DISTANCE EDUCATION COMMITTEE
Monday, October 29, 2012, 3:30–5pm, Room 1096, TLC

NEXT MEETING: Monday, November 26, 2012, 3:30–5pm in the TLC

Attendees: John Govsky, Francine Van Meter, Kyle McCarthy, Steve Schessler, Ed Parrish, Georg Romero, Rachel Mayo, Barbara Durland, Dan Borges, and Cheryl Chaffin

Student Authentication and Identity
In response to accreditation guidelines for distance education, a draft of a new policy, AR3700, Distance Education was reviewed by the committee. The document was originally drafted by Dan Borges, Barbara Durland, and Francine Van Meter, and presented to Tech Committee as a BP. It contains a summary of authentication procedures for students in distance classes, and references strategies used by faculty to verify student identity. The Tech Committee recommended using a CCC League template to draft an AR. Rachel and Georg suggested writing both a BP and AR for Instruction Council to review. It also needs to go to Faculty Senate and Cabinet. Attached is the draft.

Student Complaint Procedure
Accreditation guidelines for distance education also recommend posting in a visible area on the college website, the process for students to file complaints related to online classes. There already exists a process for students to communicate problems related to Blackboard on the Blackboard login page. However, other issues related to distance education may arise. A student complaint regarding how a class is taught, or directed towards an instructor must follow existing procedures outlined in the Student Rights and Responsibilities Handbook. The Distance Education page now contains a reference to the procedures outlined for a student grievance with a link to the Handbook.

“Cabrillo College extends to all students the right to petition for readdress of grievance. The right to petition may be initiated at any time when the student has a grievance against any college employee, policy or procedure at Cabrillo. The Pre-Grievance Problem Resolution Procedure is outlined in section VI. E. of the Student Rights and Responsibilities Handbook. The primary goal of this procedure is to produce a mutually acceptable solution to the student’s complaint as soon as possible and at the lowest administrative level possible.”

DE Annual Report to the Board
The Distance Education 2011/2012 Annual Report was reviewed by the committee. Because of the timing related to gathering the data, the timeline was such a revision based on committee feedback would probably not be possible. As it turned out, the President’s Office was able to accept a last minute change to correct an error in Figure 2, page 2. The report is organized into 6 sections: program highlights, characteristics of students who choose DE sections, performance of students in DE sections, courses offered, DE topics at the statewide level, and DE topics at Cabrillo.

Francine went on to explain the importance of looking at success and completion data for two reasons: first with an eye for planning DE schedules and faculty assignments, and second, to identify areas for faculty development in distance learning pedagogy. Schedules and assignments are the responsibility of the Divisions. However, the committee discussed the importance of communication between DE and the Divisions, in particular, when DE courses necessary to degree programs are not included in schedules. This has been very difficult in the last three years with campus-wide reduction of sections, and is reflected in the big dip in DE course offerings. On the other hand, there has been a big
increase in hybrid and web-enhanced instruction. DE is a way to grow future FTES with little to no new infrastructure investment, while providing access to a student population who cannot attend traditional on-campus courses for work or family reasons. The DE report also points out that students supplement their on-campus schedules with DE classes as a way of achieving a degree or certificate in a reasonable timeframe.

The degree matrix is reviewed by the DE Committee each spring. Rachel pointed out we should consider keeping the DE language courses in the DE matrix, even if it means offering them once every two years. Currently, only students who completed two years of a language in high school can meet the IGETC transfer requirement. Nancy Stucker and Francine will discuss this further with Rachel. Francine will continue to alert Deans when degree applicable DE courses “fall” off the schedule.

**Discussion**
The committee discussed distance pedagogy and Steve Schessler shared his experience learning to teach online and how to effectively engage students. At a previous college, Steve stated they were moving more courses online because of facilities issues. Barb asked if the TLC noticed a difference in help desk call volume related to Blackboard, and both she and Kyle agreed browser compatibility has improved. There are still small issues with Safari on the Mac. Francine will be offering a workshop next week on designing for mobile delivery using Blackboard’s app.