



MERRITT COLLEGE

DISTANCE EDUCATION PLAN

2021-2024

The Merritt College Distance Education Plan has its foundation built on the Peralta Community College Distance Education Plan. Merritt College's Distance Education plan is focused on all learners and based in equity. This plan outlines the actions needed to increase a) online student retention and success rates; b) the number and quality of resources and services for student support and learning support; and c) the number of courses that meet guidelines for quality, consistency, equity, and accessibility.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Building on the district's Distance Education Plan, Merritt College has outlined the actions it will take to implement its own goals to serve the needs of its online learners.

As one of four colleges in the Peralta Community College District (Peralta CCD), Merritt College serves over one-fifth of total district enrollment (23.2% in 2019-20), and one-quarter of total district distance education enrollment (25.5% of combined online and hybrid enrollment, and 26.4% of online enrollment in 2019-20). Online students at Merritt College have improved

retention and success rates over the last six years, but there are still large opportunity gaps to address. This Merritt College Distance Education (DE) Plan is directly aligned with Peralta CCD strategic goals and ACCJC standards, while taking into account the changing educational landscape and the nature of students in Peralta's service area. Among the district's guiding principles and values, this DE Plan and Program will be focused on learners and equity. In support of both Peralta CCD and Merritt College goals, this Plan outlines projects that Merritt College will complete.

INTRODUCTION

In 2017-18, the Peralta Community College District (Peralta CCD) created and adopted a Distance Education Plan that is aligned with a) the district's strategic goals; b) district-wide values—learners and equity; c) the needs of students in Peralta's service area; and d) accreditation standards set by the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC).

The Peralta CCD Distance Education (DE) Plan outlines ten projects, numbered 1.1 through 4.4, in support of the following goals:

- **Peralta DE Goal 1:** To close achievement gaps, Peralta CCD will increase online student retention and success rates each year from AY2021-22 to AY2023-24, through research-based success strategies.
- **Peralta DE Goal 2:** To support students in achieving success in distance education courses, Peralta CCD will provide resources, support, and services that are specific to online students, are necessary to close achievement gaps and meet regulatory requirements.
- **Peralta DE Goal 3:** To support both student and faculty success throughout their online course experiences, all Peralta CCD online courses will meet guidelines for quality, consistency, and accessibility in their design and facilitation.

Further, while most institutions value diversity and equity, they often struggle to institutionalize practices that support inclusion and equity in online environments. When Peralta's DE team could not find a rubric to support online course equity, they created the Peralta Equity Rubric to foster an expanded understanding and appreciation for student populations, particularly for disproportionately impacted students, and their experiences in online courses. Online teachers in the district may now use the rubric to redesign online course structure, materials, activities, assessments, and modules to align with equity criteria. To help faculty with course redesign, the district provides professional development and support.

Stemming from the district's efforts, Merritt College has created its own Distance Education Plan that aligns with the college's vision, mission, values and strategic goals

(<https://www.merritt.edu/wp/mission-goals/>), as well as its Educational Master Plan

(<https://www.merritt.edu/wp/emp/>):

- *Merritt College Vision*: Merritt inspires students to create meaningful lives including fulfilling careers, community participation, self-expression, and a love of learning.
- *Merritt College Mission*: The mission of Merritt College is to enhance the quality of life in the communities we serve by helping students to attain knowledge, master skills, and develop the appreciation, attitudes and values needed to succeed and participate responsibly in a democratic society and a global economy.
- *Merritt College Values*: Student Success, Caring Spirit, Teamwork and Inclusion, Campus Climate, and Diversity.
- *Merritt College Strategic Goals*: Completion, Transfer, Time to Completion, Employment, and Equity

OVERVIEW OF DISTANCE EDUCATION AT MERRITT COLLEGE

The Merritt College Distance Education initiative is designed to:

- Focus on our student success and retention rates
- Draw attention to our needs for teacher preparation and AP4105 mandates
- Demonstrate our awareness regarding equity in the online classroom
- Encourage accessibility in online learning
- Increase the numbers of online-ready students in our courses
- Provide information regarding equity gaps and suggestions on how close them
- Educate our faculty, admin, and staff so they may understand the critical needs of our distance learning programs

MERRITT DISTANCE EDUCATION COMMITTEE CHARGE

The Merritt College Distance Education Committee will serve as the college's primary recommending body on matters related to distance education – specifically, focusing on supporting excellence in distance education teaching and learning; recommending policies, procedures, and resources to support effective, innovative, and equitable distance education at Merritt College; and ensuring that Merritt College distance education classes meet federal, state, and accreditation standards.

ONLINE COURSE OFFERINGS AND ENROLLMENT AT MERRITT COLLEGE

Over four academic years—AY2014-15 through AY2017-18—total enrollment in online courses at Merritt College comprised less than five percent of total enrollment each semester, but when combined with enrollment in hybrid courses grew from ten percent to over twenty-five percent

(see Table 1, below). In part, total enrollment in online courses has been controlled by the number of online course sections offered at Merritt College (also see Table 1, below). Those sections served between 36 and 3,140 students each. For leaders at Merritt to plan distance education program growth mindfully, the college should a) collect data beyond what is analyzed in this plan and b) consider increasing the number of online course sections.

