

**Imperial Valley College
Distance Education Committee Meeting
Unadopted Minutes
September 1, 2011
9:00 a.m. -10:00 a.m.
Building 2700, Arts & Letters Conference Room**

Present: David Zielinski
Andres Martinez
Paige Lovitt
Mary Jo Wainwright

Ralph Marquez
Michael Heumann
Gaylla Finnell

Not Present: Martha Olea
Taylor Ruhl
Allyn Leon
Jeff Cantwell
Omar Ramos
Brian McNeece

Visitors: Deirdre Rowley
Dr. Alfredo Cuellar

Recording Secretary: Toni Gamboa

The Distance Education Committee meeting was called to order at 9:08 a.m. by David Zielinski, DE Coordinator.

- 1) **Welcome and approval of Minutes (Meeting of May 12, 2011)** – M/S/C M.J. Wainwright/A. Martinez to approve the minutes of May 12, 2011 with correction.

- 2) **Orientation Information and WebSTAR** – Andres Martinez stated that this semester he asked his students as to how they knew to show up to his online class orientation. Many returning students stated that they were aware from the past to refer to the DE website. However, the majority of students only knew because of the announcement Andres had sent out. It seems as though students are not going to the DE website. Andres decided to go through the process as a student would in registering for an online course. In the past, students would carry the class schedule which included a blurb about going to the DE website. Now that the class schedule is no longer being printed but is available online, students are not being directed to the DE website since it is not noted in WebSTAR.

Ralph Marquez stated that throughout the registration period starting in July he informed Admissions and Counseling to send him students having issues with online classes. The

majority of students expressed frustration as to how to log on. As Ralph assisted students he asked them if they had checked their email and most had checked their regular email account but not their IVC email account. He then proceeded to show the students where their IVC email account was when the student was there in person or walked them through the process if they were calling.

According to Andres the main problem is that on the website when a student clicks on WebSTAR it directs them to a form that prompts them to what division and courses they can add. There is no information indicating that there is an orientation, what type and when and where it will take place. All that is shown is that it is an online class and TBA as the time. The only resolution to this issue is to get the information up on WebSTAR. David stated that there has been discussion of this issue in various venues on campus. Matthew Thale sent out a lengthy email explaining how they have tried so hard to put this pertinent information in WebSTAR. Apparently, there are even blank lines where you can enter text where this information could be placed readily available to students when they register. The text will just not take for some strange reason.

David and Andres spent a great deal of time late Spring early Summer gathering the orientation data for 66 online classes from the division secretaries. It was a rather cumbersome project. There has to be an easier way to gather this data. Andres then posted the information on the DE web page, but again one reverts to the same point of how students are not checking since they are not looking in their printed schedules. On the hand, information can be sent. David sent out all his PDF comment sheets to his students through the new IVC email but inquired as to how crashers are getting in? David stated that there has to be a centralized way in which to get this information out even to the point of getting an online form where the instructors themselves would put the information.

Michael Heumann informed the members that he and Val Rodgers had met with Todd Finnell and Jeff Enz to discuss this issue. According to Todd, there are blocks in Banner which prevents text to show up in Banner. Matthew Thale will be moving over to IT shortly and is well aware of the issue. In the interim, Todd concurs that emailing the students is one method to get the information out but it still does not address the issue with crashers.

According to Gaylla Finnell, the information is being forwarded from the student's personal email to the new IVC student email. With the sending of mass emails to her students, Gaylla had a really good response from students this semester than she has had in the past. In gathering and reviewing the orientation data, David became aware of how scheduling Friday online orientations in combination with the sending out of information to enrolled students has been quite effective. This enabled students who wanted to crash to send David an email throughout the week. The comments were then attached and the crash issue resolved prior to Friday's orientation.

Mary Jo Wainwright stated that with the launching of the new website students might not have been familiar with where things are located. Although the website is beautiful, there are now even more clicks in order to get to the course information and comments section. With the sending out of information, Mary Jo had one no show.

Ralph suggested placing the online class link prominently on the website with a schedule of online orientations. Students could then click on the link to find out the pertinent information.

Dr. Cuellar informed the members that this issue has been discussed at the Dean's meeting but requires reinforcement from the DE Committee. Gaylla suggests making a recommendation to place a hyperlink about online courses on the online schedule to the Academic Senate.

