

Distance Education Council
Meeting Minutes
November 29, 2016

- I. The regular monthly meeting for the Distance Education Council was held on Tuesday, November 29, 2016, at 2:00 pm in R100, the chair being present and no person filling the office of secretary.
- II. A quorum was not present at the beginning of the meeting, so the council present engaged in informational items only until a quorum arrived.
 - a. Those present reviewed the document, “SE Plan for Continuous Improvement and Course Review of Online Courses.”
 - b. BlackBoard Course requests for Spring 2017 should be made by December 1.
 - c. Dec 26-30, BlackBoard will be down for an update. All courses will be cleared out. 2 years of courses will be archived and may be restored upon request. All Spring 2017 courses will be restored immediately. Coursesites was described as a storage option for courses and an area where instructors may work on courses during the week Bb is down.
- III. Quorum was met at approximately 2:15pm
Roll Call after achieving quorum:
Voting Members in Attendance: Jossie Menendall, Janet Barker, Crystal Jensen, Ying Lin, Jerry Stout, Mike Reed, William Fridley, Karl Finkle, Jeri Walker, Chunmei Yoe
Non-voting members in attendance: Christala Smith (chair), Tim Boatmun, Dan Moore, Sandra Thomas, Blake Scott
Guests in attendance: George Collier, Tim Smith, Jason Stowell
- IV. Jeri Walker moved to approve the document, “SE Plan for Continuous Improvement and Course Review of Online Courses” as was written. (Provided in appendix 1)
Jerry Stout seconded the motion.
Discussion included an explanation that the most significant change in the document is that DEC members would be more involved as mentors for their departments and would review and assist with courses rather than placing an extra burden on the chairs.
The motion was approved with 9 votes of yes, 0 votes of no, and 0 abstaining votes.
- V. The status of the Intellectual Property Rights Policy (Provided in Appendix 2) was discussed. To date, the Academic Council has sent the document to Charlie Babb, who serves as RUSO legal counsel. They are still waiting for feedback, and we will be informed when feedback is provided.
- VI. Dan Moore addressed the council and answered questions about the end of semester surveys for online students. Three concerns were expressed: 1. Low response rate, 2. Excessive time lapse in faculty receiving feedback, and 3. The questions do not align with the questions asked to face-to-face students. A solution suggested to promote response rate was to ask students to submit a screenshot to prove the survey was taken before accessing the final. With regards to the time for receiving feedback, at other institutions, institutional research offices take care of collection and disbursement of data, but we do not have such an office. The speed at which results are returned is related to a lack in manpower to accomplish the task. In regards to concerns of what questions are asked, although there is value in that the questions have been consistent for 5 years, it was agreed that the questions could be modified to better meet the needs of the departments. It was acknowledged that Jason Stowell would be responsible for processing and distributing online surveys within a reasonable amount of time.

VII. The meeting adjourned at 3:07pm.

Minutes submitted by Christala Smith.

Appendix 1

SE Plan for Continuous Improvement and Course Review of Online Courses

Semester 1

The faculty member gains online certification through successful completion of Quality Matters (QM) Applying the QM Rubric Workshop (APPQMR). This workshop should be completed either prior to teaching the course or during the first semester.

*The instructor should take advantage of the template provided in the Start Here section of each BlackBoard (Bb) course shell by filling in all red text and following the instructions found there. He or she should also review the information found in the Instructor Guide tab at the bottom of the course menu. Each department has a member of the Distance Education Council (DEC) who can mentor online faculty as needed.

Year 2

- A. The faculty member continues professional development and begins the course review process by successfully completing the QM Improving Your Online Course Workshop (IYOC). This occurs within the second year of online teaching.
- B. The faculty member shares the self-review and course improvement plan, started in the IYOC, with their DEC representative. This occurs after completion of the self-review in Part A.

Year 3

The department DEC representative will review the course and provide personal feedback. The DEC member can assist the online faculty member in making modifications as needed.

Years 4 +

- A. Online instructors are encouraged to repeat the self-review process on additional courses, or the same course if significant revisions have been made. The self-review should be discussed with the department DEC representative again.
- B. Online instructors are encouraged to participate in at least 1 form of training relating to online course development each year. Examples of such training include but are not limited to the following:
 - CIDT Public Workshops
 - CIDT Personalized Training
 - Webinars
 - Conferences (for example, Quality Summit in OKC)
 - Lynda.com

Notes:

This plan is designed primarily for instructors teaching online courses for the first time. However, the need for continuous improvement and the mentorship provided by the department's DEC representative is for all online

instructors. The starting point, pacing, and further application of this process for experienced online instructors will be determined by the department chair and the department's DEC representative.