Table 1. Number of Online & Hybrid Course Sections Offered, Number of Enrollments, and Percentage of Total Enrollment at Merritt College – Fall 2014 through Spring 2020

	# Online Course Sections Offered at Merritt	# Of Enrollments in Online Courses	#Hybrid Course Sections Offered at Merritt	# Of Enrollments in Hybrid Courses	Total Enrollment	Percentage of Total Enrollment in Online/Hybrid Courses
Fall 2014	18	66	27	1,571	15,102	10.84%
Spring 2015	29	620	20	1,472	14,713	14.22%
Fall 2015	38	256	15	1,681	14,641	13.23%
Spring 2016	35	324	18	1,562	13,874	13.59%
Fall 2016	37	466	20	1,894	14,936	15.80%
Spring 2017	47	289	19	2,702	14,959	19.99%
Fall 2017	65	447	20	2,834	14,721	22.29%
Spring 2018	74	271	28	2,620	14,099	20.51%
Fall 2018	74	531	28	3,536	14,947	27.21%
Spring 2019	81	1,669	28	2,490	14,200	29.29%

Fall 2019	82	3,058	26	969	15,040	26.78%
Spring 2020	110	3,140	0	655	13,456	28.20%

*Enrollment = Total Enrollment – Grade “XX”

*Note it is the opinion of the Distance Education coordinator (Monica F. Ambalal) that some of the enrollment numbers may be skewed- as some numbers seem drastically low for online total enrollment. For the sake of this chart and to ensure accurate data, refer to the ‘percentage of total enrollment’ for complete information.

ONLINE RETENTION RATES AT MERRITT COLLEGE

Overview of Merritt College Retention Data

Overall, online student retention rates—i.e., the percentage of students completing an online course—increased over the past six academic years for all Merritt students as well as the four largest ethnicity groups—Asian, Black/African-American, Hispanic/Latinx and White. Table 2 and Figure 1 below compare retention rates in online and traditional classes for all groups over this six-year period.

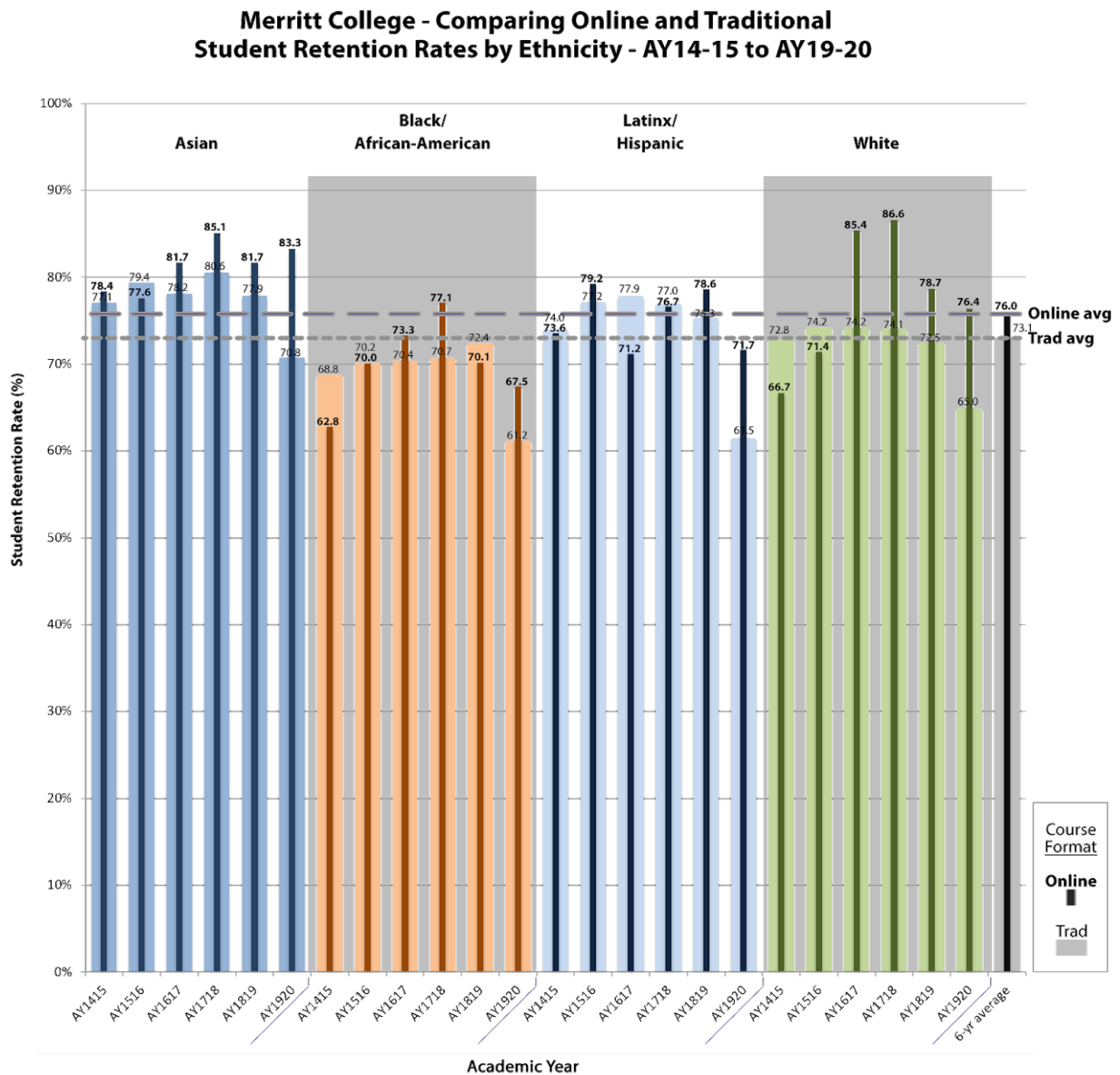
Table 2. Comparing Online and Traditional Student Retention Rates by Ethnicity Group at Merritt College – AY14-15 through AY19-20