With new DE instructors almost each semester, Mary Jo recommends that David send out an email to the DE faculty with a template reminder of the logistical details to follow.

Dr. Cuellar stressed the importance of collaboration and team playing particularly this semester in regards to DE. It is important that DE becomes aggressive and focuses on being steps ahead of the game. DE needs to be much more aggressive in working with the Dean's and Department Chairs, and perhaps even at the Vice-President level in order to train DE faculty thoroughly.

- 3) **Instructors with Video Orientations: Comments for Crashers** - Crashers were confused when they wanted to crash certain classes because they had video orientations and students could not see the video. Martha Olea does an excellent job of tracking what kind of calls come in. The calls are categorized and maintained on a PowerPoint presentation. Gaylla inquired if when student concerns are heavy for an instructor is the instructor notified? Andres stated that instructors are notified via email. David will be including this in the email he will be sending the DE instructors.

- 4) **Results of DE Surveys: Success and Retention Rates** – David read from a report produced by Dawn Chun titled: “Imperial Valley College Success Rate and Completion Rate Online Versus Face To Face Classes. The report includes all online courses offered going back to 2007. It compares the face to face class, online class success rate, face to face online retention rate and the differential. The percentage of difference across the board is 15% to 20% differential on average. Sometimes the differential will go up as high as 60% depending. The administration is concerned and has asked DE to analyze the findings of this report to see what can be done to decrease this differential. David asked for volunteers to help analyze the findings and prepare a report to present to the Academic Senate. Gaylla is concerned with comparing online retention and success rates with to face to face classes. If a comparison is to be made, then the online retention success rates should be compared with other online programs and not with face to face classes. If they continue comparing online course retention success rates with face to face, DE is going to appear as though it is not succeeding and that is not true.

- 5) **Plans for the Evaluation of DE Courses** – Dr. Cuellar expressed his appreciation for all the work the DE committee has done. He informed the members that he is fully on board for the evaluation of DE courses. Dr. Cuellar has met with Gaylla to discuss starting the evaluation

process with her online class, either by observing or evaluating whatever model is suggested. Dr. Cuellar also wanted to publicly acknowledge and thank Mary Jo for a very valuable document she provided that will assist in the development of a model to follow. Once the model is developed, Dr. Cuellar will forward it to DE committee for review and approval.

- 6) **Wait List Available in Spring 2012** – Wait lists are on the horizon. How will they work for online courses? The process is still not clear. According to Michael, it is an automatic process before classes start through WebSTAR. When a student drops then the first person on the waiting list receives a message that they can register. Once classes start it is up to the instructor as to how she/he will use the wait list.

- 7) **Substantive Change Report Progress** – David is still working on this report which is due in December.

- 8) **Other** –
 - David expressed the importance of coordinating which departments are going to have new online classes offered. What are the visions for the future? Everyone is doing Program Reviews but are they merely being done to satisfy accreditation. Does each division have a one, three or five year vision for new online classes? If this information was available, DE could coordinate training schedules with a stronger sense of purpose. At the last Etudes 101 training, approximately 30 faculty members were in attendance. After a week, about 8 remained and continued with the training. Only two of the faculty attending the training had been directed by a Dean or Chair to attend, the rest attended on their own. David will be sending out a message to the Deans again since only about half were present at the last meeting.

 - Gaylla recommends that the DE committee continue to work towards the development of a DE master plan as previously discussed in the past. The plan would include DE's vision, how to develop online courses and would promote web enhancement which familiarizes the students with Etudes and online education. It also assists the faculty teaching face to face courses with effective communication. Another issue which has been discussed before and if a DE master plan was developed and working towards specific goals, it could include a possible one unit prerequisite class for first time online students to better enable them to succeed. Perhaps even a test could be given to students to keep them from enrolling in an online class just because it is open.

 - According to Mary Jo, the push for planning has to come from the discipline level as to what classes are needed online. In History, there is no need for more online U.S. History classes. However, there is a need for several online World History classes. Secondly, there is concern with teachers being forced to teach online classes when they do not want to teach online. Discussion followed and it was agreed that even

when teachers are resistant to teaching online courses, the district must continue to persevere because students are going to expect and demand online education.

9) **Adjournment** – The meeting was adjourned at 10:06 a.m.

The next meeting of the DE Committee is tentatively scheduled for **Thursday, October 6, 2011** at 9:00 a.m. in the Arts & Letters Conference Room, Building 2700.