market needs.
  - a. Conduct market analyses and feasibility studies to ensure data informed program development.
  - b. Engage employers and other key stakeholders and partners to inform new program development.

4. To leverage extant campus resources, build efficiencies, expand capacity, and grow revenue streams
  - a. Explore collaboration opportunities with the Adelante grant and other grant opportunities to grow enrollment in graduate online programs.
  - b. Integrate a strategic focus on online programming in the University's Strategic Enrollment Management initiatives.
  - c. Invest in people and tools to expand Chico State's instructional design and marketing and recruitment capacity.
  - d. Create new sources of student fee revenue to ensure program quality and rigor, student success, and advancement of the strategic priorities of the University.
  
5. To identify partners and collaborators who can help us deliver high-quality programs.
  - a. Build a clear and compelling initiative in collaboration with University Advancement to develop resources supporting the expansion of high-quality online programs.
  - b. Identify and engage marketing, outreach, and recruitment partners to grow programs and reach an extended audience.
  - c. Evaluate instructional design needs and explore partnership options to add to our institutional capacity and responsiveness.
  - d. Strategically utilize self-support resources to expand the capacity of Chico State to grow online programming.

**Online Program Benefits:**

- Additional revenue for the college/department/faculty, which could allow for additional investments and capacity in infrastructure, research, students assistants, professional development, faculty support, etc.
- Enhanced awareness and (potential for) corresponding growth in an in-person version of a program, as has occurred with the in-person MBA program as a result of the outreach for the Online MBA program (per the COB's data).
- Additional reach beyond Butte County, which could serve a large number of potential students throughout California and beyond, especially in more remote rural locations.
- Additional opportunities to develop innovative curricula and innovative ways to deliver those curricula.
- Additional opportunities to foster collaboration and innovation among and between departments and colleges.
- Increase diversity and inclusivity: Chico State online programs tend to enroll greater numbers of working adult professionals, rural learners, and historically underserved students.

## Guiding Considerations for Developing Online Programs:

Strategic online program development is grounded in program feasibility, institutional capacity, faculty interest/commitment, and mission alignment.

- Program feasibility is determined by market research data about student demand for the program, employer demand for the skills and knowledge gained in the program, and an assessment of the competitive landscape.
- New programs must demonstrate sufficient demand to be sustainable over time at enrollment levels that support the costs of developing and delivering the program.
- Institutional capacity considers administrative commitment, faculty support and engagement, and the institutional resources needed to support the program: marketing/recruitment, admissions/advising, online course instructional design/technology, faculty development/quality assurance, and student engagement/success.
- Online programs expand access to a Chico State degree to a broader audience, which supports the University's mission to be inclusive and provide distinctive academic programs.
- Distinctive online programs are well conceived and provide a coherent and integrated student experience, more than a series of individual online courses.

## Online Program Funding Options: Self-Support and State Support

The CSU provides two options to fund the development, marketing, and delivery of online academic programs: state-support and self-support. Self-support funding relies on student fees to fund the program. State-support funding relies on existing general fund allocations and department/college existing budget. One of the first, if not the very first question to determine when planning a new online program is whether it will be delivered through self-support or state-support. The following table lists some significant differences between self- and state-support programs, which may help guide a subsequent decision.

| <b>Self-Support</b>   | <b>State-Support</b>  |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Tuition variability:</b> Per unit course fee allows programs to be offered at a competitive market price and at a level necessary to cover the cost of delivering the program, including all student support services of the university (e.g., student financial services, advising, admissions, financial aid, and IT access). Students pay for the services they access and do</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Tuition stability:</b> Students pay established state full-time and part-time tuition and campus fees including activity and facilities fees; non-resident fees apply. The full cost of delivering the program is covered by the general fund budget allocation to the college along with the general fund allocation beyond the college budget that funds benefits,</li></ul> |