Ethnicity	Course delivery format	Student retention rate AY14-15	Student retention rate AY15-16	Student retention rate AY16-17	Student retention rate AY17-18	Student retention rate AY18-19	Student retention rate AY19-20 *
All ethnicities	Traditional	72.2%	74.3%	74.7%	75.0%	74.1%	63.2%
All ethnicities	Online	70.2%	73.7%	77.2%	78.7%	75.8%	73.4%
Asian	Traditional	77.1%	79.4%	78.2%	80.6%	77.9%	70.8%
Asian	Online	78.4%	77.6%	81.7%	85.1%	81.7%	83.3%
African-American	Traditional	68.8%	70.2%	70.4%	70.7%	72.4%	61.2%
African-American	Online	62.8%	70.0%	73.3%	77.1%	70.1%	67.5%
Latinx	Traditional	74.0%	77.2%	77.9%	77.0%	75.3%	61.5%
Latinx	Online	73.6%	79.2%	71.2%	76.7%	78.6%	71.7%
White	Traditional	72.8%	74.2%	74.2%	74.1%	72.5%	65.0%
White	Online	66.7%	71.4%	85.4%	86.6%	78.7%	76.4%

Bold numbers denote the higher percentage between online and traditional retention rates for each ethnicity.

* Retention rates in AY19-20 were likely affected by conditions caused by global pandemic (e.g., campus closures, family responsibilities, changes in employment)

Figure 1. Comparing Online and Traditional Student Retention Rates at Merritt College – AY14-15 through AY19-20



A Closer Look at Merritt College Retention Data in AY19-20

As Merritt students were likely affected by the global pandemic in Spring 2020, a closer look at the data for that academic year is warranted. Table 3 shows the student retention rates in online and traditional classes in each term during AY19-20, as well as the change in student retention rates from Fall 2019 to Spring 2020.

Table 3. Comparing Online and Traditional Student Retention Rates by Ethnicity Group at Merritt College and by Academic Term in AY19-20

Ethnicity	Course delivery format	Student retention rate AY19-20 (Average)	Student retention rate Summer 2019	Student retention rate Fall 2019	Student retention rate Spring 2020	Change in student retention rate, Fall 19 to Spring 20
All ethnicities	Traditional	63.2%	79.9%	68.8%	54.2%	-14.6%
All ethnicities	Online	73.4%	82.8%	76.5%	64.4%	-12.1%
Asian	Traditional	70.8%	80.4%	72.4%	67.0%	-5.4%
Asian	Online	83.3%	90.3%	81.4%	79.9%	-1.5%
African-American	Traditional	61.2%	79.8%	68.0%	50.1%	-17.9%
African-American	Online	67.5%	77.0%	75.0%	54.6%	-20.4%
Latinx	Traditional	61.5%	83.1%	67.2%	51.5%	-16.7%
Latinx	Online	71.7%	79.3%	75.2%	63.2%	-12.0%
White	Traditional	65.0%	75.1%	71.7%	57.0%	-14.7%
White	Online	76.4%	86.6%	79.4%	66.8%	-12.6%

Analysis of Merritt College Retention Data

Results and significance

- Online learner retention rates improved for Merritt College students in the five years before the pandemic, as well as for the four largest ethnicity groups. However, not all improvements can be viewed equally.
- For all ethnicities combined, as well as Asian and White students, online learner retention rates surpassed traditional learner retention rates for each of the past four academic years. Retention rates for Black/African-American and Hispanic/Latinx students fluctuated more over the six-year period.
- Likely due to conditions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, retention was higher in online courses than in traditional courses for the first time in AY19-20.
- In AY19-20, retention for both traditional and online courses decreased dramatically from Fall 2019 to Spring 2020. When looking at all ethnicities combined over this period, retention rates dropped less in online courses than in traditional courses. This is also true for all individual ethnicities except Black/African-American students.

Proposed next steps to increase online student retention at Merritt College

The Distance Education Committee proposes that Merritt College complete specific activities to increase online student retention, including the following:

Retention Activity 1

We propose that all instructors are recommended to partake in online equity training courses. This can be offered as the 4-6 week model at the district or the course that has currently been added to Canvas Commons (Online Equity Training). It may also be fulfilled by a 2-day equity workshop or instructor facilitated courses offered at other colleges. One of the missing pieces regarding low student retention is the needs for faculty to be aware of how to be an equitable online instructor. Images, discussion topics, and design in courses are important factors that need to be addressed. We also recommend FLEX day workshops that bring this topic to the forefront.

Retention Activity 2

We propose that all instructors are recommended to utilize the online equity rubric for self-evaluation of courses annually. This on-going appraisal process would encourage faculty to remain equity focused and meet the standard of CVC-OEI and Peralta's added equity standards. It is also recommended that equity/online equity specifically be addressed in the "self-evaluations report form" completed during faculty evaluations.

Retention Activity 3

The Merritt College DE Committee will hold a meeting with the Director of Research and Planning to determine what kind of student feedback data already exists related to distance education. Depending on what data exists, we will use the findings to inform recommendations to the broader campus related to students retention and/or work with the Director to develop a survey and administer it in the [insert semester and year]. The DE Committee will inquire about the possibility of connecting with students who did not "retain" to find out if/how they could have been better supported? The DE Committee will also work with Student Services to find out the effectiveness of the Chromebook lending program and how this information might inform student retention in distance education.

