

# Distance Learning Committee

Recollections  
September 6, 2019

## I. Opening

### A. Call to Order

B. **Quorum established** – Suzanne Davenport, Cyndie Birdsong, Michelle Boucher, Autumn Cahoon, Anne Diamond, Jeanne Guerin, Jay Kesler, Sonia Klenner, Rob Lapkass, Michelle Macfarlane, Mithia Mukutmoni, Sabrina Pape, Chris Poling, Tina Sixt, Amber Turner, Aimee Colvin

## II. April 2019 recollections approved

III. **Visitor Presentation:** Natalie Sherrell asked the committee about the possibility of creating a button in Canvas, to increase the easy of access to the CARE program. The committee discussed the technical issues that would be involved and the potential for greater integration of the CARE program into Sierra Connect. Natalie and Cyndie will be meeting to explore ways this could be implemented into Canvas.

IV. **Action Items:** None

## V. Discussion Items:

### A. Online Tutoring Update – Jeanne

- Again, the student feedback has been very positive.
- Last July, 232 students used online tutoring. This July, 461 students used that same service.
- On ground tutor center usage was down, but it is unclear whether that is because of increased online usage.
- The Tutor Center will no longer be requiring their student tutors to enroll in the online tutoring training.
- Jeanne is currently being “flooded” with an increase in early alerts, which is often triggered by “unusually long” tutoring sessions. The amount of time that defines what “unusually long” is may be changed.
- Rob asked if there are any patterns regarding time of day and the longer tutor sessions that trigger the alerts.

- Jeanne said she would look into the data to see if there are any obvious patterns that emerge.

#### **B. Online Library Update – Tina**

- Other colleges are being looked at regarding their policies on reformatting media.
- The committee discussed the legality and technical details involved in converting and uploading digital media onto the Office 365 service.
- While there may be some exceptions, for example the converting of media that requires captions/accessibility, the practice of converting videos for instructors will no longer be allowed.
- Sabrina reminded the committee that the library does support the purchasing of media for instructors, with streaming rights, if instructors need them.
- Tina shared that Alma-Primo is now functional, though it has not yet gone live. She will be informing instructors soon about the change.
- Jeanne asked if this would impact the new English 1A hybrid modules.
- Amber said that this will have a huge impact, but that plans are in place to update the module accordingly.

#### **C. Workshops and Instructional Design Update – Autumn**

- It's been a very busy time in the Instructional Design office. There are increased numbers of faculty who are making appointments for help with their online courses.
- The Spring 2020 reviews are now in progress. Autumn has already started the accessibility reviews for those courses.
- Autumn has been updating the current online instructor trainings to give more accurate and up-to-date information. These updated canvas-based trainings will be made available Monday.
- There will be a wide range of new workshops for instructors this semester, including how to make accessible Word documents, how to caption videos, and how to use the graphic website Canva.
- Anne asked how the new online courses, which were created by previously approved instructors, will be handled – as well as the possibility of FERC credit for the online trainings.
- Michelle stated that Sierra's online training was not approved for FERC, but that Suzanne should look into having it approved, since the @One training is it based on does qualify for FERC credit.
- Mithia requested a workshop on conferencing tools.

#### **D. Policy for Reformatting and Storage of Videos**

- This topic was covered by Tina in her library update.

### **E. LTI Policy**

- This topic has been discussed before by DLIT, but has never been resolved.
- There is currently no approval process in place for LTIs and Cyndie does not feel comfortable integrating LTIs that may not meet accessibility standards (for example MyMathLab).
- This issue will be taken to the upcoming Accessibility meeting.
- The group discussed how LTIs are integrated into Canvas and the difficulties that Cyndie faces.
- Suzanne will be gathering information in the coming month on the policies implemented by other colleges regarding LTIs.

### **F. Form D – Curriculum Review**

- There needs to be greater clarity regarding what constitutes a fully online course, a partially online (formerly called hybrid) course, and an asynchronous course with limited synchronous content (for example – Math courses that require students to take exams on campus).
- The group discussed the courses which currently take place in the V-Building on the Rocklin campus, but connect via webcam with the NCC campus. This would qualify them as Distance Learning courses.

### **G. Form to Request to Offer a Course via Distance Learning**

- Sierra College does not currently have a form that instructors need to complete before designing an online course. There is a course coming through the online review process this semester, which has not been approved by the curriculum committee. Requiring instructors to complete a form, which would be approved by their department chair and dean, would help to avoid this problem in the future.
- Anne stated that this along with a list of courses that have been approved by the Curriculum Committee would be helpful.
- Suzanne said that she would contact Tim about gaining access to that list.

### **H. Partially Online English 1A Additional Unit**

- Amber stated that the implementation of the additional unit was going smoothly so far. Of the one hundred and forty-nine sections of English 1A, one hundred and twenty-seven are partial online/hybrid courses. The remaining courses are fully online.
- If the instructor has been through the online approval process, they can alter the content in those new modules. Those not

approved for online went through a brief training so as to be familiarized with teaching in an online environment.

- There will be two big changes made to the new content. The first will be updating the information regarding the library. The second will be to add the Title V requirements of student-to-student interaction.
- Sabrina asked if these new modules will go through the approval process like other hybrid courses.
- Amber said they would not, since the material would not be altered by instructors who have not already been approved for online courses.
- Anne asked how the English department would insure that the instructors would not alter the content.
- Amber stated that only approved instructors would be allowed to alter the content. Any violation of that rule would likely be caught during the routine course evaluation process.

#### **I. Accessibility – Blackboard Ally/Review Process**

- Daniel Avegalio is now the head of the Accessibility Committee.
- Blackboard Ally will be live this semester.
- There will be faculty trainings for Blackboard Ally in place by Mid October.
- The committee discussed how Blackboard Ally works and how it will be used.

#### **J. Accreditation Update**

- The accreditors will have their Canvas accounts the week of September 9<sup>th</sup>. They will have the list of Spring 2019 online courses to choose from, but first time online instructors and hybrid courses will be omitted from that list. The faculty who are chosen will be informed. There will be 15-40 courses looked at during the accreditation process. The presence of the accreditors will not interfere with the operations of the courses.
- While the accreditors will not be looking at the Canvas inboxes, for confidentiality reasons, if there is an issues with a lack of obvious instructor-to-student interaction, they will ask for access to the Canvas inbox.
- Mithia asked about the faculty union and their thoughts about this.
- Suzanne stated that they had been informed and have no objections.
- The committee discussed what constitutes substantive interaction and feedback in a Canvas course.

### **K. Distance Learning Consultant Report**

- The report composed by Pat James, regarding the Sierra College Distance Learning program is now available and has been sent out to the DLIT committee. Suzanne shared the report with Deans' Council the week of August 26<sup>th</sup>. Pat James believes that Sierra College has a robust and unique program.
- The Distance Learning program has, since the creation of the report, moved from being part of Student Services to being a part of Instruction.
- Suzanne shared Pat James' recommendations with the committee.

The committee ran out of time and will discuss the remaining agenda items at the next meeting, in October. The meeting was dismissed at 2:01 PM.