

LTCC part of online education pilot program

Lake Tahoe Community College is one of eight colleges selected to be part of a pilot program involving online education.

California Community Colleges' Online Education Initiative (OEI) begins this fall and goes through spring 2016.

The goal is to increase student access to online courses throughout California and define the future of online education in California's Community College system.

California's community colleges have offered online courses for more than 20 years. Last school year, 620,000 students took more than 41,000 online courses. However, there has been little coordination between the state's 72 community college districts in terms of technology platforms or student and faculty support. Retention rates in online courses remain low, as they do nationwide. The hope is that bringing extra technology resources and centralization to California's community college system will improve online student success rates.

Associate degree for transfer online courses that will be included in the initial phases of the pilot program include: introductory courses in anthropology, criminal justice, communications, micro and macroeconomics, human geography, psychology, and others.

The OEI will also look at developing a common course management system. There are upward of 10 systems in use now. The OEI intends to create one system to be used by all community colleges.

Other colleges in the pilot program are: Mt. San Jacinto College, Butte College, Coastline Community College, Foothill

College, Shasta College, Fresno City College, and Ventura College.