ONLINE SUCCESS RATES AT MERRITT COLLEGE

Overview of Merritt College Success Data

Overall, online student success rates—i.e., the percentage of students earning a passing grade—has risen at Merritt College over the past four academic years for all Merritt students as well as the four largest ethnicity groups—Asian, Black/African American, Hispanic/Latinx, and White. While African-American and Latinx students at Merritt College made improvements in passing online courses over the last four years, they still have significantly lower online success rates than Asian and White students (see Table 4 and Figure 2 below). We note that an increase in success for both LatinX students and age groups from 14-17 - both report higher enrollments.

Table 4. Comparing Online and Traditional Student Success Rates by Ethnicity Group at Merritt College – AY14-15 through AY19-20

Ethnicity	Course delivery format	Student success rate AY14-15	Student success rate AY15-16	Student success rate AY16-17	Student success rate AY17-18	Student success rate AY18-19	Student success rate AY19-20 *
All ethnicities	Traditional	62.7%	64.6%	66.7%	67.4%	65.9%	63.9%
All ethnicities	Online	58.5%	62.4%	62.3%	66.1%	61.9%	64.6%
Asian	Traditional	73.3%	73.8%	73.9%	77.9%	74.7%	75.1%
Asian	Online	75.9%	71.5%	74.6%	82.2%	73.8%	80.4%
African-American	Traditional	53.1%	55.5%	57.5%	59.2%	60.2%	58.1%
African-American	Online	46.0%	55.9%	49.5%	57.3%	52.8%	53.1%
Latinx	Traditional	62.7%	65.2%	68.0%	66.2%	63.3%	61.0%
Latinx	Online	57.1%	64.3%	57.7%	62.6%	60.9%	60.2%
White	Traditional	74.5%	74.8%	75.7%	75.6%	74.3%	71.3%
White	Online	63.9%	63.8%	77.1%	77.2%	71.0%	74.2%

*Bold numbers denote the higher percentage between online and traditional retention rates for each ethnicity.

* Success rates in AY19-20 were likely affected by conditions caused by global pandemic (e.g., campus closures, mental stress, family responsibilities, changes in employment)

Figure 2. Merritt College – Comparing Online and Traditional Student Success Rates by Ethnicity – AY14-15 through AY19-20

