

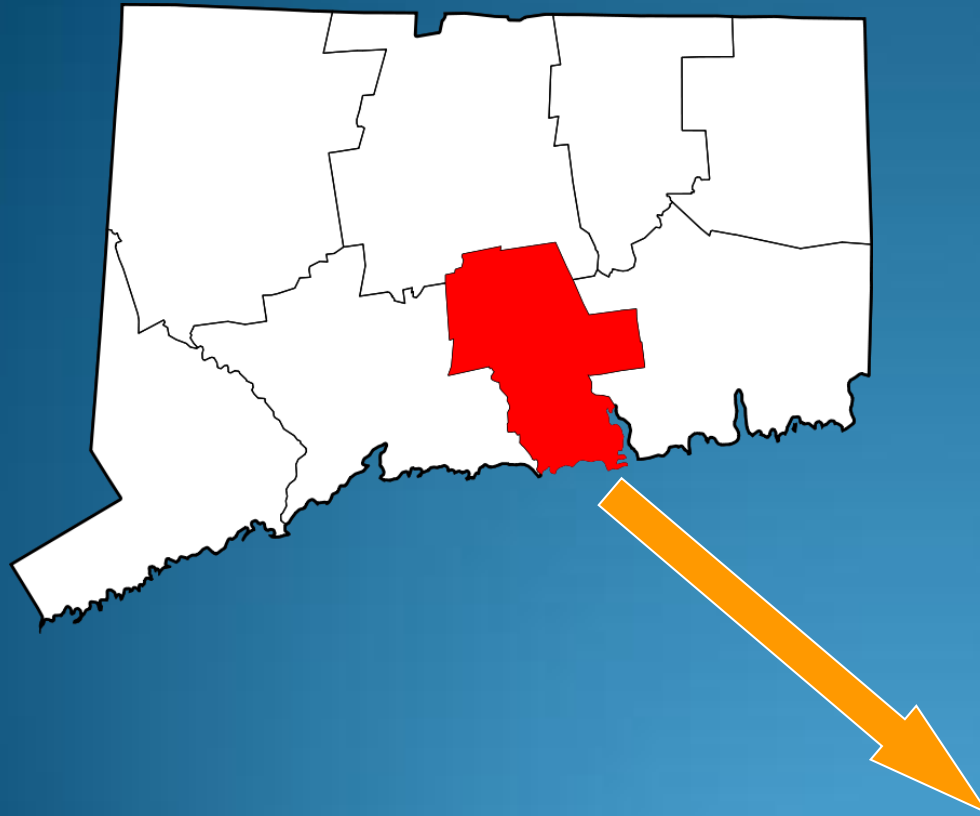
# Quality Control of Online Learning: From Design to Student Services

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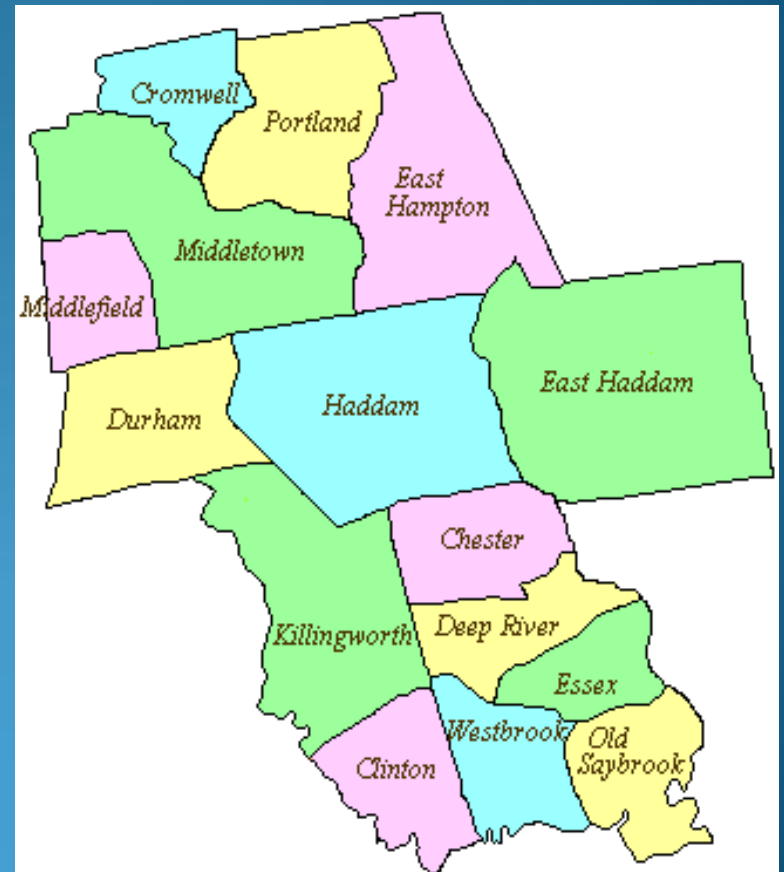
# College Overview