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| <p>not pay campus-based activity or facilities fees.</p>   | <p>administration, and all service divisions of the university who support the academic program and students.</p>   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Variable scheduling:</b> course length (e.g., eight week courses) and multiple start dates and times year round.</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Standard scheduling:</b> fall and spring semesters as a regular part of the University’s academic schedule.</li> </ul>  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Increased income with variable spending options:</b> Increased enrollment can immediately generate additional income, which can be reinvested elsewhere in multiple ways.</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Increased income with specific spending options:</b> Increased enrollment can increase the college/department general fund allocation in future budget cycles as provided for by the ABC funding model.</li> </ul>  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Additional Funding Assistance:</b> RCE can provide additional guidance/resources for program development and reimburse the General Fund campus providers for their costs per EO1000.</li> <li>• Development costs, including faculty stipends and instructional design services, are covered by self-support reserve resources. RCE partners with colleges and departments to move the program through the development, marketing, launch, and ongoing delivery of the program. RCE staff and resources help the academic partner in the heavy lift of new program development.</li> <li>• Marketing and advertising costs are covered by self-support resources. Self-support reserve resources are available to fund marketing partnerships and investments in marketing campaigns prior to launch.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Specific Funding Assistance:</b> Program and student resources are funded by the campus budget.</li> <li>• Development costs, including faculty stipends and instructional design services, are covered by existing state general fund resources, processes, and staffing. Staff and resources required to move the program through the development, marketing, launch, and ongoing delivery of the program are provided by the academic college and department in partnership with on-campus resources.</li> <li>• Marketing and advertising costs are covered by existing state general fund resources, processes, and staffing.</li> </ul> |

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Variable Faculty Hiring Process:</b><br/>More flexibility with faculty hires, including additional employment for current Chico State faculty and expanding the faculty pool by hiring additional qualified faculty outside current Chico State faculty. The same departmental hiring standards and evaluation criteria are used for self-support appointments as state-support.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Guided Faculty Hiring Process:</b><br/>Current faculty, T/TT and lecturers, may be assigned to teach in online programs as established by the faculty order of assignment guidelines. Teaching is as part of the faculty's normal assignment.</li> </ul> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Financial Aid and Scholarships:</b><br/>Students are eligible for federal financial aid; they cannot apply for or receive campus scholarships or grants</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Financial Aid and Scholarships:</b> In addition to federal financial aid, students are eligible to apply for and receive campus scholarships, grants, and applicable fee waivers.</li> </ul>   |

**Supplementing versus Supplanting:**

[CSU Executive Order 1099](#) governs self-supporting academic programs in the CSU and stipulates the self-supporting programs shall not supplant state-supported offerings available during the regular academic year. Supplanting means reducing the number of state-supported offerings and increasing self-support versions of the same course on the same campus.

EO 1099 provides the ability for campuses to supplement existing state-support programs as well as offer programs that do not have a state-supported counterpart. Online programs offered self-support must supplement, not supplant, existing state-support programs.

The Chancellor's Office clearly defines the process for [developing a self-support version of a state-support program](#). Any new self-support programs that do not have an existing state-support counterpart are subject to all requirements for developing a new academic program as detailed in [our campus form and procedures](#).

**WSCUC, EPPC, and Senate:**

Our regional accreditor, [WSCUC](#) (WASC Senior College and University Commission), requires us to submit all programs that offer more than 50% of its required course work online through its substantive change screening process. Should this apply to the proposed program or should you have any questions, please contact the campus Accreditation Liaison Officer (ALO), Daniel Grassian (dsgrassian@csuchico.edu). Our [Interim Policy on Digital Learning](#) also requires that programs with over 50% of required courses online to go through EPPC/Senate review.

### **State Authorization:**

State and federal laws require colleges and universities to obtain authorization for distance education instruction or programs provided in states other than their own. CSU, Chico is currently authorized to offer online instruction or degree programs to students residing in a majority of states, but not all. More information about State Authorizations is available at <https://www.csuchico.edu/em/stateauthorizations.shtml> .

### **Graduate Education:**

The Office of Graduate Studies is the central hub for graduate education, providing advocacy and service to support all graduate programs and graduate students. The office facilitates student recruitment and program outreach; application process guidance; admissions and enrollment for all post-baccalaureate programs; thesis writing, formatting, and review; advising, evaluations, and graduate clearance; commencement ceremonies; new program development; program review; and program and student data reporting. When planning online graduate programs, one should take into account the increased workload that will be encumbered by this office, which should be factored into a new program proposal through funding for staff support. Details about graduate admissions can be found at: <https://www.csuchico.edu/graduatestudies/prospective-students/apply/graduate-admissions.shtml>.

