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NICC's online programs see tremendous growth

Dr. Christopher Ostwinkle, director of distance learning, gave trustees an update on the distance learning opportunities available at Northeast Iowa Community College (NICC). In Spring 2011, 23 percent of all credits were generated through NICC's distance learning options. Students in these courses

have come from 38 states and overseas. In total, 30 percent of all NICC students have taken at least one course completely online. In addition to ICN, hybrid and asynchronous online courses, the college will also begin to offer synchronous (real-time) online learning courses this fall. In addition, the college now offers 20

academic programs completely online.

"Even though we have grown significantly the past several years, we have maintained academic quality in these courses," stated Curt Oldfield, vice president of academic affairs, pointing to the fact that all faculty must successfully complete an online training course before they can teach in that capacity. In this course, instructors learn about the tools available to them and the strategies to help students be successful in this mode of learning. In addition, student success measures such as GPA's and withdrawal rates are carefully monitored by distance learning staff.