

## Distance Learning Advisory Committee

### Minutes of Meeting 2/17/09

Special Guest: VP Lela Morgan

New Member: Mary Adele Combe – Manager, User Services (IT)

D. Donovan welcomed VP Morgan, and introduced Mary Adele Combe to the Committee.

VP Morgan forwarded the Sloan Benchmark Survey to D. Donovan for distribution to the Committee. D. Donovan will forward the report to all committee members.

M. Combe updated the committee on the Blackboard upgrade.

- Blackboard 9 will be in by May 1, and will be demonstrated on Professional Development Day (4/3/09).
- The best case scenario is that Blackboard 9 will be available for a few pioneers to pilot this summer. Workshops and training sessions have not been scheduled as of yet, but will be offered to help faculty make the transition.
- It is anticipated that the current version of WebCT will be supported by IT for at least one to two years, allowing sufficient time to transition courses to Blackboard 9.

## Enrollment & DL Issues

### Course Bulletin

Providing students with information about delivery formats and requirements need to be addressed both in the Bulletin and online (Available Courses). Several issues were discussed.

**Course listing by campus:** Courses are currently pulled into the bulletin by campus and therefore DL courses are listed separately in the Bulletin. As students may not be aware that alternative delivery formats are available for specific courses (unless they review the “DL” offerings section); a statement will be added to specific courses indicating that an “alternative” delivery format is also available. This statement is currently being used for courses offered by the Computer Studies Department.

**Important Information about Internet Courses:** It was recommended that additional information be included on the DL page of the course bulletin to better prepare students for DL.

- Students will be contacted via Pipeline e-mail with information about logging into their courses, therefore check e-mail approximately two weeks before classes begin.

- Highlight and stress that DL courses are rigorous as (or more rigorous than) traditional courses, and may be more “demanding”. The ease and convenience of DL relates to “how instruction is accessed”.
- Refer students to “DL Orientation for students” on the DL website “Is DL for you?”
- Warn students that some courses require on-campus sessions and/or proctored examinations
- Online programs and certificates should be included here.

In addition to having this information available in the course bulletin, it was recommended that the Advising personnel also stress this information when students opt to register for DL courses.

**Course Listing “Available Courses” online.** The same information about special requirements (sessions on campus; proctored exams, etc) can also be available online. Each DL Faculty member can add syllabi and special instructions to their course listing on the “Available Courses” web pages. D. Donovan created a brief video showing how a syllabus or special instructions can be added to a course (through Banner) and ultimately viewed by students from the “Available Courses” web pages. However, information attached to specific course sections will roll over, and therefore faculty need to remove such information at the end of the semester, if they will not be teaching the course the following semester. **D. Donovan recommends that fall and summer syllabi be posted by 4/1/09.**

**Course Delivery Formats:** Students need to be aware of different delivery formats. The use of “icons”; section numbers and statements were discussed. C. Tessier indicated that she created a new “schedule type” for Hybrid courses.

### **Follow Up On Permit Functions – Wait List and Add**

C. Tessier reported that “permit” and “Wait List” functions do not work within the current banner system, but should in the next upgrade. In the meantime, DL faculty who wish to add a student to a DL course can e-mail C. Tessier with the course and section number along with the student’s ID number.

An alternative to the “wait list” function is to build “shadow courses” for popular sections of DL courses. Shadow courses will need to be identified and approved by Department Chairs. D. Donovan will send an email to department chairs, suggesting they consider scheduling shadow courses for popular sections.

## **Policy Recommendations**

D. Donovan reviewed the Memo circulated regarding terminology that needs to be added to the existing DL Policy. Language is somewhat ambiguous related to what constitutes a “fully online” course, and this

has had an impact on class size limits. Class size limits for online courses, as defined below, are set at a maximum of 20 students. **All 600 sections will be set at this limit, unless Enrollment Services is notified by department chair.**

Distance Learning Definitions: In consideration of memo and discussion, the following definitions of courses would be added as an addendum to the DL Policy.

- Web-Enhanced course – courses that use a course management system as a supplement to the on-campus class meetings or use the course management system for testing, surveys, or assignments. These courses are not Distance Learning Courses and are not subject to the DL Policy.
- Online course – courses that have 80 – 100% of the class instruction delivered using a course management system, and have a maximum of three (3) required on-campus class meetings a semester. These courses may have on-campus proctored tests required in addition to the on-campus class meetings.
- Hybrid/Blended Courses: – course combine online and on-campus instruction with reduced in-class seat time for students that deliver less than 80% of the course instruction online and have more than three (3) required on-campus classes in a semester.

***Committee members present voted unanimously to amend the DL Policy to include the definitions highlighted above.***

#### **Future Goals for DL**

D. Donovan indicated that he will be circulating a set of goals related to the future of DL at CCRI. Among them: Proctored Tests; Blended Certificates.

Next meeting tentatively scheduled for Tuesday, April 21, 2009.

Submitted by J. Warren