



DISTANCE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Adopted Minutes

March 26, 2012
Room 101
2:30 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Dale called the meeting to order at 2:38 pm.

Roll: Dale Crandall-Bear, Chair; Karen Cook; Jeffrey Lamb; Philip Petersen; Roy Pike; Philip Summers; Robin Sytsma; Connie Adams

Absent/Excused: George Daugavietis; Marylou Fracisco; Scott Ota; Sandra Rotenberg

1. Approval of Minutes – March 12, 2012

Motion to Approve – Roy Pike; Seconded – Karen Cook; Passed - Unanimous

2. DE Reports from Schools

Dale announced plans to begin a regular tradition for reps to bring information from their areas for discussion and he reminded members it is their job to take DE information back to their schools.

3. LMS Update

Dale updated the Committee from the last meeting when he shared the written Pearson RFP addendum, and then took it to the Academic Senate and Liberal Arts. There were many concerns that were similar from each group. Dale compiled a list of the many similar concerns and questions generated from each group, and sent it to S/P Laguerre. It was forwarded to Pearson and has gone through many changes as they responded to each concern. Dale, EVP Reyes, S/P Laguerre, and Jeff met with Pearson and participated in follow-up conference calls. Last week Dale, Jeff, and EVP Reyes also met with one of the Canvas co-founders who was in the area.

Pearson created a more formal legal document to address the list of questions and Dale opined the proposal evolved in a more positive direction. The original plan was for the College to pay Pearson for every enrollment in online classes that used Pearson books. If students were to prefer a hardcopy, they would have to pay twice. The Selection Committee was uncomfortable without choices for students or faculty. This part of the proposal was amended into three groups as follows: 1) online classes that don't use Pearson materials would not be impacted; 2) online classes using Pearson materials would have a tab in the course shell for the student to click on if they choose to purchase the ebook, and; 3) instructors using Pearson in eCompanion will have the option to include the tab or not in the shell. Students can choose to click on the tab and pay the \$80 fee to receive the access code for the eBook, which would be an interactive electronic text they can highlight and add sticky notes to. The tab will be in the shell but they will have the choice whether or not to buy the eBook or they can buy a hardcopy instead. Instructors who use their own or another book can do what they have always have done. Instructors will have to work with the bookstore on the number of books to order. There are no limitations on students being able to rent a book from the bookstore and they can also buy eBook access through the bookstore which would be available as long as the shell is in use. The issue of permanent access to materials was raised but Pearson said the Chancellor's office agreed access can be time limited because students have the option to

photocopy the digital book. Instructors could encourage students not to buy the eBook and Karen noted she would probably tell students that it would be a better option to buy a hardcopy for reference, especially if they take other classes in which she uses the same book. Dale noted that publishers are moving in a digital direction. Roy stated that there are 5-7 publishers selling basically the same book for the fire program and some put out new editions every other year. He plans to write his own primer with all the content that is needed for his students and sell it at a reduced cost. Dale turned over questions to VP Ligioso regarding how the Pearson purchases will work with or affect the Barnes & Noble bookstore. Dale reported that S/P Laguerre is ready to move forward and it seems the decision has been made to contract with Pearson for the three years they required for the system at no cost to the College. S/P Laguerre plans to take this to the Governing Board on April 4th and he was clear about realizing Canvas would be the heir after this largely budget driven, stop-gap measure. He gave Dale the green light to begin piloting Canvas which will officially begin in year two. Because Pearson will be free to the College, both platforms will be able to run in a phased transition. Courses will be moved over to Canvas in the third year of the Pearson contract. Dale concluded the discussion by noting that the bookstore issue would probably be the only potential roadblock. He is looking forward to be getting beyond the LMS issue and will write and email an LMS update summary to the DE Committee members.

4. Pilot Program

Dale reported that the formal pilot program will begin in year two of the Pearson contract when the College contracts with Canvas so they can connect with BANNER. Instructors can choose to teach courses or have Canvas eCompanions next year by setting up shells without course content but with a link to Canvas and students can be invited into class through a Canvas mechanism. The student will show up as an email rather than a name in the instructor's grade book and items will have to be manually managed during this phase. Orientations can be held in the computer lab next year. Dale reported he is receiving more communication from classroom students now because it is so easy through Canvas. He will send an email out to everyone and start an informal group for interested instructors. A Canvas shell could also be set up just for instructors. Faculty members need to send a request to Dale to be set up in Canvas eCompanion. CRN numbers are needed for set-up and for textbook orders. Instructors will set up online Canvas shells themselves.

Roy raised a concern regarding the way online classes have been apportioned at centers after a statement was made that the Vallejo campus gets the majority of income from online classes regardless of where they were taught. Dale replied that certain thresholds are needed for each center and Jeff explained: when Vacaville came online the threshold for center status was 500 FTS at Vacaville and 1000 FTS at Vallejo; as growth occurred, a decision was made a few years ago that some online courses would be attributed to Vallejo; at its peak Vallejo offered 1600 FTS, it is now down to about 1250 FTS and 250 FTS may be online. This item was found to be in a Title 5 grey zone and wasn't considered an issue at the time. It is coming up now because the Chancellor's office notified the College that the Vacaville threshold has to increase to 1000 FTS. S/P Laguerre would like to consider FTS online apportionment in the most appropriate way while looking at how to increase FTS by the 350 or more needed at Vacaville within the timeline given to retain the \$1,000,000 the College receives. Growth could come from realignment to increase courses there but that will also impact growth needed at the main campus.

