

**Imperial Valley College
Distance Education Committee Meeting
Unadopted Minutes
February 9, 2012
9:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.
Building 2700, Arts & Letters Conference Room**

Present: David Zielinski
Andres Martinez
Mary Jo Wainwright
Martha Olea
Gaylla Finnell
Ralph Marquez
Michael Heumann
Allyn Leon

Not Present: Matthew Thale (Excused)
Page Lovitt
Taylor Ruhl

Visitors: Kathy Berry
Brian McNeece
Deirdre Rowley
Melody Chronister

Recording Secretary: Toni Gamboa

The Distance Education Committee meeting was called to order at 9:04 a.m. by David Zielinski, DE Coordinator.

- 1) **Welcome and Approval of Minutes (meeting of November 10, 2011)** – M/S/C A. Martinez/M. Olea to approve the minutes of November 10, 2011 as presented. Motion carried.

- 2) **Collaborative Effort to Harvest and Promote Orientation Data** – Recently David Zielinski worked with Melody Chronister and Matthew Thale trying to solve one of DE’s consistent problems with scheduling orientations, mid-terms and final exams. Ms. Chronister joins DE today to discuss the issue.

David shared that a discussion took place the other day in which Melody recommended utilizing the Event Scheduler for the scheduling of these events. As the discussion continued, realization set in that the simple solution in order to eliminate scheduling issues is to rescind the existing policy of the three mandatory, semi-mandatory meetings to full online mid-terms and finals.

Mary Jo Wainwright stated that mandatory orientations should not be scheduled for Fridays or Saturdays since in the past this created problems for DE students taking more than one online class. Instructors should consider other options such as utilizing the same classroom utilized for their face-

to-face classes already assigned to them. Instructors have the right to give their tests as they see fit, this is academic freedom. If they do not feel comfortable giving an online test they should be able to give it face-to-face and not be impeded by logistics. David's concern is the notion of a student verification process which is addressed when online students meet for the mandatory meetings. In spite of the concern, David is in favor of rescinding the existing proposal agreement and allowing DE instructors to choose. In the meantime, David will research student verification processes utilized at other institutions.

Michael Heumann stated that he tried testing fully online a few years ago and it has worked out successfully. The only glitch he encountered was with the writing aspect of the exam in that a handful of students failed to submit their work within the allocated two hour timeline. Gaylla Finnell switched to online final exams two years ago and it has and continues to work well.

If student verification is an issue, Ralph Marquez recommends reserving a computer room in Building 2600 and request that staff check student identifications. The instructor could set the exam for a certain week, not necessarily for one day, with only a one try stipulation and a time limit if necessary. Building 2600 could potentially become a variation of a testing center for online exams.

Melody agrees with Mary Jo's suggestion in having online instructors who wish to schedule their mid-terms and finals on campus to wait two weeks after classes begin. This would allow for any additional classes to be added and classrooms would then be easier to book eliminating scheduling problems.

In order to alleviate miscommunication, all divisions will be submitting their mid-term and final information to Melody in order for her to compile a single list for the website to avoid overlaps.

Kathy Berry stated that with the Accreditation site visit scheduled for next year, all processes and information has to be very clean. Students need to be notified upfront.

Gaylla inquired if there is a way of obtaining student information in order to contact those students on her class waitlist. Deirdre Rowley stated that the student contact information is there. Log onto the IVC website, go to teaching schedule and under each class it has the students and their various emails and it includes students on the waitlist. If you send out a bcc through outlook to that class, even the students on the waitlist are notified.

David, Andres and Melody will maintain communication regarding scheduling, the testing center situation and check out other schools regarding student authentication strategies.

- 3) **Etudes 101 Update (Andres Martinez)** – Andres Martinez reported that as he facilitated the training for ATLAS on the Etudes introduction to supplement the face-to-face courses, a number of instructors expressed an interest in taking the course earlier as opposed to later in the semester because of finals. In lieu of this, Etudes 101 has been scheduled for March 2, 2012 and the course will run for 4 weeks. Thus far, there are 18 instructors signed up to take the course. There is still room for anyone interested.

Currently, DE is utilizing the Mediasite system to push out instructor orientation videos, but the yearly contract is expensive and increasing significantly. A more economical option is to look into obtaining an educational channel on YouTube instead. Making this switch will also be beneficial to students since right now only students with PC's can access it unless they install this additional add-on. It would be one less step students would have to go through.

