MINUTES
Distributed Learning Council (DLC)
Wednesday, November 17, 2010

Members Present: James Bush, Cliff Fedler, Mary Fehr, Sarah Foley, Karissa Greathouse, Melanie Hart, Sherry Herzog, Glenn Hill, James Hoffman, Patrick Hughes, Melinda Mitchell, Michele Moskos, Carla Myers, Jean Scott, Vickie Sutton, and Kimberly Vardeman

Members Excused: Kathy Austin, Matt Baker, Hansel Burley, James Bush, Don Collier, Steven Fraze, Bob Hickerson, John Kobza, Isis Leslie, Julie Martenson, Amy Murphy, Valerie Paton, Vickie West, and Kent Wilkinson

Guests Present: Pat McConnel, Mike Carter, and Benita Charles on behalf of Hansel Burley

The meeting was called to order by Dr. Patrick Hughes at II :40 a.m. Hughes welcomed everyone to the DLC meeting and shared that Dean Matt Baker is attending meetings at the TTU Fredericksburg site today with consultants from Noel-Levitz.

Action Items

I. Approval ofOctober 18. 2010 Minutes-Patrick Hughes (Attachment #1)
   Cliff Fedler moved and Melinda Mitchell seconded to accept the minutes as distributed. Motion passed.

Information and Discussion Items

2. Distributed Learning Program Review Final Report-Patrick Hughes (Attachment #2)
   Hughes reported that Dr. Richard Novak from Rutgers University has provided the final report with regard to the Distributed Learning Program Review. The final report has been submitted to the Office of the Provost and can be found on the DLC BlackBoard site.

3. Distance Education Program Verification-Patrick Hughes
   Hughes informed DLC members that the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board has made a request ofTexas Tech University to complete the "THECB Distance Education Verification Report 2010". The report will be emailed to all DLC members immediately after today's meeting and will require a short turn-a-round response. DLC members were asked to verify the accuracy of their college's distributed education programs and send any additions/deletions/corrections to the attention of Kimberly Wagner by close of business tomorrow, November 18,2010.

4. Online Course Development-Mary Fehr
   Hughes thanked Fehr for her willingness to talk about online course development. Fehr shared that the TLTC offers two great options, 1) Design Assistance (DA), and 2) Course Production (CP). Fehr asked the DLC members to help spread the word that faculty need to allow more than one semester for course development. While the TLTC does offer this service to individual faculty, it is important to encourage participation at the program level in order to help plan a development schedule and to ensure program wide consistency. Fehr reminded DLC members to apply by the appropriate

deadline, i.e. Fall 2011 courses must be submitted by December 1, 2010. For more information regarding online course development, feel free to contact the TLTC at 742-0133, or visit their Instructional Design website at b.!!R://www.tltc.ttu.edu/content/asp/Distance_Learninglindex.asp.

5. SEPC-Distributed Learning Q&A – Mary Fehr (Attachment #3)
   Fehr shared that she is serving on the Strategic Enrollment Planning Council (SEPC). At present, the committee is identifying factors that will help increase and maintain enrollment in both online and blended courses. The DLC was recently sent an email asking three questions:
   - What has been your experience with distance learning?
   - What issues have you encountered in distance learning?
   - What changes could be made in distance learning at TTU to increase and maintain enrollment in distance learning classes?

   In response to the aforementioned questions, emerging themes/categories include:
   - Specialized advising and support
   - Financial aid, scholarships
   - Interaction, building learning communities
   - Instructor feedback
   - Setting realistic expectations for time commitment
   - Technical considerations for IVC/PolyCom
   - Having competitive offerings and good marketing
   - Incentives for faculty /release time, TA help, etc.
   - Support from instructional designers
   - Faculty development on designing/teaching distance courses
   - Administrative support/willingness to start new programs
   - Strategic hiring practices
   - Return revenue to department and faculty for distance courses
   - Consider distance teaching for tenure and promotion
   - Predictable online course rotations
   - Access to the Writing Center (or a similar service) and tutoring

   Hughes noted that the SEPC will generate a strategic plan for distributed education which will include action steps, identifying offices and personnel who will have oversight responsibilities to include identifying costs in order to determine the expected return on investment. Hughes thanked the DLC for their assistance.

   Fehr closed by encouraging DLC members to continue to share their ideas, strategies, and goals.