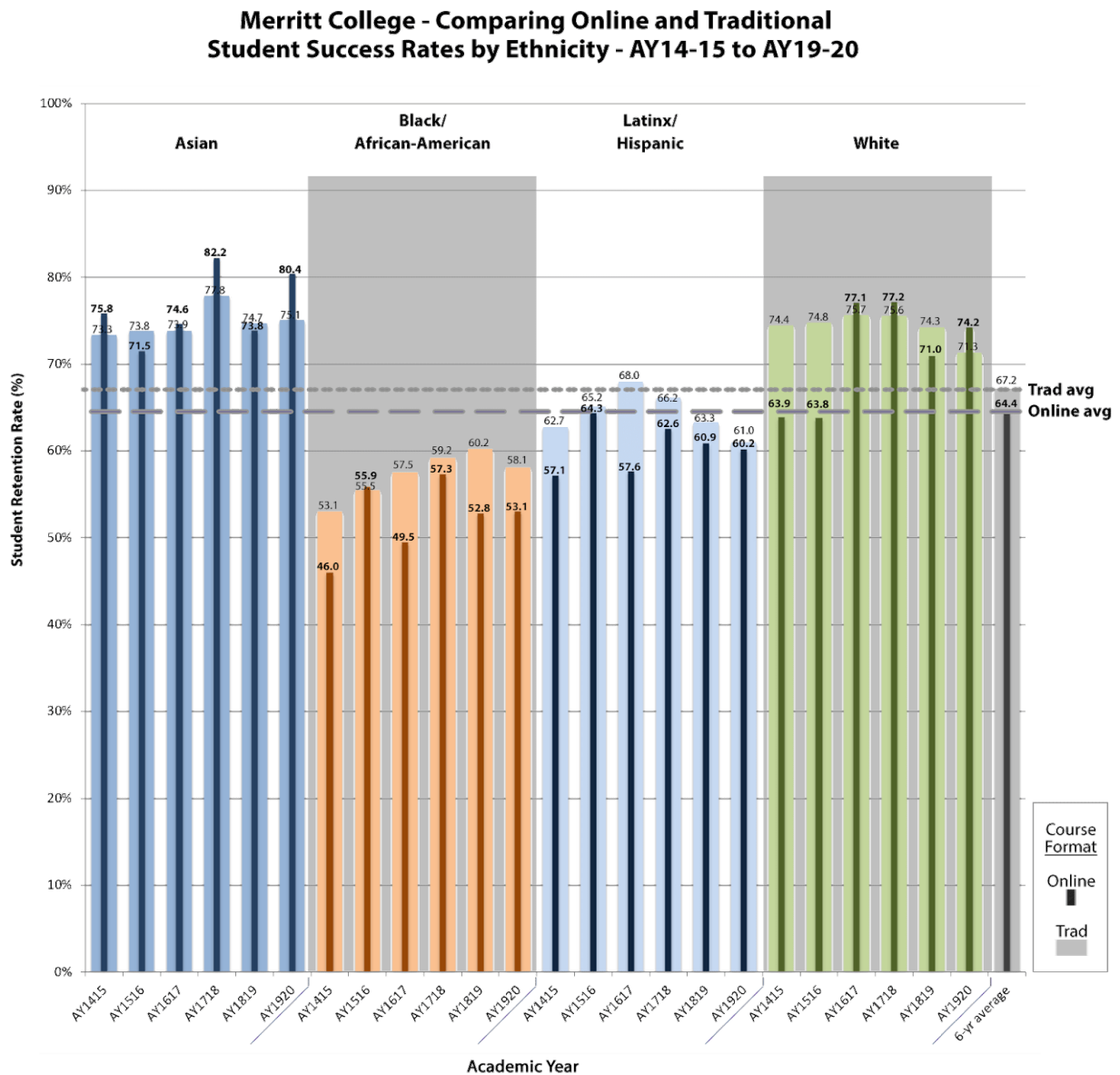


Table 5. Comparing Online and Traditional Student Success Rates by Ethnicity Group at Merritt College and by Academic Term in AY19-20

Ethnicity	Course delivery format	Student success rate AY19-20 (Average)	Student success rate Summer 2019	Student success rate Fall 2019	Student success rate Spring 2020	Change in student success rate, Fall 2019 to Spring 2020
All ethnicities	Traditional	63.9%	76.7%	64.9%	60.7%	-4.2%
All ethnicities	Online	64.6%	72.0%	60.3%	64.0%	+3.7%
Asian	Traditional	75.1%	79.3%	75.8%	73.5%	-2.3%
Asian	Online	80.4%	85.8%	75.2%	81.5%	+6.3%
African-American	Traditional	58.1%	73.7%	58.8%	54.9%	-3.9%
African-American	Online	53.1%	58.5%	51.5%	51.6%	+0.1%
Latinx	Traditional	61.0%	77.1%	61.7%	57.7%	-4.0%
Latinx	Online	60.2%	65.7%	55.2%	61.7%	+6.5%
White	Traditional	71.3%	77.6%	75.5%	66.4%	-9.1%
White	Online	74.2%	80.7%	70.2%	73.3%	+3.1%

Analysis of Merritt College Success Data

Results and significance

- Over six years the overall online student success rate at Merritt College (all ethnicities) improved by almost six percent (from 58.5% in AY14-15 to 64.6% in AY19-20).
- The online success rate for Asian students at Merritt surpassed their success rates for traditional classes in AY14-15, AY16-17, AY17-18 and AY19-20.

- White students at Merritt improved their success rate the most between online and traditional classes (from a 10.6% difference in AY14-15 to a -2.9% difference in AY19-20).
- As a group, African-American students at Merritt increased their success rate in online courses considerably (from 46.0% in AY14-15 to 53.1% in AY19-20), but still have the lowest success rate.
- The equity-based achievement gaps are still very large.
 - African-American students trailed Asian students by over 25% and trailed White students by over 20% in success rates in AY2019-20.
 - Latinx students trailed Asian students by over 20% and trailed White students by over 5% in success rates in AY2019-20.
- Combining all ethnicities, students in classes that already were scheduled to be online in Spring 2020 had a higher success rate than students in Fall 2019. Conversely, students in classes that were scheduled to be in person and were converted to emergency remote courses saw a decline in success rates from the previous semester.
- An increased awareness of disparities among success rates will allow Merritt College to make thoughtful decisions about growing its distance education program.

Proposed next steps to increase online student success at Merritt College

The Distance Education Committee proposes that Merritt College complete specific activities to increase online student success, including the following:

Success Activity 1:

- We propose that student services develop a peer ambassador program where students may find online assistance at set hours M-F so they can receive tech assistance from a peer rather than tech help. This facilitates student learning and access, while providing job opportunities for students and allowing overloaded student services departments to release some of their responsibilities on excellent student workers.

Success Activity 2

- The Merritt College DE Committee will formally invite ASMC and students at large to a dedicated DE meeting to host a listening session to find out what students most pressing needs are, what solutions they would like to see implemented, and how we can work together to improve students success as defined by increased retention, successful completion, decrease in equity gaps, wellbeing, confidence.

Success Activity 3

- Host ongoing FLEX day preparation workshops for advanced learning in DE for LTIs. Students react to new LTIs like Padlet and Quizlet, and data demonstrates they find them to be helpful and interactive ([LTI Usage Survey](#)). Many workshops continue to cover the basic preparation of How to Use Canvas, but we need to develop materials for our intermediate users and those who have been teaching online for over a decade. We should also continue to encourage instructors to ask for the acquisitions of new LTIs.

Success Activity 4

- Instructors should consider inserting an assessment piece in their online courses. This would be in alignment to the CVC OEI rubric, and it is an opportunity to provide a check-in for students, or a way to align with an SLO in the respective course. The DE committee can collectively create a module sample of assessments for suggestions on how to incorporate student check-ins and brief quizzes that serve as such surveys.

Success Activity 5

- Engage the DE team in communicating with Merritt College staff in a consistent manner, so they may inform us of their needs to best serve students. This may be completed by having staff members attend and speak during the open comments section of DE committee meetings, and likewise Classified Senate may consider hosting members of the DE team once each semester so we may give an update about data, new funding or online software recently acquired.

MERRITT COLLEGE DISTANCE EDUCATION ACTIVITIES

To put the Peralta CCD Distance Education Plan into action locally, Merritt College intends to complete the following Distance Education Activities.

