



Meeting Minutes

Distance Education Committee

A Committee of the Academic Senate at West Los Angeles College

Wednesday – November 18, 2020 | 3:04-4:30 | virtual

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Members Present: Eric Ichon, Ana Figueroa, Linda Alexander, Nancy Brambila, Ryan Edwards, DeAnna Gossett, Sandra Ruiz, Alice Taylor, Jan Vanderpool

Guests: Grace Chee

Approval of Minutes from October 21, 2020 meeting- approved with spelling corrections

Update on Motions to Senate-A. Figueroa reported that the October noticed motion on POCR process passed in November, and the Oct 27 motion to revise Distance Education Committee charge passed. E. Ichon noted that the Senate discussed equal representation from the Senate and AFT and accepted that principle.

Student Grievances with Third-party Grading Systems- West's Ombudsman contacted E. Ichon and A. Figueroa about faculty not addressing technical issues with 3rd party grading used in Accounting and other areas. It is difficult to know what the specific issues are, though they could include how the software was integrated into Canvas. A Figueroa shared her knowledge of working with Vista Higher Learning, where students taking Spanish in Canvas must log on to Vista Higher Learning to do their homework. She contacts Vista Higher Learning's tech support but often the student must call to give her permission to work with Vista Higher Learning on the problem.

The Committee discussed the kinds of information syllabi should give students on how to deal with 3rd party system issues, such as what happens if the system is down; how to deal with a grade discrepancy, etc. Faculty should include tech support contact numbers in their syllabi, but we can't assume that publisher tech support is adequate. Dr. Vanderpool reported his experience using an OER textbook from OpenStax whose question bank was not aligned with the content. OpenStax said they couldn't guarantee the accuracy of the test bank. He only found out after the first quiz, so he gave everyone credit for those questions. For subsequent questions he made up his own questions. Test banks may not even be secure; there are businesses that harvest questions (often by enrolling someone in courses) and sell the answers. R. Edwards noted that OER textbooks are of varying quality. He recommended checking for info on limitations to software or content on publisher's websites; searching FAQs and troubleshooting articles to give to students. It is wise to coordinate deadlines with hours that tech support is available. D. Gossett suggested that in selecting OER, instructors check if they have ways to update, fix errors. Use authentic assessment (give examples). Avoid high-stakes assessments. L. Alexander noted that textbooks test banks are often wrong. A. Figueroa suggested keeping a list of issues, e.g. hours of tech support. G. Chee asked about legal issues with student privacy and 3rd party systems and suggested that instructors should know how to set up test banks so that each student gets a unique quiz. E. Ichon proposed expanding on this list at our next meeting and asked for ideas to be emailed to him and to A. Figueroa.

Program Review: Request West L.A. College Hire an Accessibility Support Specialist- A. Figueroa noted that since we are now mostly online, we need someone to help with accessibility issues. Should this be included in Distance Learning's Program Review? Ichon notes that some things do get funding through Program Review. Faculty are aware of the issue of accessibility. District is getting more serious about ensuring accessibility. There is not a Classified position for accessibility specialist yet; we might have to push for one. A. Taylor suggested making a joint proposal with DSPS. D. Gossett reported that the District has hired an ADA specialist, Nicolás Crisosto. L. Alexander asked if Does Scott Kecken works on accessibility, and. E Ichon noted supports faculty with video captioning requests. ELAC has a Multimedia Specialist, as West does. R. Edwards reported that at UC Channel Islands the web team handled accessibility issues; could our PR team help?

Ongoing Digital Resource Support- E. Ichon reported on news from the state Chancellors' Office sent out word on support. Continuing: NetTutor, but with limited hours. (West ran out in of hours in September but LACCD is covering the shortfall.) Proctorio is funded through December; it has equity and privacy concerns. Funding for Canvas is rock solid. Turnitin is paid for by District. LACCD will likely move to HonorLock (the most equity-minded, as well as cheaper). We've had to switch from Unicheck, but funding for Turnitin is stable. The Chancellor guidelines for use of Zoom include discouraging

requirements to have students on video. DAS is working on a policy. A. Figueroa pointed out that the Chancellor's opinions on real-time captioning as well as video are in the DEC Canvas shell. J. Vanderpool noted that it's hard to build a community if you don't have a face, just a name. He requires student avatars, and that they be a photo of the student. He docks grades if they resist. However, video can reveal differences in students' economic resources, living situations, etc. S. Ruiz recommended thought about mental health issues in connection to this. The fact that computer labs in HLRC are not available makes it harder. A. Figueroa noted that the DEC should include this in our reporting to our Academic Senate. It was noted that a more robust online tutoring system from the college would help with apportionment.

DEC to Curriculum Committee Liaison: E. Ichon reported that we've had to do DE addenda for all our classes. West will be all caught up by January, with 300 updates. To help with this process, the Curriculum Committee wants someone who would be a member of both committees. The Curriculum Committee meets monthly for 2 hours or a bit more; there are materials to review before the meetings. Tech review is done by email. J. Vanderpool volunteered to take on the liaison position. A. Figueroa offered to let the Curriculum Committee Chair, Baraki Woldehaimanot, know. E. Ichon offered to serve as a resource, with other DEC members. L. Alexander, A. Figueroa, D. Gossett have worked on DE addenda. D. Gossett represents Business on the Curriculum Committee. It was noted with regret that B. Woldehaimanot is stepping down as Curriculum Committee chair.

Nomination for Co-Chair of DE Committee -A. Figueroa is stepping down, having exceeded her term limit. R. Edwards was nominated and selected by acclamation. His term will start at our next meeting.

Meeting date for December Wednesday, Dec. 9 at 1. Committee members are requested to email A. Figueroa, R. Edwards, or E. Ichon with any items for the agenda.

VISION: WEST: A gateway to success for every student.

MISSION: West Los Angeles College provides a transformative educational experience. West fosters a diverse learning community dedicated to student success. Through quality instruction and supportive services, the College develops leaders who encourage excellence in others. A West education enriches students with the knowledge and skills needed to earn certificates and undergraduate degrees, to transfer, to build careers, and to pursue life-long learning.

CHAIRS

Eric Ichon,
Administrative
Co-Chair
Ana Figueroa,
Faculty Co-Chair,
Senate Representative

MEMBERS

Linda Alexander,
AFT Representative
Nancy Brambila,
Academic Senate Representative
Ryan Edwards,
Academic Senate Representative
DeAnna Gossett,
Academic Senate Representative
Sandra Ruiz,
AFT Representative
Alice Taylor,
AFT Representative
Jan Vanderpool
AFT Representative

MEETING DATES

9/16/20 from 1:00pm - 2:30pm
10/21/20 from 3:00pm - 4:30pm
11/18/20 from 3:00pm - 4:30pm
12/9/20 from 1:00pm - 2:30pm