

Online Studies Committee Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, October 6, 2015

2:00 PM – 2:50 PM Jones Room

In Attendance: Sherie Saltveit (OIT), Kim Schwinler (CAS faculty), Jolina Miller (MSU Online), Jacek Mrozik (CoB dean), Andy Bertsch (CoB faculty), Nicole Thom-Arens (CAS faculty), Mark Timbrook (OIT), Kris Warmoth (CEL dean), Lisa Eriksmoen (Director Student Wellness and Development), Janet Gerken (CEHS faculty), Stacey Folstad-Magandy (CEL), Alex Westman (SGA Senator), Marina Carrillo (SGA Senator)

Minutes

- Synopsis of discussion for the following questions:
 - **Should CEL create and distribute to departments the DFW analysis for campus and online courses?**
 - The consensus was that these data should be sent to departments. This could be a trigger that the department used to decide if a deeper look is warranted. The end result is hopefully improved student success in the course and improved retention rates.
 - There was discussion about what should be included on the report:
 - Include a campus and online comparison listing data for every class. For example, the DFW rates for Math 103 online would be listed along with the DFW rates for Math 103 on campus. A course-to-course comparison as opposed to an average.
 - Should “D’s” be included? The group decided that they should be even though they are technically a passing grade.
 - Suggestion was made to separate out D’s, F’s and W’s into separate reports.
 - **If yes, how often should CEL create and distribute to departments the DFW analysis for campus and online courses?**
 - The group decided that sending departments these reports two weeks prior to the April Assessment Day would allow departments to include a discussion of the data in their Assessment Day meetings.
 - **Is a 20% DFW rate an acceptable threshold? Should it be higher? Lower?**
 - The consensus was that 20% as a trigger for department discussion was reasonable.
 - The group felt that departments should be aiming for a 5% to 10% DFW rate in all courses regardless of delivery method.
 - **Who should initiate conversations about the part course design might play in the high DFW rate of an online courses? The CEL dean or departments (with CEL becoming involved by department invitation only.)**
 - There was a discussion, but not a consensus, as to when a look at online course design should be initiated. It was agreed, though, that CEL would become involved only if the department felt that a look at online course design was warranted.
 - **General Discussion:**
 - The point was made that sometimes online courses have a higher DFW rate because the student is not well suited to that delivery method.
 - Advisors should help students decide if online courses are a good option for them. It was mentioned that perhaps advisor training could include information about online courses and the time commitment necessary for success. Once a student has “checked out” it is difficult to get them back.

- Advisors should make students aware of the impact of having a “W” or “F” on their transcripts.
- The group asked if there was information about how other universities are handling DFW’s.

- Discussion Topic for November Meeting:
 - How can “we” (MSU, colleges, Office of Instructional Technology, Center for Extended Learning) help instructors and students to be more successful online?
 - Committee members solicit feedback during October and bring to November meeting

- Topics to discuss this semester:
 - Department Peer Review of online courses (November – December)
 - Uniform online course design (probably moved to Spring discussion)

Remaining Fall Online Studies Meetings:

- November 12th: 2:00 – 2:50, Jones Room
- December 10th: 2:00 – 2:50, Jones Room