Distance Education Committee Summary

Academic Year 2014-2015

Committee Mission Statement
In responding to the learning needs of its expanding communities, Hartnell College supports innovative applications of technology and methodology to create accessible, inspiring, and measurably effective learning opportunities for an increasingly diverse student population. The mission of the Hartnell College Distance Education Committee is to address the changing educational environment and students’ needs by growing and enhancing the Hartnell College Distance Education Program.

This year the Distance Education Committee has worked on initiatives and polices at the local and statewide level to support the mission statement of the committee. Below are the specific initiatives completed or in process at this point in time.

Completed:

- DE Attendance Policy: A continuing project from last year was the attendance policy for distance education courses. Last year a policy was developed by the DEC and approved by the AS. This year, we saw that policy implemented into an Administrative Policy (AP 4105) the approval of which is still in process.
- Faculty Survey: Earlier in the year, a faculty survey was conducted to assess if faculty was satisfied with the Etudes platform. In general, faculty were satisfied with Etudes (the Discussions features continue to be one of the areas faculty like best), but the biggest complaints were in regards to the Gradebook. The Gradebook is being revised by Etudes this summer (Summer 2015). A minority of faculty were extremely displeased, but this number seemed to be small. This survey will be considered when discussing if faculty would like to move to the Canvas platform through OEI in the future.
- Student Survey: A student survey was also sent out to assess student satisfaction with the Etudes platform. Students were overall satisfied and most student complaints were related to how the instructor managed the course rather than the Etudes platform.
- DEC Webpage: With the help of Alicia Ramirez, we now have a webpage dedicated to the DEC with agendas, meeting minutes and other information relevant to the committee.
- DE Plan: The DE Plan has gone through some minor revisions this year. The goal of the committee is that DE will be a program, not just a set of courses offered in this modality. The plan is now completed and was approved at the 5/12 DE meeting.
- DE Specialist: Based on a request from last year, we now have a DE Specialist in place to support the completion of additional initiatives and projects.

In Process:

- Online Education Initiative (OEI): OEI is a statewide initiative to expand the quality and quantity of online courses. Hartnell is a pilot school and two faculty (Lindsey Bertomen and Tina Esparza-Luna) have courses in the pilot. The course exchange piece of OEI is scheduled to launch in
Spring 2016. Within this, we are also contemplating changing from our current CMS Etudes to the OEI CMS of Canvas. This is a decision that will not be made until the 2015-2016 year. Given the scope of this initiative, it will continue to be in process for the next few years.

- **Regular and Effective Contact Policy:** The committee is currently working to recommend a more formal regular and effective contact policy. The target completion date is Fall 2015.
- **Online Student Resources:** To provide more resources to students online, a tab in the left navigation bar will be added into Etudes with links to online student resources such as online counseling and online tutoring. The target completion date is Fall 2015.
- **DE Best Practices FIG:** In the 2015-2016 year, there will be a FIG focusing on DE Best Practices in conjunction with Gavilan College. The goal is to develop a best practices guide that can be used as a reference for faculty and give faculty more resources to offer the highest quality online courses possible. The target completion date is Spring 2016.
- **Hybrid Policy:** Recently there have been questions about hybrid courses. These questions will be explored by the committee and a policy may be recommended regarding hybrid courses. The target completion date is TBD.