6. ADA Compliance and Non-BlackBoard Learning Content Management Systems – Mary Fehr
   Fehr shared that the TLTC is doing a LMS Assessment this fall. They are reviewing options for replacement of the present BlackBoard version. Faculty will be asked to participate in the LMS Assessment in February 2011. All DLC members will be invited to participate. Fehr shared their initial findings as follows:
   - Pearson eCollege @
     o Compatible with Jaws and WindowsEyes.
     o Offers accessible solutions that conform to international web content accessibility guidelines from the World Wide Web Consortium.
     o Pearson commented that it is committed to addressing accessibility issues as they are identified.
     o A Technical Help Desk team is trained in the use of popular assistive technologies.
   - Desire2Leam ©

- o Earned National Federation of the Blind Non-visual Accessibility Gold Level Web Certification.
- o Recognized with a national award as equally accessible to blind and sighted users.
- o Tools are standards compliant and easy to navigate and understand using the assistive technologies.
- o Uses Web Accessibility Initiative (WAI) guidelines to ensure designs are consistent with international objectives.
- o Client-led Accessibility Interest Group actively reviews and verifies company standards compliance claims.
- o Has Accessibility Standards Compliance documentation on their website (http://www.desire21earn.com/access/standards/)
- Moodie®
  - o Technically accessible. However, much work remains to prevent Moodie from being a frustrating experience for users.
  - o Complaint: "There's just too much stuff." Screen readers can't filter repeated content, secondary content, and images.
  - o Moodie has a user forum for "discussing all core issues related to accessibility for those with disabilities, and our planned conformance to standards/laws such as the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG), Special Educational Needs and Disability Act (SENDA), and Section 508 (USA).
  - o There are known issues in version 1.8.2
- Sakai®
  - o Sakai 2.6 fulfills five WCAG 1.0 Priority I checkpoints, but it does not fulfill three checkpoints, and regards seven as not applicable.
  - o Sakai 2.6 fulfills four Section 508 standards, but does not fulfill six standards, and regards six as not applicable.
  - o Sakai 2.6 is accessible to individuals using the most adaptive technology. However, it has several issues that we are continuing to address.

Fehr shared that they have sent out invitations to review the aforementioned products to individuals who are known to be regular users of BlackBoard and who have a vested interest in the outcome of the LMS Assessment. Fehr noted that she welcomes everyone's input in this important process.

7. Future Testing Center Demands for Online Students – Pat McConnel
   Hughes welcomed McConnel to the DLC meeting. McConnel introduced Mike Carter who handles the logistics of the testing center. McConnel shared that the growth of enrollment numbers in distributed learning will impact Academic Testing Services (ATS). In the past, correspondence examinations did not have a high demand at any specific time of the year, and ATS annually proctored over 1,000 distance/correspondence examinations. However, due to formula funding, all Texas Tech distance/correspondence students will be taking their final exams within the same five (5) day period as all classroom exams. Obviously, this is a concern, and there have been several discussions across campus in order to determine the best way to handle this situation. A recent report indicates that approximately 3,900 students enrolled in Texas Tech distance learning courses live in the Lubbock area and may want to be proctored at the ATS. At present, courses are designed to be user driven and students pay to have their examinations proctored. ATS also handles testing for local students who may be taking courses from other universities. Until now, ATS has been charging $20.00 for a three (3) hour block of time, as long as the student registers five (5) days in advance of the examination. A $10.00 late fee is charged, if appropriate. However, more advance registration, and other procedures will be necessary if ATS begins to have large numbers of examinations over a five (5) day period. Due to finite seating and staff, the impact would mean that ATS would have to be open until 11:00 p.m. daily, and potentially on Sunday during finals. However, under current conditions, ATS would still be unable to meet a demand that large, even with extended hours. There

is also concern with regard to common practices from a distributed learning perspective. McConnel noted that she has researched practices at other universities and found that they have campus policies that dictate how examinations need to be proctored through an authorized testing site. At present, Texas Tech University does not have any policies that address the proctoring of examinations off site. McConnel shared that the National Collegiate Testing Association (NCTA) has a link to the Consortium of College Test Centers which provides proctors for online courses. However, it is unclear as to whether or not they will have someone in the Lubbock area. McConnel stated that she is simply trying to start to ask questions across campus in order to raise awareness about this issue and its impact.

McConnel opened the floor for any questions or concerns from the DLC. Some discussion followed regarding the number of computers available for testing, pencil and paper exams, the scheduling of classrooms for examinations, and the challenges of the current system. McConnel shared that there are also some bigger infrastructure issues that need to be resolved.

