



Membership Services for States 2007-2008

Project IDEAL offers two tiers of service to member states. Tier 1 membership is for states in the early phases of setting up and refining a basic distance education program. These states can look to the Support Center for extensive assistance in designing, implementing, and evaluating their efforts. Tier 2 membership is for states with established distance programs and an experienced distance education support staff. These states can depend on the Center for a core set of resources, but minimal technical assistance in using those resources. The Center will provide Tier 2 states with customized technical assistance aimed at refining their basic program to insure that it meets the highest standards of delivery. Both Tier 1 and Tier 2 states will profit from the Center's efforts to continually upgrade core resources, as it did this year with a major upgrade to the Online Data Collection System and revision of the online surveys for teachers.

Resources Available to All Member States

All member states have access to a core set of resources. These include:

- An IDEAL staff member assigned to your state who serves as a liaison between the state's DLC and IDEAL project staff to ensure clear communication regarding your needs and the timely delivery of Support Center services.
- Establishment and maintenance of a CommunityZero website tailored to the state's needs and containing resources for the introductory distance education course for teachers—Distance Learning 101.
- PDF copies of all training publications, including the *Handbook of Distance Education for Adult Learners*, *DL101 Study Guide*, *DL101 Trainer's Guide*, and *Welcome Packets for DL102 and DL103*.
- PDF copies and limited print copies of all national reports, policy papers, and newsletters.
- Online Student Intake Survey with instructions for how to use the survey to guide students into classroom or distance education programs.¹
- End-of-year online surveys for teachers, administrators, and students. The Support Center handles the invitations and follow-ups to teachers and administrators. Teachers extend the invitation to their students to complete the student survey following instructions provided by the Center. Reporting options vary by tier of service as noted below.

¹ Project IDEAL conducts ongoing research on the characteristics of students who are most successful studying at a distance. The intake survey is updated annually based on research results.

- Access to a website and all materials necessary to lead one of the online study groups: *DL102 Distance Teaching Strategies*, *DL103 Evaluating Online Resources*, and *DL104 Learner Persistence*. Basic training in how to conduct these courses is provided at the annual summer workshop in Ann Arbor. Facilitation services can be purchased separately (see below).
- Access to member-only documents such as sample RFPs used by member states to solicit local centers to apply to be a distance learning demonstration site.
- A voice at the federal level in the establishment of national policy for distance education.

Tier 1: Services for States Designing or Refining Distance Education Programs

- In-person support for designing and implementing a distance education program.
- Assistance in developing research questions and appropriate methods to answer the questions.
- In-person assistance with training the first cohort of distance teachers.
- Printed versions of the *Handbook of Distance Education for Adult Learners* and the *DL101 Study Guide for Teachers* for all members of the first two cohorts of teachers new to distance education. Copies of the *DL101 Trainer's Guide* for the state's trainers.
- Ongoing training and assistance to help the state's trainer(s) facilitate DL101 and utilize the state website to further the development of a "community of practice" among the state's distance teachers.
- Access to the Online Data Collection System to monitor program performance. This includes virtual training in use of the system for all teachers, provision of monthly reports on student progress, and an annual summary of student progress. Alternatively, we will consult with a state's e-data operation regarding the addition of fields to capture key aspects of a distance education program.
- Analysis and a narrative summary of the findings from the annual surveys of teachers, administrators, and learners.
- Assistance in preparing an integrative report on the state's annual distance experiment.
- Access to data from all member states, helping the state measure its own progress against that of other states.
- Expenses paid for 2 people attending the annual distance education workshop in Ann Arbor. The workshop provides opportunities for the state's Distance Learning Coordinator (DLC) to adjust the state's program in response to presentations on the latest research findings and discussions with DLCs from other states.

Tier 2: Services for States with Established Distance Education Programs

This level of service is geared for states with mature distance programs and staff to support the programs. The focus of these services is tailored activities designed to refine the existing program and support growth to the desired level in the state.

Services (in addition to those described under Resources Available to All Member States) include:

- Consultation on designing innovations in the established distance program.
- Customized evaluation support, including custom surveys, teacher time diaries, and small-scale telephone focus groups (maximum of two per year).²
- Raw data tables from each of the standard online surveys, but no summarization or interpretation by Support Center staff.
- A CommunityZero website and course materials for DL102 and/or DL103 study group. Online surveys to poll participants about the course. The Support Center will negotiate cross-state participation for a course it offers within the state, but will not facilitate the course itself except as noted below.
- Consultation on organization and interpretation of student performance data, collected from either Project IDEAL's Online Data Collection System or the state's own e-data system.
- All expenses for one person to attend the Project IDEAL summer workshop.

Optional For-Fee Services

- *For Tier 2 states only—this service is free for Tier 1 states.* Use of the Online Data Collection System to monitor program performance, including virtual training for all teachers, provision of monthly reports on student progress, and a summary of student recruitment, retention, and achievement over the course of the year. Cost: \$150 per teacher for the first 10 teachers; \$75 for each additional teacher.
- The Support Center will facilitate any of the online study groups for a fee of \$175 per teacher enrolled in the study group. The Center will provide ongoing support for a state's own facilitator for \$400 per course. The available study groups are:
 - *DL102: Teaching Strategies*
 - *DL103: Evaluating Online Resources*
 - *DL104: Learner Persistence*

² Examples: In 2004-2005 the Support Center developed a mentoring program survey for MO, conducted focus groups on centralized distance instruction for PA, and helped KY design and interpret case studies of a sample of literacy providers.

Member State Obligations to the Consortium

Member states in both Tiers agree to share with other member states all information from their distance efforts. This information may appear in Support Center publications, some of which are distributed outside the consortium. "Information" includes summary data regarding student performance, findings from IDEAL's standard teacher, administrator and student surveys, and reports on innovations of interest to all consortium states.

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