In support of Peralta DE Goal 1— increase online student retention and success rates, and reduce achievement gaps

Peralta DE Project 1.1: Develop recommendations for early interventions and other actions	Peralta DE Project 1.2: Implement recommendations for early interventions and other actions
<p><i>Merritt DE Activity 1.1a:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early intervention is embedded online tutors for students in classes of 32 or more. This has assisted students who have been assessed by SAS and those students who are just having difficulty with Canvas. Based on the data the recommendation is to keep the embedded tutor program available through summer and fall 2021 for classes of 32 or more. In addition, Instructors who have class sizes of 32 or more can also choose to have their course reviewed by a course designer specifically focusing on accessibility for all students. The recommendation for this area is to also extend the course designer option for summer 2021 and fall 2021 for class sizes 32 and above. There was a delay in implementation for this option because course designers had not been hired. That area has now been addressed. • The third recommendation in this area is to be a formal recipient of the 	<p><i>Merritt DE Activity 1.2a:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This project was completed in Fall of 2020 and mandated by the PFT. Faculty need to request with helpdesk; ongoing support and research is needed as it is not sustainable to have a 32 cap with low enrollment concerns reported in Spring 2021

<p>student technology needs survey. This will inform the DE committee on what the needs of the students are so that we can work to address them .</p>	
<p><i>Merritt DE Activity 1.1b:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a motion or plan where data is used to assess student resources where DE is concerned 	<p><i>Merritt DE Activity 1.2b:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use data from ongoing projects like the DE plan, and surveys from the college and district level to drive the need to examine resources lacking or omitted
<p><i>Merritt DE Activity 1.1c:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider the use of Starfish as a means of early intervention for students who lack tech knowledge OR • Consider a similar tool purchased or created specifically at the district level 	<p><i>Merritt DE Activity 1.2c:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instructors may use Starfish or another approved platform to connect with counselors and inform them the student is not performing to their best and this may impinge success. Then counselors will see the name of the student, a checklist of issues raised in the class experience, and can make recommended fixes like connecting with student services or student ambassadors

In support of Peralta DE Goal 2—provide resources, support, and services that are specific to online students

<p>Peralta DE Project 2.1: Conduct a district-wide needs assessment of student support and learning support services available to online students</p>	<p>Peralta DE Project 2.2: Introduce new and make improvements to existing student support and learning support services for online students</p>
<p><i>Merritt DE Activity 2.1a:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan to create and conduct a survey for our students at the end of Fall 2021 to assess their DE needs 	<p><i>Merritt DE Activity 2.2a:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We plan to review the data from the surveys given in the Fall 21 semester in Spring 2022 at the DE committee. We will synthesize the data and make recommendations and resolutions based on our findings with a report to

	the VPI; recommend that findings be distributed campus-wide
<p><i>Merritt DE Activity 2.1b:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survey students when they submit a Peralta application. This can be done in the form of Survey Monkey or other platforms. 	<p><i>Merritt DE Activity 2.2b:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the DE tech survey, a question should include which student services and learning supports the students are finding helpful or are interested in. A subsequent list should be generated and sent out to those support people to start initial contact. Another area that has come to the DE committees attention from students is peer ambassador training. SAS students and Faculty have voiced concerns that students with different abilities are finding the Ambassador intake overwhelming. One recommendation for that area is to have A dedicated student Ambassador for students with different abilities.
<p><i>Merritt DE Activity 2.1c:</i></p> <p>After the first two weeks of a semester provide a list of student and learning support services via email, consider a workshop for students through student services welcome week</p>	<p><i>Merritt DE Activity 2.2c:</i></p> <p>Reevaluate after 2 semesters how this was implemented; consider success rates and data-based evidence.</p>

In support of Peralta DE Goal 3—increase the number of online courses that meet guidelines for equity, quality, consistency, and accessibility

Peralta DE Project 3.1: Prepare and adopt course design and facilitation guidelines	Peralta DE Project 3.2: Implement recommendations related to online course and instructor preparation
<p><i>Merritt DE Activity 3.1a:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Use the Online Equity course and the POCR norming process to help ensure quality course design ● Draft addendums or resolutions for AP4105 or ongoing requirements for professional development where DE is concerned. Start with the DE committee, and eventually forward recommendations to district DE and DAS as appropriate ● Create a flowchart of expectations for ongoing DE instructors and a separate chart of expectations for new instructors ● Work with the Instructional designers at each college 	<p><i>Merritt DE Activity 3.2a:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ensure instructors are completing POCR review processes so their class is approved for the CVC-OEI (consistent funding is needed) ● Host a flex day workshop in to share recommendations related to online course and instructor preparation with an applied training component to address 1-2 recommendations
<p><i>Merritt DE Activity 3.1b:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Implement strategic process for “equity course reviews” and maintain data of how many courses have been reviewed. 	<p><i>Merritt DE Activity 3.2b:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ongoing training regarding the Equity Course Rubric must be a priority ● Opportunities for professional development at the district and college levels may appear in the forms of workshops, brief trainings, self-enrolled online course without proctor, and attendance at the Online Teaching Conference (OTC) ● We recommend adequate funding to cover expenses of training and all required courses

In support of all three Peralta DE Goals

Peralta DE Project 4.1: Delineate college and district roles and responsibilities related to distance education.

- ***Merritt DE Activity 4.1a:*** Work collaboratively with DE teams across the Peralta District to support distance education. Continue serving on respective DE teams, POER teams, and ensure cross-communication between DE committees at district and college. Merritt
- ***DE Activity 4.1b:*** Continue to examine and edit charges as deemed necessary to ensure fair and divided workflow for all members of the DE team. Work with local and district PCCD to encourage all positions and expectations are carried out in a similar fashion across the sister schools.