- Founded in 1966 as a branch campus of Manchester Community College and became an independent college in 1968.
- South central part of Connecticut, servicing 18 surrounding towns.
- 4<sup>th</sup> smallest college among the 12 community colleges in Connecticut.
- 2500 full and part-time students (credit)
- 21 degree programs – Associate Degree
- 24 certificate programs
- Students' average age: 27.5

# Map of Connecticut



## Middlesex County



# Student Characteristics

- Adult learners
- Work and study
- Difficulty attending some scheduled classes on campus



## Distance Learning

- Take credit courses at their convenience time
- Speed up the degree seeking process



# Distance Learning: Past to Present

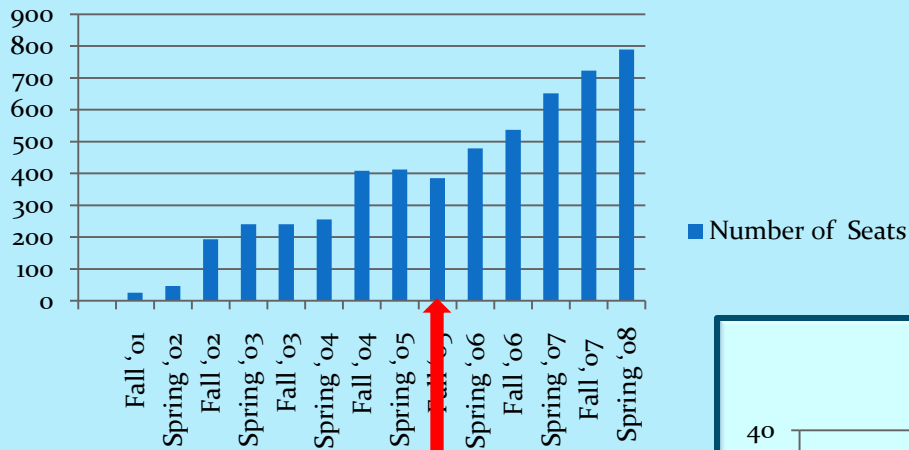
- First fully online class in 2000.
- Spring of 2001: two online classes, 48 seats
  - Art History and Financial Accounting
- Spring 2008, 34 online courses, 789 seats
  - Accounting, Anthropology, Biology, Business, Communication, Computers, Early Childhood Education, Economics, English, Geography, History, Mathematics, Philosophy, Political Science, Psychology, Sociology

# Growth: Online Classes

Semester	Number of Classes	Number of Seats	Total Seats	Percentage	Average Per Class
Fall '01	2	26	5607	0.46%	13
Spring '02	3	47	5333	0.88%	15.7
Fall '02	10	193	6152	3.14%	19.3
Spring '03	11	241	5622	4.29%	21.9
Fall '03	11	241	6187	3.90%	21.9
Spring '04	13	256	5711	4.48%	19.7
Fall '04	18	408	6472	6.30%	22.7
Spring '05	18	412	5939	6.94%	22.9
Fall '05	18	385	6339	6.07%	21.4
Spring '06	21	479	6154	7.78%	22.8
Fall '06	24	537	6738	7.97%	22.4
Spring '07	28	651	6346	10.26%	23.3
Fall '07	30	723	7279	9.93%	24
Spring '08	34	789	6606	11.94%	23.2

