

Distance Education Committee

April 24, 2015

Jennifer Kriechbaum, Pat Stroud, Korene Silvestri, Kim Patterson, Pam Sharma (Chair)

Guest: Carry DeAtley (VPAA)

1. Approval of April Minutes

Jennifer /Korene made the motion to accept January minutes.

2. Discussion and approval of DE documents

Guidelines for determining the viability of offering online courses, on line course teaching assignment, and new/existing online programs were discussed in January meeting and developed in February. DE committee emailed comments to Pam in February and March. Updated documents were presented to the committee for vote.

Discussion summary and the vote to accept all three documents follow:

Guidelines for offering an online course:

Discussion: Pat inquired about the process used to request online courses. Pam indicated a formal form; "Online Course Request form" is available for requesting online courses. This form is completed by the faculty member requesting the course and approved by the Division Chair/VPAA before the online course is designed. Approved form is send to the DE coordinator to provide faculty support in developing the course. The course is reviewed by a team of three peer reviewers to ensure course design is consistent with the Quality Matters Standards. This form was developed to streamline the online course development process.

Jennifer inquired about the cap on courses and the "magic number" in determining "low enrollment" courses. Pam shared the information listed on the Online Course Procedure document under the "Course Enrollment Limits." Division chair in consultation with the faculty decide on the course limit. Limits are different for different courses. For technical courses cap may be restricted based on specific factors such as lab equipment, student safety, etc. For general education courses, a class with less than 10 students is considered a low enrollment course.

Motion: Pat /Jennifer made the motion to accept," Guidelines for Offering Online courses."

Vote: Eight (three proxy votes) members voted to accept the document.

Guidelines for Online Course Teaching Assignment:

Discussion: There was a discussion on one of the four selection criterion; the fourth Bullet.

“When all other factors, faculty load; number of online courses developed in the discipline, and the seniority level of two or more faculty members requesting the course are the same, the division chair in consultation with VPAA assigns the course to one of the faculty members requesting the course”

It was pointed out that when a division chair is not from the same division and/or the division chair is not knowledgeable in online learning, it may be difficult to make such decisions. The selection criterion must be carefully designed to minimize subjectivity in online course assignment. Committee members felt this item needs to be addressed by division chairs/VPAA.

Motion: Jennifer made the motion to accept the document, “Guidelines for Online Course Teaching Assignment” as a starting document and request input from the division chairs /VPAA on specific criterion for bullet #4.

Vote: Eight (three proxy votes) members voted to accept the document.

Guidelines for New/ Existing Online Program:

Discussion: Add a choice under New or Existing Program to allow Existing Program choice to skip Program Offered: One of the members indicated he needs more time to review the document.

Motion: Jennifer/Korene: Accept the document as a starting document.

Vote: Seven (two proxy votes) members voted to accept the document.

2. Faculty report: There was a discussion on revisiting the restriction on the full time faculty on teaching online courses and its impact on online programs. As per the Online Course Procedure,

“Full-time faculty members may teach up to two courses (6-8 credits) online as part of their normal course load. Exceptions may be requested through the Division Chair and recommended to the VPAA for approval. Courses may be taught as an overload with overload limits as per traditional courses.”

Pam shared the basis for the restriction on number of online courses a full time faculty is allowed to teach. The restriction was based on the fact that the college does not offer programs online. This restriction will be revisited when the college will offer programs online. Since we are offering programs online, there needs to be discussion about the number of online courses a full time faculty can teach.

A suggestion was made to allow the full time faculty to teach 75% of the regular load (11-12 credit hours) online. This can be 100% for programs offered completely online with the approval of chair/VPAA. Load assignment can be 100% or 6 hours online for adjunct/part time faculty. If there are multiple sections, preference goes to fulltime faculty if they are qualified and willing to teach the course. It was determined; this item needs more discussion before the DE committee makes a recommendation to the VPAA. Pam will discuss this issue with the VPAA and the faculty assembly.

3. DE coordinator Report: Kim Patterson

Three faculty members were approved to complete Applying the Quality Matters Rubric training during the summer. This training is a requirement for designing online courses.

4. Online Steering Committee Report: Jennifer Kriechbaum

There was no meeting.

5. LRC Report: Pat Stroud

No report.

6. Adjournment: Korene/Jennifer made the motion to adjourn. Meeting adjourned at 3:10 PM.