

Distance and Blended Learning Committee – Minutes 9/3/2014

Meeting Time: 2 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Location: Link 301

Present: Teresa Coffman (chair), Jim Groom, Debra Hydorn, Sarah Morealli, Paul Boger, Greta Franklin, Chad Murphy

Teresa welcomed us to the committee; Debbie volunteered to serve as secretary.

Deadlines – we decided 10 days was sufficient for us to review proposals and ask for clarifications and/or revisions in order to meet the deadlines set by the Registrar

Reviewing proposals – we briefly discussed how we read/review proposals, identifying what we look for in different sections. Of concern is how students will interact with and engage with the course, so the online environment needs to be well defined in the proposal. We also try to ensure that the liberal arts values are connected to the online aspects of the course. Teresa reminded us that we have two tasks. The first is to ensure that students taking an online course are who they say they are; this is conveyed by the Online Course Authorization form - if faculty will be using Canvas then we can infer that this task is met, otherwise faculty need to complete the 2nd page of that form. The second task is to ensure that faculty are following our ideal of what online instruction should be at UMW. Concerning the use of online tools – such as those outside of Canvas – we can't be sure how faculty are using them so we don't question whether or not the tools are safe for students to use, for example. We want to avoid externally designed courses, as a way of ensuring quality control, but we are not concerned with course design and content.

Review of online proposals – we reviewed two NURS courses and one EDUC course (resubmitted). Issues that came up are whether or not new instructors need to submit an Online Course Authorization form for a previously approved course – is a new instructor the same as a new section? – Teresa or Jim will check with John Morello as a first contact. Some of the proposals needed clarification concerning required presentations and discussions – the instructors will be asked to provide details about whether these will be online or in face-to-face meetings (of blended courses) and how they will be completed by students. The syllabi for two of the courses indicate that a C is needed to pass the course but this is not in agreement with UMW policy that a D or better is a passing grade. One proposal needed additional information about how online tools will be used to assess students and also on how required reflections will be completed. Two of the proposals were approved pending requested clarifications and one proposal will be returned with the request to revise syllabus to reflect distance learning modalities and resubmit. Teresa will send the instructors details.

Survey requests – Teresa forwarded an e-mail to us sent to Taiwo Ande, Matthew Wilkerson and Ashley Finelli with a request for information about online courses at UMW. She asked if the committee had additional questions for this data collection process. One She also indicated that Debra Schleef will have the students in one of her courses conduct a survey of UMW students to assess student interest in online course and

whether or not current online offerings are meeting their needs. These initiatives are being taken in part to meet the Provost's agenda on the strategic use of online learning.