

Academic Technology and Online Education Committee Minutes

April 09, 2013

HUB 123

3:30-5:00

Present: Christian Roberson (Chair), Nancy Betchart, Denise Burchsted, Marylynn Cote, Joann Guilmett, Hridaya Hall, Liesl Lindley, Scott Robison, Meagan Shedd

Unable to attend: Cheryl Baker, Dan Bramer, Zach Dziura, Rich Grossman, Jong-Yoon Kim, Kristine Levan, Mark Turski, Eun-Ho Yeo, David Zehr

Scribe: Christian Roberson

Acceptance of March 2013 minutes

Update: PSU Online Policy

Scott mentioned a prior ATOEC discussion and how the committee pointed out the large, cumbersome nature of PSU's Online Policy document. One of the changes Scott has been working on is a Quick Start Guide in the policy to help faculty navigate the policy. The Quick Start includes a variety of tasks/items faculty or department chairs might be looking for information about and points them to the relevant sections of the policy along with information about first steps to take. Scott has also made a large number of edits to the policy. One concern is that the old policy did not include details related to issues in practice we know about currently. There are also things in the policy that are not currently happening on campus such as informing LTOE about the creation of new online programs. He also has sections proposed for removal that include things like student support, outcomes and assessments, etc. It doesn't make sense to draw attention to these when there should be a seamless support system for all courses and all courses should be assessed the same way. Nancy provided some historical context for the original development process for the document. Hridaya agreed with the suggestion to remove duplication and to emphasize it across all systems. There is another section about LMS usage that could probably be removed and cited in another policy that is campus-wide. Other edits include general updates to items as needed.

Discussion: Observing Online Courses

Scott also presented a peer review guide for online courses which is going into the policy document that can be used to help with review/evaluation of online courses. This was an outcome of an online course offered in Winterim for chairs to better understand how to observe an online course. Nancy wondered how departments currently observe online courses. Scott cited CoBA as an example which uses a f2f rubric and ignored irrelevant sections. Nancy asked Marylynn what she thinks are some characteristics of a good online course. Marylynn presented some of the organization elements of the Moodle site that are helpful and how a course is released over time. She also finds videos or audio helpful for lecture material. Having regular and timely feedback on assessments is very helpful, and having weekly review is also useful. Scott cited responsiveness of instructor as the most common complaint in online courses. Christian shared some of Cheryl's questions submitted via email which included: How do we make a comparable evaluation to the face-to-face courses? I think that we are discriminating heavily with this particular process. Why should on-line faculty be paid the same, but be under more scrutiny than face-to-face faculty? Nancy pointed out that historically the online courses are less scrutinized. Meagan pointed out that without a specific rubric to compare it is difficult to

form an opinion, but she agreed that online courses are typically less observed or scrutinized than f2f courses. Meagan asked if it would be possible to share the document with the committee and Scott said he would send out the draft via email. Hridaya mentioned that this document is an excellent tool to reference in the development of online courses. Scott pointed out that this meshes well with the LTOE rubric used in the training/development process and also mentioned this tool could be used for f2f courses with some minor changes. Nancy asked if the tool looks at how the instructor develops rubrics to help the students with what is expected for assignments. Hridaya sees how this could be a bit overwhelming for a chair to work through. Perhaps a shortened rubric with this longer document as a supplement would be helpful. Scott provided a draft of a shorter version. The committee felt the scale/choices on the short form could be improved, perhaps with a four-choice scale for each item to force a decision on one side or the other. Hridaya asked if the committee could help facilitate gathering of feedback. Scott will send Christian the drafts to distribute to the committee to read and provide feedback. From there we will push this out until such time as it can go to the faculty.

Update: Academic Affairs and Online Education

Christian shared that Academic Affairs requested that he attend their upcoming meeting to discuss issues related to online education. Joann shared this could be something that is stemming from discussions on how to develop processes to handle issues with students who are online. Christian will report back to the committee in May after the meeting.

Discussion: ATOEC Chair Election

Christian asked about the timing of elections. Liesl felt waiting until September would be best. The committee will elect a new chair at the September meeting. Christian will continue to serve as chair until elections.

Next meeting: May 14, 2013, 3:30, HUB 123

Meeting adjourned at 4:45