



DISTANCE EDUCATION COMMITTEE MINUTES

Monday, March 7, 2011, 3:30–5pm, Room 1096, TLC

Attendees: Francine Van Meter, Georg Romero, Rachel Mayo, Letitia Scott-Curtiss, Barbara Durland, Ray Kaupp, Steve Larson, Jennifer Cass, Nancy Brown, Dale Attias

DE Accessibility Guidelines [http://www.cabrillo.edu/services/disted/de_committee.html]

Francine presented the DE Accessibility Guidelines issued by the Chancellor's Office January 2011. The requirements essentially refer to Section 508 standards that state anything on the web be accessible to persons with disabilities. Cabrillo must ensure DE courses are accessible; that we maximize opportunities for students without outside assistance (like a sign language interpreter,) and all accommodations are "built-in." The TLC continues to provide accessibility training in their one-on-one and workshop training for applications like Dreamweaver, Blackboard, and iTunesU. Francine will ask Calais if she's willing to provide another training during Fall Flex Week for faculty and staff. Ray asked if any college has ever challenged the guidelines. Francine was unaware of any challenge, but stated there are many circumstances when a disabled student enrolls in a course that does not meet the standards, and the faculty member has to scramble to make their materials accessible. Accommodations are required by law and it is much easier to build them into the design of instructional materials from the beginning and/or select produced materials that meet the standards.

DE Course Approval Process (Curriculum Committee)

Evaluation of distance education courses (including hybrids) should be done during the faculty evaluation process and when possible, before the course goes live in Blackboard. Dale will send a list of proposed courses (Curricunet) tagged for online delivery to Francine. Francine will make contact with the faculty and provide the guidelines for regular/effective contact and accessibility compliance. The Committee felt the current mechanism used during the curriculum approval process, which designates types of tools used for DE communication, and section 508 compliance, should remain unchanged. It is the responsibility of the instructor to insure those standards are upheld through the lifetime of the course. The Committee also discussed the merits of regular opportunities to discuss course quality standards with faculty through interactions with the TLC, flex events, with colleagues, and in department meetings, when new courses are proposed. Steve pointed out the irregularity in which some courses are taught and how they may not fall in line with an adjunct's evaluation cycle. He recommended a "packet" or guide for faculty on what standards need to be met when considering teaching an online course. Georg produces a packet for the Library each year to give to new faculty. The TLC will work with the Library to augment the packet with distance education guidelines.

What the **Legislative Analyst's Office report** is saying about DE in California.

The Committee viewed a short video, LAO Report: "Using Distance Education to Increase College Access and Efficiency" by LAO Analyst, Paul Steenhausen. He talks about DE as a way to increase access and completion at CC, CSU, and UC's, but acknowledges there is an achievement gap in DE, primarily based on ethnicity. [<http://youtu.be/4N1Wt18V4Lk>]

Bb 9.1 Update

Barbara asked if faculty would prefer to have test student accounts created for each class in the new version of Blackboard. There was discussion on the value of being able to test functionality

of tools from a student perspective. Barbara's going to research as way to do this so each course has a unique test student account. Nancy suggested the account name begin with the letter "z" so it automatically goes to the bottom of the roster. Barbara will also consider including the section number in the account name as well.

Ray stated at a time when the college is looking to switch to a new version of a learning management system that requires a lot of training, the option of reviewing open source solutions was not explored. Letitia explained we've been down that road, and for various reasons, the team that evaluated learning management systems in 07-08 did not want to adopt Moodle.

Francine stated they will most likely be migrating courses in tiers based on the file size of the backup: sm/med/lg courses. She also suggested training tiers for beg/int/adv users.

EduStream services (item postponed until next meeting)

Open Discussion

Letitia would like to talk about repeatability of a course and what we as instructors can do (if anything) when we continually see the same names on the roster of students who repeatedly drop our courses, yet they are taking the space of someone who also needs the class. Dale stated there are some new regulations coming that are directed at repeatability issues. The discussion will be put on the next meeting agenda.