DISTANCE EDUCATION COMMITTEE MINUTES
Monday, April 16, 2012, 3:30–5pm, Room 1096, TLC

Attendees:
Veronica Lundquist, Francine Van Meter, Kip Nead, Georg Romero, Rachel Mayo, Letitia Scott-Curtis, Nancy Stucker, Susan Nerton

Distance Education Program Plan & Review – Francine Van Meter
The committee approved the Distance Education Program Plan and Review with minor changes. It is linked on the DE Committee website. The plan was written to reflect the structure outlined in the Guide for Evaluating Distance Education and Correspondence Education, ACCJC, June 2011. The 2009 goals were organized into tables which include a description of the goal, a status update, evaluation of goal outcomes, and revised and/or new goals.

Because the Chancellor’s Office is working on a couple of new regulations for DE related to instructional materials, Francine asked permission to take the revised plan to the Board in November when the Annual DE Report is presented. This will also allow us an opportunity to see how pending legislation pans out regarding online textbooks and integrate that information if necessary.

Blackboard Service Pack 8 – Francine Van Meter
Francine gave a presentation on the updates to Blackboard that will be rolled out for summer 2012. Over 600 colleges and universities participated in the new features. Videos available on the TLC site at: http://www.cabrillo.edu/services/tlc/bb/index.html
In addition to the usual bug fixes associated with the release of a service pack, Blackboard has enhanced functionality by adding:

- Automated Regrading (instructors can change a question’s answer and Bb will re-score all test attempts in the gradebook)
- Merge Enrollments
- Course-to-Course Navigation (navigate to the same tool in a different section, i.e. gradebook to gradebook, or discussion board to discussion board)
- More detailed Student Activity Reports including reporting time on task
- Standards, Objectives and Goals Alignment
- And a choice of themes (new color combos)

Additional features will be available in late fall or early spring. They include:

- Easy edit (Edit Word and HTML documents from the Files panel)
- Improved Text Editor (Improved math equation editor, and pasting from Word) Georg would like to see a better way for students to submit MLA citations.
- Preview as a student
- Improved Calendar functionality (late 2012-13)
- Fill in the blank enables expressions
- Course evaluations
- Item Analysis on tests and assignments
- Avatar in discussion forum and course roster (Mouse over a student’s name to see their avatar)
- Presence and Instant messaging
• Social learning spaces and updated student profiles
• Learning Object repository

Sue asked about the Assignment download feature. She would like to be able to download assignments without the original filename being appended with student information. She currently asks students to compress (zip) files so that doesn’t happen.

There are two ways for instructors to get their suggestions to Blackboard directly:
1. Blackboard idea exchange: blackboard.com/bie
2. Enhancement requests: blackboard.com/feedback

In light of our past discussions about Latino students facing an “online penalty” for taking a distance class, Rachel would like to see more focus on student achievement. Francine is integrating lessons on student performance tracking and best practices in the Blackboard training session. More faculty participating in training is needed. Francine also stated our success and retention numbers have been average because we count courses that are coded OL (online) but technically qualify as correspondence education (a different code). She is communicating with Deans about both the training needs and correct identification of distance courses.

The committee agreed to a cancelation of the May meeting. Francine will be out of town on Monday, May 14. Francine promised to communicate through the committee news, recent discussions at the statewide level. This includes proposed Title 5 regulations and legislation related to DE.

AB 2320
This bill would require by January 1, 2016, and every 2 years thereafter, the Trustees of the California State University and the Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges, and request the Regents of the University of California, to report to the Legislature on workload and key performance data on distance learning courses, as defined. This bill would, by February 1, 2014, also require the Legislative Analyst’s Office to convene a task force composed of specified members to identify the steps needed to establish the Western Governors University, California, as a degree-granting institution that is self-supporting and does not receive state funding. The task force would be required to consult with representatives of the University of California, the California State University, and the California Community Colleges. The task force would, by February 1, 2015, be required to report their findings and recommendations to the Legislature.

AB2471
This bill would require the trustees and the governing board of each community college district, and urge the regents and the governing body of each private postsecondary educational institution that offers a baccalaureate degree, to develop and adopt rules, regulations, and procedures that would mandate that an e-textbook, as defined, that is assigned as required or recommended reading in a course offered at the postsecondary educational institution comply with specified requirements. These requirements include: pricing tiers reflecting consumer access rights over periods of time, as specified; cloud storage, as defined; digital rights management information, as specified; a refund policy, as prescribed; and unbundled electronic subscriptions to online services relating to the e-textbook.