- 4) **Report on ATLAS/Etudes Training from January** – Michael Heumann expressed concern regarding the number of instructors who sign up for Etudes 101 and actually do not finish the class. The retention rate is rather dismal. This is largely due to the class being offered during the semester when instructors are super busy.

Before the start of today's meeting, Michael asked Andres if he felt it was possible to teach the entire Etudes 101 class in a couple of days during the ATLAS training in August. Andres' response was that he felt it was feasible to offer Etudes 101 intensively in two days. This would allow instructors to complete the class before the start of the semester.

David stated that there are a number of reasons why instructors sign up to take the class. Very few of them attend because their department is creating a new online course and are in need of new instructors. There are part-time instructors who just want to be onboard with Etudes. Some instructors attend because they want to obtain a shell but do not teach an online class. Others just show up with no apparent reason. Mary Jo suggests taking a survey as to why instructors quit before completing the class.

According to David, the ATLAS training went well. Allyn Leon did an excellent job presenting the new features of the program. There were also presentations from Deirdre Rowley and David. The meeting was fruitful but diverged somewhat from the three main points. Given the success of the interaction during the course of the meeting, David would like to facilitate more of those kinds of meetings for DE faculty as his schedule permits. In addition, David is looking to profile some of the DE faculty by interviewing and profiling what they are doing in their online classes. He plans to publish the information for the college community. Vikki Carr, Toni Pfister and Daniel Gilson have agreed to be the first DE instructors to be profiled. David will generate some standard questions, on what they do to coordinator best practices, what challenges they face and how they have overcome them. Perhaps even include some screen shots of their classes as well.

- 5) **Evaluation of Student Support after First Three Weeks** – With the transfer of Martha Olea to IT, there was concern as to how things would go regarding DE student support this semester. Andres dealt with a lot of students who came in to the Library. David received a number of calls from both students and faculty and just wanted Martha to communicate to DE as to how she felt the support was handled from her new position.

According to Martha, things went fairly well. Students are getting more familiar with their new email, but there are others who are now just accessing this email. The problem now is that when new online students call her to obtain their password and user id they tend to skip the first step which is

typing in their new email address. With the help desk, Martha is able to obtain the students email address. However, in order for the student to be able to log in they have to use WebSTAR or the student portal “G” number. Sometimes students do not know their “G” number so Martha has to refer them to Admissions & Records since Martha does not have access to that information. These problems do not happen consistently, but they have happened and Martha has assisted the student (s) from start to finish since it is quite frustrating for the students. It is essential that students start utilizing their IVC student email.

- 6) **Substantive Change Proposal** – Kathy Berry reported that in essence, IVC is playing catch up as regards substantive change proposals. IVC in its history has never submitted substantive change proposals to the Commission. During their visit in 2007, they accepted everything that had been accomplished up to that point in time. IVC has since been notified that anything that has happened at the College past 2007 according to the Commission is considered new even if you have been doing it for a few years. The reason why the College has to do substantial changes is because if we do not, and a student is on financial aid and the Federal Department of Education does not see that we have done a substantive change for a new program, then not only is that student’s federal financial aid declined, all financial aid at the institution is declined. These substantial change proposals are huge to the Commission.

Many other institutions are also playing catch up. Southwestern College just submitted 74 program substantive changes. The person receiving these proposals at the Commission has made it quite clear that she will review the draft, make necessary corrections prior to releasing it to the Commission. The rule is that the substantive change proposals must be submitted to the Commission at least six months prior to a visit. IVC’s visit is scheduled for next March 11, 2013. Keep in mind that these are proposals that may be declined. If the substantive changes are declined then they have to be removed from the catalog even if the Chancellor’s Office has approved them. The deadline is to submit the drafts in March so they can be reviewed and returned to be submitted the first week of April to the Commission.

- 7) **Program Review** – David was informed by the Dean of Learning Services to write DE’s program review and that he would review it once completed.
- 8) **Other** –
- Kathy Berry announced that next year Distance Education will no longer be reporting to the Dean of Learning Services, but would be reporting directly to her office.
 - A question was posed to Kathy Berry regarding the possibility of resurrecting Room 2610 (currently the Business Lab) to utilize as a testing center. Unfortunately with the dismantling of the 500 Building by June 2013, space will be limited. There will be no place to move the existing Business Lab to another location.

- 9) **Adjournment** – The meeting was adjourned at 10:02 a.m.