Peralta DE Project 4.2: Develop recommendations for and/or revisions to policies and procedures to address distance education issues.

- ***Merritt DE Activity 4.2a:*** Merritt College DE committee is in the process of completing this 2-year Distance Education plan so we may have a source of tasks and a sense of our priorities as we move forward into Fall 2021. This committee has also made numerous recommendations and resolutions over the past 2 years and we will continue our mission to work with curriculum and student services
- ***Merritt DE Activity 4.2b:*** Merritt College DE committee will lend support to the District DE committee regarding policies and procedures that Administration should revise or implement following negotiations with PFT.

Peralta DE Project 4.3: Improve information and communication related to distance education across the district.

Merritt DE Activity 4.3a: Attend quarterly District Distance Education Meetings to align student success efforts across the district.

- Explore models for districtwide coordination of distance education to provide leadership to implement the Distance Education plan and to facilitate communication between the District and the college.

Peralta DE Project 4.4: Develop resource recommendations to support the goals and projects above (e.g. fiscal, human resource, tech, etc.).

- ***Merritt DE Activity 4.4a:*** Create flow chart and direct processes of how POOR will function on our campus. Create job descriptions for leads, peer reviewers, timelines, and respective funding formulas for: trainers, reviewers, leads, and those building and editing content in their courses. This should be at the college and district level, and be funded continuously through a separate fund formula - not through a grant or special emergency monies.
- ***Merritt DE Activity 4.4b:*** Adopt CVC-OEI guidelines to promote quality online course development and facilitation, and implement the first 10% of fully-operational online courses by June 2023

PROPOSED DE PROJECT TIMELINE

Term	Projects supporting Peralta DE Goal 1	Projects supporting Peralta DE Goal 2	Projects supporting Peralta DE Goal 3	Projects supporting All Peralta DE Goals
Fall 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Canvas helpline is established for faculty assistance in Canvas -First APU for Distance Education is drafted 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Canvas Helpline is established for student assistance in Canvas -Separate helpdesk email address is created for student tech assistance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Final transitions to Canvas LMS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -DE Mission statement finalized
Spring 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -First cohorts enrolled in the Online Equity Course 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Transition of LRC to assist with Canvas and tech-related help for students -The pronoun function is now enabled for Canvas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -DE Committee, PFT, and district DE puts forth a resolution for AP4105 at DAS -Emergency transitions for remote and shelter-in-place instruction by DE team 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Article 33 drafted (funding + compensation for those participating in DE courses/redesign) -Consortium agreement signed 2/20)
Summer 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Further development of the OEC -PDC hosts 4 workshops on equity, safety, and preparedness in the online classroom 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -CARES Act funding provided laptop lending program through student services 		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -DE Coordinator for summer assistance (.4) -Ongoing preparation for instructors with Summer EDT course offerings 			
Fall 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -APU completed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -EDT 502 (Intro to Online Learning) is edited to be included as a fee based course 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Resolution made at DE committee to model Curricunet addendums after COA clone -DE Coordinator made full time for Fall semester only -Online Equity Training course is placed in the Canvas commons by the online equity team
Spring 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -EDT department is in the process of revamping the Online Teaching Certificate -Drafting and completing the DE Plan with the DE committee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Chat function in Canvas is enabled to provide student support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -First POOR reviewers established on campus 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -DE plan and DE charge edited, and draft submitted

	<p>-Merritt College Officially joined the CVC-OEI</p> <p>-First Peralta Online Equity conference April 2021</p>			
Summer 2021	-Online Teaching Conference held virtually (Summer 2021)	-EDT 502, 2 courses of EDT 1, and 2 courses of EDT offered in Summer session	-Preparing to submit the first three aligned courses to the CVC-OEI	

SUMMARY OF RESOURCE NEEDS

Support	Resource description	Estimated cost
Students	Adding online embedded tutors to classes to assist students.	\$50,000
Students	Requesting student ambassadors to facilitate peer-assisted tech help (CalWorks or TA)	\$50,000
Faculty	Requesting ergonomic tools for remote instruction (laptop stands, mouse, wrist pads and chairs)	\$50,000
Faculty	Laptops and hotspots	\$500,000
Faculty	DE technical assistance by faculty peers	\$50,000
Faculty	Lab technicians with online experience	\$50,000
Faculty	DE professional development	\$10,000
Faculty	Online tutoring platform	\$10,000
Faculty	POCR Funding (needs are for review process, the norming process, POCR classes, and completion of aligned rubrics) this can vary but estimate at \$3000-5000 per POCR reviewer	\$50,000
Faculty	Equipment (document and video cameras, scanners, etc.) this may also include meeting room equipment to facilitate committee meetings once we are face-to-face and in a hybrid format	\$40,000
Faculty	Software (Adobe Suite, Clarity Pro, screencasting, video editing)	\$5,000
Faculty	Instructional supplies and materials	\$5,000
Total cost estimate*		\$870,000

Summary of District Paid Resources	Estimated cost
CARES Act Funding	Unknown
DECT Grant from 2019 - 2021	Ongoing
VC Siri Brown Budget for DE	.4 for DE Coord Ongoing
Guided Pathways GRANT	Unknown
Total cost estimate*	\$X,000

MERRITT DISTANCE EDUCATION PLAN DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