A faculty member can request alternate certification for Semester 1 by submitting documentation of previous online training/certification to the department DEC representative. Faculty members who obtained SE online certification prior to QM, can be considered certified. It is strongly recommended that every faculty member who teaches online or blended courses participate in the APPQMR. After initial certification, the faculty member begins the course review process by participating in the IYOC.

Philosophy of this model:

Grounded in QM guiding principles, this model attempts to ensure quality online courses by offering professional development and support to online instructors. It evaluates the design of online and blended courses with a systematic scoring system (QM rubric). This process is meant to be collegial, continuous, and centered in national standards of best practice, research, and instructional design principles.

Rationale:

Initially, Southeastern had an approval process in which a course was approved to be delivered online after the submission and approval of the course syllabus by the DEC (APPM 6.7.3). The online faculty were trained through an in-house Bb course designed and facilitated by the DEC Chair (APPM 6.7.2). Currently, the syllabus approval process is not being implemented and online faculty are requested to go through APPQMR before teaching an online course. This proposal is an attempt to outline the guidelines needed for obtaining online teaching certification and a structured course review process. It is a product based on The Higher Learning Commission (HLC) accreditation requirements and the State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (SARA) Initiative requirements.

HLC's "Reviewing Distance Delivery during Comprehensive Evaluations and Comprehensive Quality Reviews" describes the requirements for online quality to be evaluated by reviewers for accreditation visits. Criterion #5 requires a "process for selecting, training and orienting faculty for distance delivery." Criterion #7 requires a "process to evaluate and improve quality in distance-delivered offerings." These are both addressed by this proposal.

SARA is a nationwide collaborative of states designed to make distance education courses more accessible to students across state lines and make it easier for states to regulate and for institutions to participate in interstate distance education. SARA is an agreement among member states, districts, and territories that establishes comparable national standards for interstate offering of postsecondary distance education courses and programs. Southeastern was approved to participate in SARA as of March 2016 and will be reviewed annually. SARA requirements addressed by this proposal are below:

3. How is online learning incorporated into the institution's systems of governance and academic oversight?
 - How does the institution ensure the rigor of the offerings and the quality of instruction;
 - does approval of online courses and programs follow standard processes.....;
 - how are online learning courses evaluated on a periodic basis?
6. Are the faculty responsible for delivering the online learning curricula and evaluating the students' success in achieving the online learning goals appropriately qualified and effectively supported?
 - How are online learning faculties carefully selected, appropriately trained, frequently evaluated;
 - Is the institution's training program for online faculty periodic? Does it incorporate tested good practices in online learning pedagogy, and ensure competency with the range of software products used by the institution?

References:

Reviewing Distance Delivery during Comprehensive Evaluations and Comprehensive Quality Reviews (DistDeliveryReview_2015_PRC.pdf). Retrieved from <https://www.hlcommission.org/Peer-Review/peer-review-team-resources.html>.

National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements. Retrieved from: www.okhighered.org/admin-fac/sara/app-approval-form.pdf. Application and Approval Form for Institutional Participation in SARA. Interregional Guidelines for the Evaluation of Distance Education (2011). Council of Regional Accrediting Commissions (C-RAC)

Appendix 2

Intellectual Property

Southeastern Oklahoma State University respects the intellectual property rights of the professors and students and thus will ask permission for use of such works, including content stored within the LMS for online, blended, and face-to-face courses. Professors may allow the copy and/or distribution of their materials by submitting a form provided on the CIDT website giving permission to Southeastern to use the material. In such cases, any materials used will retain the name of the authoring professor.

Southeastern retains the right to view and show content, including that which is stored within the LMS, for the sake of training.

Instructors may not alter or delete content from the LMS for any course that has been taught within the previous eighteen months, as this is the time allotted for student appeals and content should be maintained in the same condition in which it existed at the end of the course.

Instructors using materials in the LMS obtained from any other source must cite the source from which it was obtained, including other professors, websites, images, etc.

Work-for-Hire principles will not be applied to individual instructors' work in developing materials. However, such rights will be reserved by the institution in cases of appointed collaboration, such as the work produced by university committees and councils.