Hughes shared that we have discussed the possibility of having a distributed learning fee and how this fee might be used. However, the proposal for this fee did not include charging Lubbock students. Unfortunately, 90% of the students who would be receiving the benefit of ATS would not be paying the proposed fee. Further, charging a distributed learning fee would not solve the problem of students taking tests at South Plains College, or the Sylvan Learning Center (with fees ranging from $20.00 $75.00), so this is problematic. If a student is taking a class that requires three (3) proctored exams at $20.00 each, we need to address how to handle the fees for that course. There is also the problem of "for profits", since you cannot control their testing or fees.

McConnel shared that ATS is reviewing ways to restructure their present policies and procedures.

Hughes thanked McConnel for sharing this concern with the DLC members and noted that this may be an ongoing "conversation" in order to resolve some of these important issues.

8. Catalog: Correspondence vs. Alternative Language- Patrick Hughes (Attachment #4)
   Hughes shared with the DLC members that 90% of correspondence courses are offered through University College. However, effective September I, 2010, we phased out the non semester based correspondence courses. This was discussed at Academic Council and Sue Jones from Official Publications noted that there are several uses of the word "correspondence" in the catalog that need to be addressed. Therefore, Sue Jones is requesting recommendations for actions regarding the use of the word "correspondence". Jones' expectation is that the language should be replaced by something more appropriate. Hughes noted that colleges need to go back and operationalize what they mean by the term "correspondence" since the delivery method is actually "at a distance" and not correspondence. Jones will be contacting colleges soon.

9. BGS and BUS Degrees-Sarah Foley
   Hughes introduced Foley who is the Lead Advisor for University College and supervises five (5) academic advisors for degree programs administered by the college. Foley shared that one academic advisor is given the sole responsibility for assisting online students that never come to campus.

   Foley shared that effective January 2010, University College attained administrative oversight of the Bachelor of General Studies (BGS) degree and effective November 1, 2010, the Bachelor of Arts/Sciences in University Studies (BUS) degree. The BGS/BUS undergraduate degrees offer a flexible degree program for students in Lubbock at off campus sites or online. Foley shared that the profile of an online BGS/BUS student is a working professional; non traditionaiJ0-55 year old student. Due to an increase in the post 9-11 Gl benefits for military veterans and active duty

personnel, this group is taking advantage of the opportunity to complete their degrees. In addition, these benefits are being passed on to their spouses and children.

Foley noted that with the transition of correspondence courses to online, term-based courses, online BGS/BUS students are enrolling in courses taught in other departments across campus. Online BGS/BUS students currently enroll in courses for their areas of concentrations in English, History, Communication Studies, Exercise Sports Sciences, Human Development Family Studies, Personal Financial Planning, Nutrition, Wind Energy, and Plant and Soil Sciences. Foley shared that we also have several requests from students who are interested in seeking an online undergraduate degree from Texas Tech University in the areas of Business and Education.

With a 186% enrollment growth in less than one year, the two (2) degree programs in University College are faced with the challenge of finding courses for our online students. With the second week of pre-registration completed, and the elimination of correspondence courses in University College, Foley stated that our online students are facing, for the first time, the elimination of "rolling admission" and closed online courses across campus.

Foley stated that if she could make a "sell and/or prediction" to DLC members, it would be the demand for online undergraduate courses and continued growth for online BGS/BUS students in University College.

Foley shared that she works diligently with academic advising units across campus to assist with the transition of correspondence courses to online term based courses. Foley also noted that the last correspondence enrollments took place October I, 2010. With existing policies in correspondence courses, we will be "out of the business" of correspondence courses by October I, 2011.

Foley thanked the DLC members for their time. If you have any questions regarding online courses at the undergraduate level, please feel free to contact Foley at 742-7202 ext 304 or via email at sarah.foley@ttu.edu.

DLC members discussed the following:
- Need to have the "Academic Program Proposal/Routing" sheet available for signature at the DLC meeting when action is taken regarding proposals. This would expedite the approval process from the Dean's Review, to the DLC, to the Graduate Council, and then to Academic Council. See OP 36.04, Attachment A to find this form.
- Request was made to provide more content in the DLC minutes rather than providing information in the attachments in order to make the minutes more meaningful.

There being no further business to come before the DLC the meeting was adjourned at 12:45 p.m.