# Growth: Online Classes

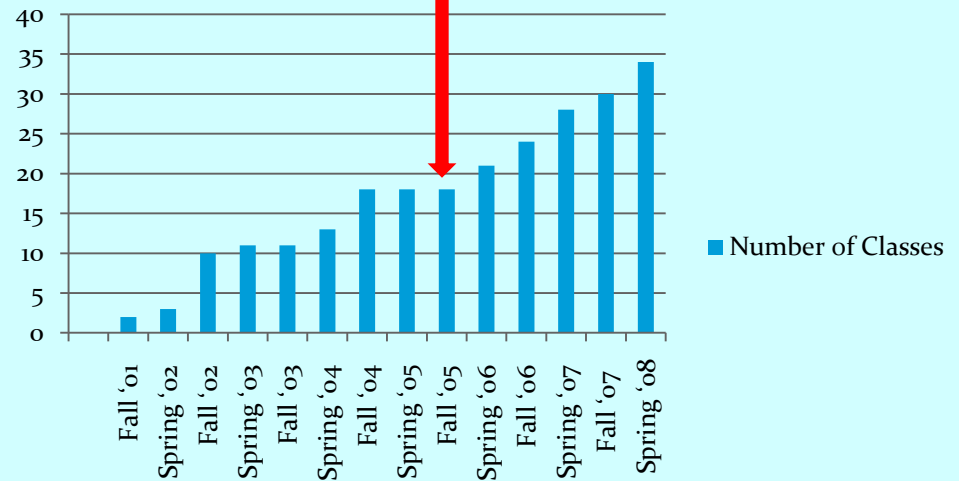
## Number of Seats



**Quality Control  
starting Fall 2005**

**Quality Control  
starting Fall 2005**

## Number of Classes



# Nature of Online Classes

- Course Management System: WebCT Vista 3.0
- Member of the Connecticut Distance Learning Consortium ([CTDLC](#))
  - Server administration
  - Technical support for students and faculty
- Fully online credit courses
- 24/7 access
- Anytime, Anywhere
- 531 students (21.5%) taking at least one online class in Spring 08.



# Characteristics of Online Students

- Spring 2008
  - Female: 72%
  - Male: 28%
  - Traditional: 51%
  - Non-Traditional, 49%
  - Service Area: 69%
  - Non-Service Area: 31%