### **Technology and Learning Program (TLP):**

TLP, which is overseen by the Academic Technology Officer, plays a pivotal role in the development, implementation, and operation of online programs by working directly with online program coordinator and faculty to empower them to use educational technology to design courses that maximize student learning and provide a cohesive and quality online experience. When planning online programs, one should take into account the increased workload that will be encumbered by this office, which should be factored into a new program proposal through funding for staff support. Details about TLP can be found at their website: <https://www.csuchico.edu/tlp/index.shtml>.

### **International Students:**

While United States residents with foreign academic coursework may be eligible to enroll in fully online programs, students residing abroad, regardless of nationality, may face restrictions to U.S. online programs or specific disciplines due to U.S. [embargos/foreign assets controls sanctions](#), home country laws, or local tax policies. Additionally, international students currently residing in the United States are [generally ineligible to enroll in fully online programs](#). Many countries do not recognize credentials earned online, and a credential or certification may be subject to local country requirements. Online program management vendors/partners

may be able to assist with respective compliance responsibilities, but it is strongly recommended, due to potential financial and legal liabilities, that faculty and administrators seek input from [International Education & Global Engagement](#) and [Office of Risk Management](#) prior to opening online programs to applicants living abroad.

### **Regional & Continuing Education (RCE):**

RCE is a unit within the Division of Academic Affairs responsible for self-support academic program development and delivery in collaboration with the academic colleges. Unlike Chico State Enterprises, which is a separate legal entity, RCE is a part of the University and the role of Professional and Continuing Education (PaCE) units across the CSU is established in California Education Code. Revenue generated by self-support academic credit programs flows back to the colleges through cost recovery and partner revenue. Cost recovery is used to reimburse colleges for the state-funded time and resources used in delivering self-support programs, and partner revenue is designated for the development of programs and services that serve self-support programs, students, and faculty. In so much as all students and faculty are served and benefit from the thoughtful use of partner revenue, those funds, in combination with state-supported funds, can help colleges and department achieve a variety of goals, including research, faculty professional development, program development, travel, student staffing, and equipment and infrastructure.

When Chico State faculty are appointed to teach a self-support course, they are compensated for that additional employment beyond their state-funded position. Established CSU salary schedules are used to determine faculty compensation, and faculty appointments to teach self-support courses are governed by the CFA CBA.

When program funding allows and departments have adequate faculty to assign self-support teaching as part of regular workload, self-support funds may be used reimburse both the salary and benefits associated that workload.

### **Faculty Development and Quality Assurance:**

In conjunction with the Technology and Learning Program, the [Office of Faculty Development](#) offers workshops for faculty to improve the quality of their online pedagogy. Specifically, these workshops revolve around the Quality Learning and Teaching instrument, which is designed to help faculty evaluate their online courses and to implement changes to facilitate learning.

More specifically, the QLT instrument addresses 10 areas of importance for online courses including:

- Course Overview and Introduction
- Assessment of Student Learning
- Instructional Materials and Resources Utilized
- Student Interaction and Community
- Facilitation and Instruction

- Technology for Teaching and Learning
- Learner Support and Resources
- Accessibility and Universal Design
- Course Summary and Wrap-up
- Mobile Platform Readiness

Online program developers should encourage faculty to attend a QLT workshop before teaching in an online program.

**External Partnership Opportunities (Everspring):**

Chico State has partnered with an external organization, [Everspring](#), to conduct marketing and recruitment for selected online programs. Everspring services are \$275,000 per program per year plus direct marketing spend. Because of the need to invest in marketing in advance of program launch and the cost of digital marketing, self-supporting programs that can leverage RCE resources are particularly well positioned to utilize Everspring services. For more information about Everspring, please contact Regional & Continuing Education or the College of Business, who has worked with Everspring.

**What Can Everspring Do For Us?**

- Provide professional quality contemporary marketing services
- Efficiently communicate and manage potential applicants
- Increase applicant pool through various additional entry points
- Increase our applicant yield rate
- Conduct ongoing customer service with students after matriculation.