Date	Distance Education Plan Development Activity
	Development and Feedback
October 15, 2020	Distance Education Committee began Plan Development
February 12, 2021	Merritt DE Committee members and Consultant developed and reviewed DE Plan drafts
April 13, 2021	Draft revision finalized by DE Committee
May 7, 2021	DE Committee approves and makes public Draft Merritt College Distance Education Plan
	Community Engagement, Shared Governance, and Approval
May 7, 2021	Merritt College Distance Education Committee shares Draft DE Plan virtually
May 6, 2021	Submitted to Merritt Academic Senate for approval

APPENDIX A: ADDITIONAL DATA

The following figures represent retention and success rate comparisons between Merritt College and the entire Peralta Community College District. Online retention rates for Merritt students were slightly lower than the rates for online students across the district, with the exception of two years (see Figure A1 and Table A1). Merritt College students—all ethnicities together—succeeded online at slightly lower rates than district-wide rates that include all four colleges (see Figure A2 and Table A2).

Figure A1. Comparing Online Student Retention Rates for Merritt College and Peralta CCD – AY14-15 through AY19-20

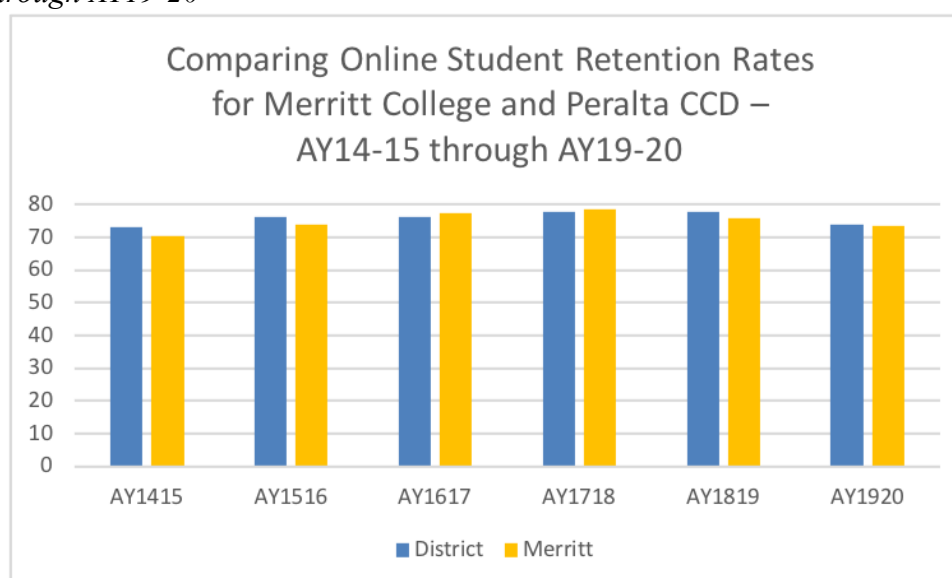


Table A1. Comparing Online Student Retention Rates for Merritt College and Peralta CCD – AY14-15 through AY19-20

	AY14-15	AY15-16	AY16-17	AY17-18	AY18-19	AY19-20
District	73.1	76.2	76.1	77.6	77.8	73.9
Merritt	70.2	73.7	77.2	78.7	75.8	73.4

Figure A2. Comparing Online Student Success Rates for Merritt College and Peralta CCD – AY14-15 through AY17-18

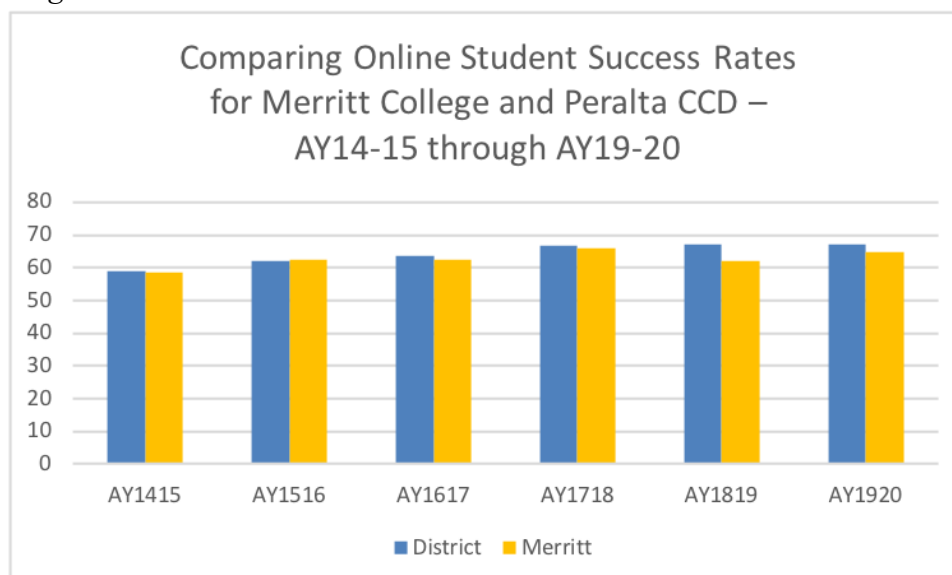


Table A2. Comparing Online Student Success Rates for Merritt College and Peralta CCD – AY14-15 through AY19-20

	AY14-15	AY15-16	AY16-17	AY17-18	AY18-19	AY19-20
District	58.8	62.0	63.6	66.6	67.3	67.2
Merritt	58.5	62.4	62.3	66.1	61.9	64.6