

Distance Education Advisory Committee

Minutes of the Meeting of November 6, 2014

Members Present: Leonor Cabrera, Gloria Darafshi, Kim Lopez, Ana Miladinova, Lisa Palmer, Jane Rice, Janet Stringer, Diva Ward

Members Absent: Gregory Anderson, Chialin Hsieh, Don Lariviere

Guests: Anniqua Rana, Lale Yurtseven

Janet Stringer called the meeting to order at 2:40 pm.

Fall Semester DE Enrollment Numbers

Janet Stringer presented enrollment numbers for online and hybrid classes since fall semester 2011. The numbers are broken down by division, although the newly created division that includes Athletics, Kinesiology, Dance, Library and Learning Resources was not counted separately, as Kinesiology and Dance had previously been part of the current Business, Design & Workforce division, and the statistics are intended to chart enrollment changes over time.

Enrollment in DE classes for this fall semester is 13.9% of total enrollment, which represents a very slight increase over the spring semester, when it was 13.4%. Science & Technology had a small decrease in DE enrollment, whereas the other division groupings saw increases. Summer enrollments are analyzed separately, as the numbers are smaller but the percentage of DE classes is much higher (37.9% for 2014).

Approval of Minutes

Minutes of the DEAC meeting on September 4, 2014, were approved.

Update on Online Tutoring

Diva Ward provided an update on the online tutoring program that launched this month. Students submit the online tutoring request form on the Learning Center website. The form sends an email to the online tutoring account, which the tutors check when they're on duty. They respond to requests either by answering simple questions directly by email or by setting up a real-time tutoring session using Join.Me (to view computer desktops remotely) and the phone. Online tutors work two to three hours a day (Monday through Friday) from a designated computer in the Learning Center. The tutors are actively involved in developing the online program.

Diva's assessment is that the tutoring is off to a slow but positive start. The fact that it is off to a slow start allows them to work out the kinks before they begin receiving a larger volume of requests. Committee members provided various suggestions for promoting the program now that the procedures are in place and tutors are comfortable with the process.

Update on Online Orientation

Kim Lopez reported that the outside vendor has completed the new online orientation for new students who cannot attend on on-campus orientation. The orientation is less interactive than they had anticipated, as it consists primarily of slides, although also contains video and questions for students to answer at the end of each section. Kim will send a link to the orientation, so that committee members can review it.

The new orientation will be used at all three colleges in the district, but will be implemented differently at each college. Groups from the three colleges have been working with IT to determine exactly how students will access and complete the orientation. Cañada representatives have not yet finished working out the implementation details, but it will be in place for the spring semester. The method for requesting the online orientation will not change.

The committee also discussed possibilities for providing an additional orientation for distance education students. Various approaches might range from a minimum of adding information to the DE website about how DE courses work to a maximum of creating a separate DE orientation course that students would complete before beginning an online course.

Program Review / Strategic Plan

Janet Stringer reported that DE will complete a combination program review and strategic plan for the program review cycle this coming January, although DE is not yet on the two-year schedule. None of the program review templates completely fit the DE program, as there is no separate DE curriculum, but Janet plans to adapt the existing templates for DE.

If DE faculty members have software or other equipment needs related to distance education, it would be appropriate to request them through the DE program review, rather than through their own program or department. Janet also announced that she is working with the district IT to find a college-wide solution to the need for voice recording capabilities for distance education.

DE Student Survey Results from Fall Semester

Jane Rice presented results from the DE student survey from the fall semester. The questions this semester included age in the demographic information for the first time. It was surprising to see that 28% of DE students responding to the survey are 40 years of age or older, whereas students in the 22 or under category constitute just 26% of the total. Also, an even larger percentage of the survey respondents are female (74%).

Another new question this semester asked whether students know what courses they need to take to reach their academic goals. 81% reported that they do. Committee members commented that it would be useful to compare the actual data about DE students (gender, age, Ed Plan completion) with the information reported by students completing the survey.

The only question on the survey this semester regarding success factors for online learning was an open-ended one. Lisa Palmer suggested it might be useful to put the responses into categories to provide an analysis of the results. She said she would try to come up with useful categories for that purpose.

Leonor Cabrera suggested it would be useful to also survey DE faculty about training needs. Jane Rice noted that training needs are part of the technology survey that the Technology Committee conducts each year, but it might be possible to get additional information from surveying only DE faculty.

The meeting adjourned at 4:00 pm.

Submitted by Jane Rice