**Distance Learning Advisory Meeting**

**February Monthly Meeting**

**February 1, 2013**

**Members Present:** Vicki Badgley, Phil Ballard, Jim Roomsburg, Art Brown, Cathy Harrell, Suzanne Wache, Donna Hendricks, Brenda Holmes,

**Guests Present:** Jennifer Baine, Linda Bates, Tim Kirk, Linda S Lephiew

VBadgley is serving as Interim Distance Learning Director and Chair of the committee.

**Minutes:**

**Item: Approval of Minutes**

PBallard moved to **accept the minutes** from the October 2012 meeting, as read.

BHolmes seconded.

**Motion carried.**

**Old Business:**

**Item: Online Courses & First Day of Class**

PBallard made a motion: Online courses will be opened by the first day of class; if not, they will be opened automatically. Cathy Harrell seconded.

The motion was discussed, and an amended motion was proposed by PBallard: **Each online course will be opened by the scheduled first day of that course; if not, it will be opened automatically**. JRoomsburg seconded.

**Motion carried.**

**Item: Excessive Absence policy**

VBadgley is part of ad hoc committee to work on absence policy for online courses. The committee members also include Val Cantu, and Jim Roomsburg.

PBallard showed a survey, taken by committee members, to elicit their views on absentee policy in online courses. The survey was distributed to those without a copy.

**PBallard moved to table discussion on absence policy until the March meeting.**

Brenda Holmes seconded.

**Motion carried.**

**New Business**

**Item: DL Director Activities Update**

VBadgley shared her activities since she was given the duties of interim DL Director:

--AMA (Ask Me Anything) activities had ten attendees in the last week (instructors)

--work continues on a brochure about online learning, and a bookmark is under development, as well

--more focused workshops for instructors are planned

--Blackboard will be updated this summer to a new version. Instructors are needed to test the system, starting in May. Some of the new features include improvements to gradebook and discussion boards. The system will be live for the Fall 2013 semester. **VBadgley will find out if ARBUG will be covering the update.**

**Item: Blackboard Server**

TKirk told the committee that there will be a new server installed to house Blackboard; instructors will be able to create ‘master’ copies of their courses, which will reside on the server, and they will be able to export copies of their courses for editing and revision.

**Item: Blackboard and Textbook Publishers**

DHendricks told the committee that she’s been in touch with several publishers, and they are all moving to integrate their online features/work with Blackboard, making course creation easier for instructors.

**Item: ARE-ON Information**

TKirk stated that the ARE-ON represents a big opportunity for our faculty to communicate and collaborate with colleagues all across the state, as if they were in an office next door.

There was discussion about ARE-ON and its possible impact on technology use at the College.

**Item: Job Description for Distance Learning Director**

VBadgley asked the committee if the job description for the Distance Learning Director should be amended/revised. She shared the last description of the position, dated 2007 and stated that the position should involve more than Blackboard technology, since the campus now includes Sympodiums, clickers, etc.

DHendricks stated that the position should be moved to IT from Academics, since it is IT who is primarily responsible for assisting faculty/staff with technology issues.

TKirk stated that we need to think beyond how the position functions currently, since fielding student questions and issues with Blackboard already constitutes a full-time position, and the job description has elements that are no longer valid.

CHarrell stated that the name and description of the position should be changedto reflect the involvement with academic technology that the position should have.

PBallard moved that VBadgley, as interim director, **appoint an ad hoc committee to assess and revise the job description for the distance learning director.**CHarrell seconded.

**Motion carried.**

VBadgley appointed the committee to include herself, PBallard, CHarrell, BHolmes, and DHendricks. The first meeting will be on Tuesday, 5 February, at 330pm, in TEC131.

**Item: Miscellaneous Discussion**

DHendrix shared information about a meeting she recently attended as part of the development of a College Success week, to be held during the second week of the Fall 2013 semester. The initiative is chaired by Dr. John Spencer. The program will include topics such as time management, tutoring in specific subject areas, dressing for success, etc. Instructors will likely be asked to participate.

BHolmes inquired about distance-learning/Blackboard orientation and why it was offered in non-lab venues, when it makes sense to be in a lab so that students can have hands-on experience.

PBallard moved to adjourn.

CHarrell seconded

Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda S Lephiew