Roy noted that considerable discussion was held regarding LMS when his school had a rare opportunity to all get together during the SLO meeting. Many faculty didn't know details about Canvas but they felt that eCollege doesn't perform as well as it used to, it breaks down more, and yet there is reluctance to leave it because of familiarity. Some faculty questioned why a platform is needed rather than having College staff handle it and Roy was reminded of his experience at Santa Rosa Junior College. He shared

how they tried to do it in-house but many internal issues arose and the academic portion of the college lost control to the tech side of the house. Dale responded that it might work if there were enough support but it is not likely to be a viable option here and IT staff wasn't for it. Jeff added that concerns also about hardware and servers could end up with what seems free or cheap costing much more.

Roy updated members on the forest service quest for online classes here. He recently met with forest service personnel representing the international portion. The Forest Service would be the lead agency for islands west of the Hawaiian Islands and Roy would be the online trainer. First they would send a contingent here for hands-on training, face-to-face conversations, and then go back to the islands and start the online process. The Forest Service has no fire prevention program in the western US which is a concern. Rather than sending personnel from Northern California down to McClellan Academy, they would use online classes already developed at Solano College. Their regional office is close by at Mare Island and their national headquarters is in Boise, Idaho. Roy will continue to work with them and see what happens. Dale noted Roy would have to start in eCollege and there shouldn't be much problem switching to Canvas later.

Phillip Summers queried if instructors using eCompanion are required to make hardcopy handouts available for students or if they can require students to go online and make copies themselves. Dale responded that there is a pretty strong obligation to supply students with hardcopy unless stated in the course catalog that the course requires internet connection and students can't really complete the class without a computer. Jeff pointed out that instructors could create a reader of all their handouts, give it to the bookstore; they copy it, and then charge the student for a copy. Dale has always printed some copies and offered for purchase and added that the demand has gone down considerably over time.

Jeff addressed two points that Roy brought up: instructors should keep track of their course shells as a folder on their computer and not have to rely on eCollege or Canvas for that and DE reps should make DE reports in their schools. Dale would be happy to come to school meetings. Dale's final message was that things are moving forward now but with a more relaxed transition time.

5. DE Program Standards

Dale reported that the Committee can finally begin looking at items beyond LMS including standards and program review. He met with Fred Lokken, DE Dean at Truckee Meadows, where they just completed a process to make standards official and are beginning to implement them. Dale forwarded the document to the DE Committee to initiate ideas and discussion. Truckee Meadows has a lot of resources and Nevada allows charging students instructional fees of \$10-15 per course. Jeff pointed out that Title 5 states that fees for materials must be for something students can walk away with.

Dale reported that S/P Laguerre stated that the Committee should begin to address the issue of staffing. Truckee Meadows offers ongoing DE training and Solano could consider using flex time for online training. Mr. Lokken pointed out there should be certain expectations and responsibilities for online instructors and some faculty may need to be told that online may not be a fit for them. Roy noted he would like to see DE return to how it was in the beginning when everyone was excited and shared ideas. Faculty need to be involved in building and improving the program and have a feeling of ownership. Dale suggested instructors could receive flex credit for designing workshops and training.

Jeff noted data shows online classes fill quickly and fully, retention can be as good as face-to-face but also can be a problem in terms of perception, if not in reality. It could be good to have a list of best practices, retention strategies for the first few weeks, what constitutes regular effective contact, and

overall best strategies that link to successful students who stick with the College. Dale noted that Truckee Meadows has that on page three of their document. He opined that while these things are addressed in the College DE white paper, much has been compromised short of what is outlined and about 98% of students don't take the survey on our website. The Truckee Meadows Standards document has requirements to force assessment and is much more robust overall.

Roy noted plagiarism is a big issue and maybe a written and signed contract could help. Karen replied that she has her students read the academic honesty policy and take a quiz so that she has on record whether or not they've answered 100% of the quiz before they can receive grades on other work. They also receive a zero if they don't follow through with the quiz. Dale stated there is a feature in Canvas that allows courses to be locked to students until they sign a form. Truckee Meadows has consistent policies in their syllabi. Karen added it should be for face-to-face as well as online. The statement could be flipped to state that traditional classes should also have these objectives on syllabi. Jeff added a collegial understanding could codify what is done in face-to-face classes. Members can review what we have in place compared to Truckee Meadows and look at areas to blend together or to fill in missing categories. Roy suggested bringing a show and tell to the next meeting and Dale added that could start with student expectations. Philip Summers suggested best practices for eCompanion could be included. Members agreed to review the first couple sections and bring something in to share.

Jeff reported that Peter Cammish and Pei-Lin Van't Hul have pulled together a nice interface for program review type data which can now be disaggregated for online data. He recommended meeting with Dale before the next DE meeting to share what is available. Jeff reported that he compared face-to-face and online in program review with all data points and then pulled data out by instructor to see how they are doing in both areas and compared to their departments. It becomes a little trickier looking at both but with a level of trust conversations could be created between individuals and their dean. Program work is good for the Committee to see how areas fit into the picture and the whole program overall. Jeff added that a fascinating question could be what DE program level outcomes would look like. Roy mentioned he plans to take a look at online and in-person Fire 50 classes, taught by two different instructors and with a capstone at the end. Comparisons can be shown along with where improvement can be made. There has to be some differences between online and face-to-face classes. It will be better for faculty to do this collegially or it will be done by administration. Jeff suggested considering how information competency, program-wise for students, could be addressed. DE would be unlike other areas in its outcomes. Once areas are identified, they can be tracked, measured, and benchmarks set with the benefit of having program review that integrates into program level outcomes.

6. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 3:59 pm