**What Everspring Cannot Do For Us:**

- Develop online courses or course materials
- Provide student orientation
- Provide instructors
- Provide financial aid to students
- Establish and enforce course standards
- Advise matriculated students
- Schedule Courses and Faculty
- Conduct assessment

**Related Resources and Forms:**

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| <p><u><a href="#">Interim Policy for the Use of Digital Technologies and Learning (EM 20-020)</a></u></p> | <p>This policy governs the use of digital technologies and the effective integration of technology in the learning process. It also</p> |
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|   | provides guidance for development of online programs.   |
| <p><u>Proposal for a New Online Program</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>New Online Degree Program Signature Form</u></li> </ul>   | Use these forms for new degree completion programs; Will need to be submitted and reviewed by EPPC, Senate, and approved by the Chancellor’s Office.                                    |
| <p><u>New Degree Program Conceptual Abstract and General Information (for completely new programs)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>First Steps to a New Degree</u></li> <li>• <u>Projected Degree Proposal (Conceptual Abstract) template</u></li> <li>• <u>Undergraduate Program Conceptual Abstract Signature form</u></li> <li>• <u>Graduate Program Conceptual Abstract Signature form</u></li> </ul> | For completely new online non-degree completion undergraduate and graduate programs. Conceptual abstract forms need to be submitted, reviewed, and approved by the Chancellor’s Office, |
| <p><u>Adding Self-Support Counterpart of a Previously Approved State-Support Degree Program</u>—Chancellor’s Office form</p> <p><u>New Online Self-Support Programs with Existing In-Person State Programs</u>—Chico State form</p>   | These forms need to be completed for new online self-support programs that have an already existing in-person state support program.  |
| <p><b><u>New Degree Proposal Information</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>New Degree Proposal Template</u></li> <li>• <u>New Undergraduate Degree Program Signature form</u></li> <li>• <u>New Graduate Degree Program Signature form</u></li> </ul>   | These forms need to be submitted to EPPC/Senate and Grad Council (for grad programs) either after the Chancellor’s Office approves the conceptual abstract or before.                   |

More specifically, if you wish to develop the following online programs, here are the forms you need to complete:

**Undergraduate:**

1. **Completely new, fully online self-support program**
  - a. New Degree Program Conceptual Abstract and General Information (for completely new programs)

- i. First Steps to a New Degree
      - ii. Projected Degree Proposal (Conceptual Abstract) template
      - iii. Undergraduate Program Conceptual Abstract Signature form
    - b. **New Degree Proposal Information**
      - i. New Degree Proposal Template
      - ii. New Undergraduate Degree Program Signature form
- 2. Completely new, fully online state-support program**
- a. New Degree Program Conceptual Abstract and General Information (for completely new programs)
    - i. First Steps to a New Degree
    - ii. Projected Degree Proposal (Conceptual Abstract) template
    - iii. Undergraduate Program Conceptual Abstract Signature form
  - b. **New Degree Proposal Information**
    - i. New Degree Proposal Template
    - ii. New Undergraduate Degree Program Signature form
- 3. New, fully online self-support program that already has an approved in-person program**
- a. New Online Self-Support Programs with Existing In-Person State Programs—Chico State
  - b. Adding Self-Support Counterpart of a Previously Approved State-Support Degree Program—Chancellor’s Office
- 4. New, fully online state-support program that already has an approved in-person program**
- a. Proposal for a New Online Program
    - i. New Online Degree Program Signature Form

**Graduate:**

- 1. Completely new, fully online self-support program**
  - a. New Degree Program Conceptual Abstract and General Information (for completely new programs)
    - i. First Steps to a New Degree
    - ii. Projected Degree Proposal (Conceptual Abstract) template
    - iii. Graduate Program Conceptual Abstract Signature form
  - b. **New Degree Proposal Information**
    - i. New Degree Proposal Template
    - ii. New Graduate Degree Program Signature form
  
- 2. Completely new, fully online state-support program**
  - a. New Degree Program Conceptual Abstract and General Information (for completely new programs)
    - i. First Steps to a New Degree

- ii. Projected Degree Proposal (Conceptual Abstract) template
    - iii. Graduate Program Conceptual Abstract Signature form
  - b. **New Degree Proposal Information**
    - i. New Degree Proposal Template
    - ii. New Graduate Degree Program Signature form
- 3. **New, fully online self-support program that already has an approved in-person program**
  - a. New Online Programs with Existing In-Person State Programs—Chico State Form
  - b. Adding Self-Support Counterpart of a Previously Approved State-Support Degree Program—Chancellor’s Office Form
- 4. **New, fully online state-support program that already has an approved in-person program**
  - a. Proposal for a New Online Program
    - i. New Graduate Degree Program Signature form