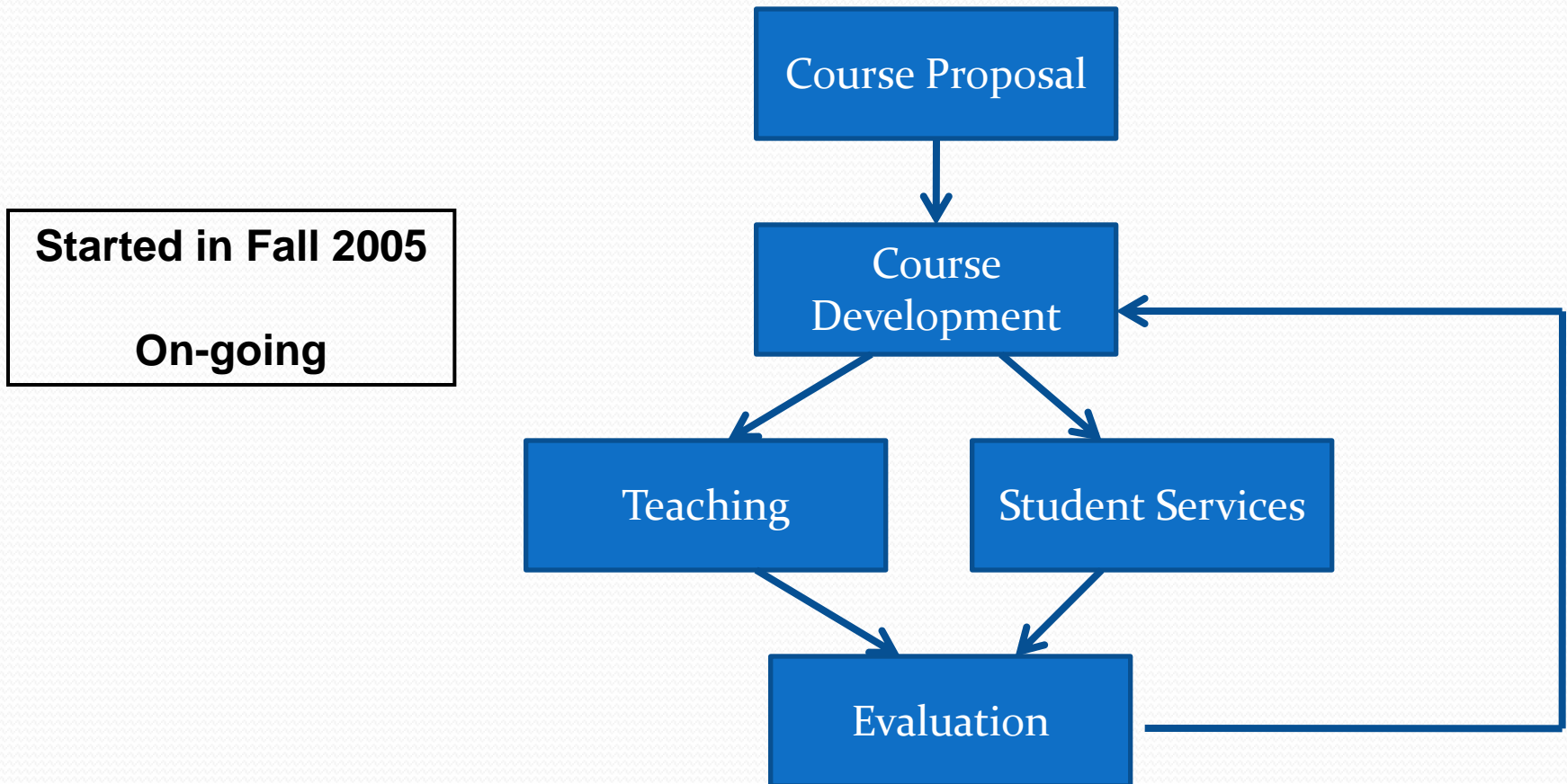
# Grade Comparison – Fall 2007

Grades	Online	On-Ground
A, A-	33.4%	25.7%
B-, B, B+	20.8%	25.6%
C-, C, C+	10.1%	15%
D-, D, D+	2.4%	4.4%
F, I, N, W	33.4%	28.1%

# Staff Supporting Online Learning

- Director of Distance Learning, full time-permanent, 70%
  - Design online classes
  - Train faculty teaching online
  - Technical assistance for online faculty and online students
  - On-campus orientation
- Educational Technology Specialist, full time-temporary, 80%
  - Academic advising for online students
  - Online student registration
  - Technical assistance for online faculty and online students
  - On-campus orientations
- Distance Learning Assistants
  - 2 , 20 hours/week each
  - Office administrative tasks
  - Assist development of online classes

# Quality Control of Online Learning



# Quality Control: Proposal Process

- Development of the classes
  - [Guideline for Developing Online Classes](http://www.mxcc.commnet.edu/distance/proposal/proposal.html)  
[www.mxcc.commnet.edu/distance/proposal/proposal.html](http://www.mxcc.commnet.edu/distance/proposal/proposal.html)
    - Nine months prior to the first day of class.
      - Online class proposal
      - Approval process: program coordinator, chair, director of distance learning, Dean of Learning and Student Development.
      - The approved classes can be put on schedule.
    - Three months prior to the first day of class
      - Professors work with Distance Learning staff to develop the course.
      - Professors receive basic training for online teaching pedagogy while working with Distance Learning staff.
    - Two weeks prior to the first day of class
      - Evaluate the course based on the course evaluation criteria.

