

Distance Education.

At the beginning of the Fall 2007 semester, we created a joint Academic Senate -- MPCTA committee on Distance Ed.

The following are their recommendations. The membership was: Gail Fail, Stephanie Tetter, Mark Bishop, Susan Steele.

The following are recommendations. Gail doesn't really expect anything to happen until we get the dean on line (so to speak) next academic year.

I suggest we table these recommendations until next academic year when we can consider them and decide what to do next.

Here are their recommendations:

1. Appropriate compensation for designing an on-line class.

Except when a teacher uses a canned class, we recommend a stipend, with 50% paid up front and 50% paid after the class makes. The amount of the stipend would be negotiable, but other colleges do this, in the range of between \$2,500 and \$6,000.

2. Appropriate load factor for an on-line class.

Should be the same as in a face to face class. If we set the limits for student numbers reasonably, it should not be a hugely increased work load.

3. Class size limits.

We feel strongly that large classes (more than 25) are a pedagogical mistake. We recommend setting a limit to class size with the caveat that the size could be increased with instructor approval.

4. Proprietary rights.

There should be language in the contract, giving the faculty member who developed the class ownership of the class for a set period after he/she leaves MPC. Many campuses have a three yr limit. After that, someone else can teach the class exactly as designed by the original faculty member. In addition, our faculty should be able to teach their classes at other schools.

5. Standards of academic rigor and currency of curriculum.

Our inclination is to trust the teachers. We recommend a good training class (or several) for new teachers, where high standards are modeled. The course outline should include info on how the class will be run.

6. Integrity of testing and assessment.

This is a major issue of academic integrity and should be addressed by the campus as a whole. It should be included in the DE manual. We did not come up with a solution to the problem.

7. The effects of distance ed classes in reducing enrollment in on-campus classes.

We recommend that admin ask Rosaleen to do some analyses on this. If records are not available, we should start keeping them as we add on-line sections of our regular classes. We also would like to know whether adding DE classes has increased general enrollment, assuming this can be determined.

8. Addition of more distance ed classes.

We recommend the development of a DE plan and manual, under the leadership of the new dean in charge of that area. We need a market analysis. Currently the college has no real plan for the development of DE education, and no data for making a plan.

9. Evaluation of distance ed instructors:

We have recommended language for evaluation of distance ed classes, and this is being used in a pilot program during Spring of 08.

10. Review and revise as appropriate article 15.12.1-Presence on campus.

We recognize there may come a time when a teacher living out of the area may be given a full load in DE. This is a decision the administration will have to make, but generally we are opposed to such a situation.

For a local teacher doing some part of his/her load in DE and some in face to face classes, he/she has the same responsibilities for office hrs, service on committees, etc. Maybe some language could be added that allows the contract requirement for presence on campus to be modified if done in writing with the signature of a dean.

Additional thoughts:

We recommend the development of a new DE plan. We will also need a regular revision of our current manual, to include such things as best practices, assessment methods, how evaluations are done, and the nuts and bolts stuff a new teacher needs to know. Some of this is already in place in Sharon Colton's manual.

We need effective training, not just an hour or two with Bruce.

Overload limits are already set in the contract, and we cannot see the need for setting different ones for DE classes. We also think that allowing a huge overload in DE classes will prevent the instructor from delivering a quality product.