

Distance Education Council
Meeting Minutes
April 5, 2016

- I. The regular monthly meeting for the Distance Education Council was held on Tuesday, April 5, 2016, at 1:00 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. IT via Dan Moore provided an IT update.
 - b. CIDT via Christala Smith provided updates regarding a new employee: Jason Stowell, progress on summer and fall course shells with the addition of a Start Here button and Instructor Guide, extended hours of service in CIDT, and an update on AP.
- III. Roll Call after achieving quorum: Jani Barker, Kay Daigle, William L. Fridley, Robert Howard, Crystal Jensen, Ying Lin, Shannon McCraw, Josie Mendenall, Jerry Stout, Jeri Walker. Non-voting members: Dan Moore, Sandra Thomas, Christala Smith
- IV. The minutes of the last meeting were approved as corrected.
- V. The “Proposed Online Teaching Certification and Course Review Process” was taken from the table. After discussion, no changes were made to the document. Dr. William Fridley moved that “We ask the Academic Council for support on the document, then ask Faculty Senate to make it policy.” The motion was adopted.
- VI. The meeting adjourned at 2:00pm.

Proposed Online Teaching Certification and Course Review Process

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.
2. 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 after the first semester of teaching the online course.
3. The faculty member shares the self-review and course improvement plan, started in the IYOC, with their department chair. This occurs after completion of the review and prior to or during the next semester of teaching the course. It is suggested that the department chair become familiar with the QM rubric by participating in the APPQMR workshop.
4. The faculty member initiates and completes the self-review process on additional courses, if applicable. These course improvement plans are shared with their department chair.
5. Whenever a course undergoes a significant change, the faculty member completes a self-review and course improvement plan (as done previously in the IYOC workshop) and shares these documents with their department chair.
6. Online instructors are expected to participate in workshops, seminars, webinars, etc. related to online teaching, either offered by SE or an outside source. Yearly participation, to demonstrate continuous improvement is encouraged. Documentation should be presented to the faculty member's department chair during the annual review. As an option, the faculty member may request a formal peer-review through the department or Distance Education Council on their online course. The internal peer-review process should occur after the course has been taught for at least 2 years or 4 semesters.

Notes:

A faculty member can request alternate certification by submitting online training materials to the Distance Education Council. Faculty members who obtained SE online certification prior to Quality Matters, can be considered certified. It is strongly recommended that every faculty member that 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 Quality Matters (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 Distance Education Council (APPM 6.7.3). The online faculty were trained through an in-house Bb course designed and facilitated by the Distance Education Council Chair (APPM 6.7.2). Currently, the syllabus approval process is not being implemented and online faculty are requested to go through Quality Matters Applying the QM Rubric Workshop 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.

The HLC has a document describing evidence supporting the criteria and core components used by reviewers for accreditation visits. Criteria #5, Staffing and Faculty Support, requires that process for selecting, training and orienting faculty for distance delivery are present. As well, criteria #7, Evaluation and Assessment, states that processes to evaluate and improve quality in distance-delivered offerings are established. These are both addressed by this proposal more thoroughly than present policy.

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 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. This program has recently been adopted by the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education. An application process was required by Southeastern in which a series of questions were addressed. Of importance to this proposal are questions 3 and 6:

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 are 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)