Joint Committee Online and Distance Learning
Minutes
Wednesday March 10 at 2:00

Present:

Diane Goldsmith	Kelly Orr
Valerie Karno	Kathleen Torrens
Roberta King	Anne Veeger
Annu Matthews	Furong Xu
Art Mead	Cc: Peggy Benz
Alicia Vaanndering	

1. The Minutes of the December 3 meeting were accepted

2. There was a brief discuss of the Small Survey of Students by One Faculty, which was shared to the committee last semester:
   ● There was a comment in response student's liking consistency, in that as time goes on students will get used to the different ways that faculty use Brightspace
   ● Suggestion that we might want to do a larger survey of students at a later time
   ● There was a request for sample exemplary online classes of many different types for faculty to view.

3. The committee is recommending the following policy. We are asking for input from IT Gov before it goes to the Faculty Senate.

   Recommended Policy: All fully online classes and programs be offered only through the University's official LMS.

   Rationale for this policy: The "Official" LMS is available to all faculty and students at URI, is supported by ITS staff and its service desk, is integrated with the Student Information System, is protected through the ITS Security Office, and meets FERPA guidelines. Using the official LMS also ensures that should a faculty member become unable to teach their class, another faculty can be given access to ensure students can complete the course. Nothing in this policy prevents instructors from using external ADA compliant web-based resources within the LMS.

There was a question of how this affects web conferencing use in a class. Zoom is integrated, but Webex, Microsoft Teams, and Google Meets are not.

4. There was agreement that the discussion of existing Faculty Senate definitions of online, blended, and web-enhanced courses should be tabled until there was more extensive information at hand.

5. Issues from You:
Several issues related to the future at URI were raised:
- Where are we going with online classes? What is the future of online learning at URI?
- It was suggested that Faculty Senate organize a forum on where do we see the future of online? How do faculty take all that they have learned about teaching online and through web conferencing into the future? how online modules might be integrated into classes, and how to not lose the momentum of what we have learned.

Diane will pass this request onto Faculty Senate.

Additionally there was a discussion of how the Faculty Senate Curriculum committee should evaluate online courses. What sort of guidelines exist for them to use? One-third of all courses submitted to the Curriculum Committee are online and/or blended. Should guidelines for such evaluations/approvals be provided for online course proposals?