Joint Committee on Online and Distance Education  
September 17, 3:00-4:30  
The Adams House  
Meeting Minutes


New Staff in Office of Online Education:  
Diane announced Kathleen and Joannah as new staff hired this summer. Kathleen runs Online Teaching Fellows and faculty training, and Joannah is in charge of Instructional Design.

Moving Faculty and Staff to Gmail:  
Garry Bozylinsky highlighted the pros and cons of conversion to Gmail. We would need to spend money either securing Zimbra or Gmail, so it seems to make more sense to spend it on Gmail. And, with the growing importance of mobile devices, Gmail offers better integration. Shared calendars would also be a huge benefit. Zimbra doesn’t integrate calendar well with phones. Access for both students and faculty/staff to Google Docs would be a big advantage. All committee members were in favor of the switch to Gmail.

Provost’s Plan Draft:  
Laura gave background on the plan. Deans have all seen this draft but didn’t offer a lot of feedback. Diane explained that Provost wants feedback from this committee. The plan reaffirms that we are a residential college, but also talks about importance of online and blended offerings among transitional students, as they should have a more technologically enriched learning experience. There is strong interest in post-baccalaureate certificates, which will be great for working professionals, as well as a good revenue stream for the University.

Committee comments included:

- Affordability is a large issue with online summer courses. Summer enrollments are dwindling because students can take the course at their local community college for less money. Enrollment is a financial issue. CCRI is our biggest competitor in regard to online classes.
  - Can we experiment with offering summer courses at a reduced rate?
  - Can we show higher completion and/or success rate if student takes course here vs. at community college?
  - Can we offer a metropolitan rate? RIC does this.
- Classrooms need to be better configured to support flipped classroom and active learning efforts.
- A strategic plan should be more concrete. This plan seems more like a vision. Ideas all sound great, but how do we make them happen? What is the timeline?
- Specifics of student support and technological support for implementation need to be better detailed. Need more commitment and investment.
• Who is going to step forward and put the time and effort into this plan unless there is evidence that there is something in it worth fighting for? More attention needed to people who will make this a reality, and incentives. Entrepreneurial perspective.
• If these ideas get funded, what/who loses funding to make that happen?

**Academic Partnerships:**
Diane provided an update on the Academic Partnerships work with Nursing. Nursing wants to create a program that starts with licensed nurses (RN) and takes them through BA, MA, to DNP. We are at the point of negotiating the contract with Academic Partnerships. The vendor is meeting with the Graduate school, Nursing, the Provost, and the Attorney on September 27th.

**Federal, Accreditation, and Financial Aid policies that affect online/blended courses:**
How do we convey the following issues to faculty in a positive way?
• Last day to determine attendance for financial aid reasons. Last day is not log in – it is substantive participation. There needs to be weekly substantive participation to be able to track this.
• Lecture capture – can’t use students voice or face without their permission. Must have informed consent to use outside of class – this seems to mean an actual signature.
  o Can we use a regrets only type of consent? State in the syllabus that if student doesn’t agree, s/he must contact instructor?
  o Yes/no questionnaire to show they have actively agreed or not?
• For financial aid purposes, faculty must provide substantive feedback, which generally means weekly, in order for the course to be considered online and not correspondence.
• Student authentication - financial aid fraud – must be able to prove that student enrolled is the one taking the course. Password protection on Sakai is sufficient for this, but not all instructors use Sakai.

Group decided best course of action is to send out regular updates from Online Ed office via listserv to all faculty.

**Learning Systems Development:**
We discussed the issues with authentication, the media servers, and mobile apps. It isn’t clear whether this committee should be the governance for instructional technology?

**Online Teaching Fellows:**
Showcase tomorrow in MCC at 3pm. 10 successful finishers.
OLTF has been redesigned – three parts now for ease and time constraints.
CAC luncheon is on Wednesday, Sept. 25th.

Respectfully submitted:
Diane Goldsmith
Sept. 20, 2013

Next Meeting Friday October 25 – 10 -11:30  Quinn 109