# Quality Control: Design Pedagogy

- Rich learning context: lecture notes, resources from professor and textbook Publisher
- Active participation: Student participate in weekly discussions on thought-provoking, open-ended questions.
- Multiple assessments: class participation, quizzes, tests, projects, research paper, etc.
- Ease of use of the interface
- Consistent interface layout
- Simple technology
  - Examples



# Technology Tools

- WebCT Vista 3.0
  - Syllabus
  - Notes and Files: Learning Modules
  - Communications: Announcements, Mail, Discussion Board, Chat
  - Assignments: Assignments drop boxes
  - Exams: Assessments
  - E-packs: notes, outlines, summary, question banks, videos, animations, etc.

# Quality Control: Online Student Services

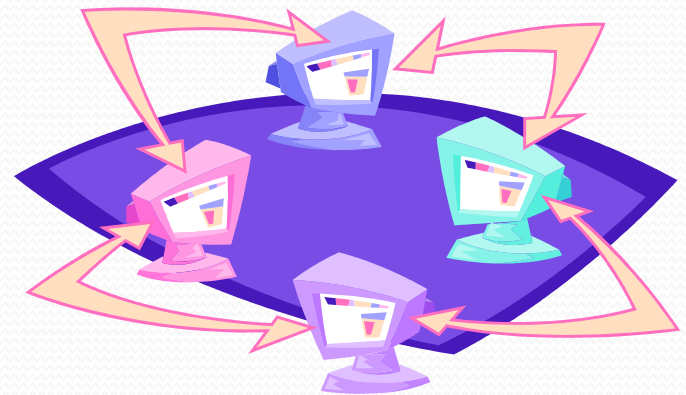
- Potential Online Students
  - Receive same services as on-ground students
- Current Students:
  - On-campus advising
  - Online Advising: WebCT Vista
- New students
  - Online Admission
  - Online Registration: current students
    - Special procedure for new online students
- Financial Aid
  - Apply for financial aid for online courses
  - Apply for financial aid from home institution to the courses at our college.





# Quality Control: Student Services

- Registered Online Students
  - Required: Take [Online Orientation](http://www.mxcc.commnet.edu/distance/start.shtml) to get started
    - [www.mxcc.commnet.edu/distance/start.shtml](http://www.mxcc.commnet.edu/distance/start.shtml)
  - On-campus orientation for first-time online learners .
  - Resolving technical problems – Help Desk and Distance Learning office
  - Online library databases
- E-tutoring: Math, Accounting, English.
  - [www.etutoring.org](http://www.etutoring.org)
- On-campus tutoring
  - Learning Center
  - Academic Support in Business.
- Virtual Campus: WebCT Vista



# Quality Control: Teaching

- Faculty: Effective Online Teaching Guideline
  - Train faculty how to teach effectively online
    - One-on-one training
  - Online resources
    - [www.mxcc.commnet.edu/distance/faculty.shtml](http://www.mxcc.commnet.edu/distance/faculty.shtml)
  - Professional development
    - Conferences, seminars
  - iTeach in WebCT Vista – newly designed by Teaching & Learning Team in the system.
  - During the semester, based on students' feedback, we constantly revise the course.
  - All online faculty are required to provide face-to-face assistance upon student request.

# Quality Control: Evaluation

- Evaluation of Online Learning
  - On-going evaluation
    - Department chairs have access to online classes
  - In the end of the semester
    - [Online Course Evaluation from CTDLC](#)
  - Evaluation results are sent to individual professors and department chairs.
  - Revise the online classes based on the student evaluation.

# Current Issues

- Support staff
  - More office hours
  - Faculty and Student assistance
  - Advanced technology
- Student complaints on teaching pedagogy
  - Feedback from professors
- Faculty
  - Incentives of teaching online
  - Formal training
  - Evaluation
    - A low response rate for student evaluation
    - Discussion on which evaluation form should be used
    - How online faculty evaluation by the department chair needs to be done.

# Questions/Answers

