Joint Committee on Online and Distance Education
Minutes
Board Room – Alumni Center
December 12, 2013
10:00-11:30


1. The committee discussed the results of the Academic Technology Survey (Results http://web.uri.edu/onlineoffice/technology-survey-fall-2013/) Suggestions and comments from the committee included:

   • It is often difficult for faculty to find teaching help on websites. Laura noted that the Teaching Effectiveness Committee is working with Kerri Hicks to begin the process of providing a faculty link on the URI home page which would provide links to the variety of help available for faculty. This is the beginning of a process to create a Center for Teaching Excellence.

   • The committee noted that most people are satisfied with Sakai – its tools and ease of use and we should publicize that fact.

   • The committee noted that one issue that was captured on the survey through notes was the slowness of some of the features of “test and quizzes.”

   • The committee asked the Office of Online Education for an Executive Summary

   • The committee asked that the Office of Online Education find the previous survey done on Sakai and compare the results.

   • The committee suggested that lecturers and per course results be separated as lecturers are full time employees.

   • The committee noted that the lowest ratings were for short courses and online instruction and we should look at how to provide better training in other ways.

2. Sakai Support

   • J. Portman-Daley has designed a basic Sakai training. So far 15 people have signed up and one has finished. - http://web.uri.edu/teachingonline/sakai-training/

   • Sakai will have a new portal page up for January which will be much cleaner and contain a “tip of the week.” We are also working on cleaning up the help wiki for students and faculty

   • We discussed priorities from the Sakai Development’s to do list in resources.
     
     o There was a positive response to being able to upload grades from Sakai to eCampus as long as it was controlled by faculty. Some faculty make adjustments to grades that have to be done manually. Faculty also like having the functions of both gradebook and gradebook2

     o There was a discussion of the slowness in Test and Quizzes this is an issue for both faculty and students

     o The committee didn’t understand why the email archive tool wasn’t turned on as it is native to Sakai

     o The committee supported work to fix Jforum.
The committee understood the other issues. There was no actual prioritization, but the ones listed above had the most discussion.

- The committee asked for more examples to be easily accessible – for example, Vince has suggestions for students who are taking online quizzes. He has forwarded them to the Online Office.

3. Review Draft Policy on required training to teach online
- The committee suggested changes to the proposal including the need to re-qualify every 5 years and a clear explanation of some of the terms. With those changes the committee voted to approve the policy and send it to the Curriculum Affairs Committee for their consideration and approval. The policy has also been sent to the Graduate Council. The approved policy is in the resources section of the committee Sakai site.

4. Curriculum Affairs Committee update
- Jill reported that the CAC is working on a streamlined and cleaner website and procedures.

6. The President approved the partnership between URI and Academic Partners to put in place an Online RN-BS degree. The contract is in the hands of the attorneys.

7. The Committee discussed the Office of Online Education's plans to pilot mentors in a variety of departments so that faculty have someone to go to for help as they design online, blended, and/or technologically enhanced classes.

8. The Committee discussed an award for excellence in Teaching Online and also the possibility of nominating a course for the Sakai teaching innovation award. We agreed that this year we would pilot an award at the spring Online Teaching Fellows Showcase. Laura, Jill, and Joannah agree to be the “selection committee.” We will explore how best to solicit student recommendations.

Respectfully Submitted,

Diane Goldsmith