

## Online Education Committee

### 2013-2014 Annual Report

#### Membership:

|                             |                           |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------|
| Christina DeWitt, Chair '15 | Food Science & Technology |
| Lynette Black '14           | Wasco Extension Service   |
| Nicole Duplaix '14          | Fisheries and Wildlife    |
| Dianna Fisher '15           | Extended Campus           |
| Sundar Atre '16             | Engineering               |
| Maura Valentino '16         | The Valley Library        |

#### *Ex-Officios:*

Budgets & Fiscal Planning Committee (TBA)

Curriculum Council (TBA)

Graduate Council (TBA)

Library – Stefanie Buck

Extended Campus – Lisa Templeton

#### Student Members:

- TBA (Graduate) – Dan Cutter

- TBA

*Executive Committee Liaison – Mike Bailey*

### Committee Charges for 2013-14

The Online Education Committee (OEC) Chair met with the Faculty Senate President and President Elect in Fall 2013 to discuss the issues the OEC would address this Fall. The tasks assigned to the OEC by the Faculty Senate President:

1. Review Committee Standing Rules.
2. Educate itself on university's efforts regarding MOOCs (Massive Open Online Courses).
3. Determine the impact of the policy change to allow graduate students to count Ecampus courses.
4. Determine next steps for the committee on assessment of parallel online and face-to-face sections of the same course.

### 2013-2014 Activities and Accomplishments

**Review Committee Standing Rules:** The committee evaluated its standing rules and decided not to make any changes in the Standing Rules as written.

**MOOC Education:** The committee discussed MOOCs and the OEC's possible role in the university's evaluation process. One of the *Ex-Officios* for the OEC noted that the university already formed a committee on MOOCs with the same charge. The *Ex-Officio* did not feel that the OEC should spend a lot of time on MOOCs. Based on that recommendation, the committee decided to just appoint the OEC member serving on the MOOC committee as liaison and updates were obtained at committee meetings.

*Two notes: A question was posed by a committee member on whether the university had a policy regarding whether or not a faculty could do a MOOC. The answer received was there was not a policy in place. The graduate student rep also expressed concern that students may perceive the university was giving away what they had to pay for, and suggested the university needs to clearly define and articulate its goals regarding MOOCs to its students.*

### **Impact of the Policy Change to Allow Graduate Students to Count Ecampus**

**Courses:** There were differing opinions on the committee regarding whether this was an issue that the OEC needed to investigate. The OEC graduate student liaison expressed concerns regarding the policy change and the impact it was having on students with regard to tuition costs and interactions with their professors. Some committee members suggested the concerns expressed were due to the graduate students in question not familiarizing themselves with what was clearly stated in the policy manuals and graduate handbook. It was also suggested that the concerns were limited to only a small segment of the graduate population that resided off-campus and not on-campus. The Chair notes that since the appointed graduate student was not a member of the Graduate Council, it was difficult to assess whether the concerns expressed were solely localized. The Chair did discuss this matter with a graduate student council representative that had served the previous school year (2012/2013). The graduate student council representative queried confirmed the concerns stated by the OEC graduate student liaison were a recurring topic in the 2012/2013 graduate student council meetings. However, that was a year removed and the OEC did not have the opportunity this year to verify this concern with a current graduate student council representative. The OEC graduate student liaison was asked to provide concrete (names) examples of students negatively impacted with regard to tuition costs. The OEC graduate student liaison complied with the committee request. After further engagement with the Office of Budgets and Fiscal Planning, it was determined that, although the students in question did see a bill, the bill would eventually be remitted. The Office of Budgets and Fiscal Planning did suggest that remitting of the bill may take a couple of months before it actually happened, and said this had been causing confusion for some graduate students. The Office of Budget and Fiscal Planning indicated the tuition charge would go back to either the researcher or the department. The Chair inquired whether the current rate table posted on the Sponsored Programs page represented 12 credits of tuition or 9 credits of tuition. The Office of Budget and Fiscal Planning indicated that the rate is really only for 9 credits, since anything over 9 credits has been "plateaued". Based on this information, the Chair drafted a recommendation for the Faculty Senate and placed the document on a shared google drive for member comment. The recommendation was discussed at a committee meeting and concerns regarding the language and content were expressed. The Chair offered to re-write the recommendation and submit the re-written recommendation for vote by email. An email vote took place. Three members voted yes, one member indicated they could not support the recommendation, and two members did not vote. As a result, there is no recommendation from the OEC to the Faculty Senate on this matter.

### **Assessment of Parallel Online and Face-to-Face Sections of the Same Course:**

The committee discussed its role in assessment of parallel online and face-to-face sections of the same course. It was suggested that this issue really belonged with the Curriculum Council and not with OEC. There was disagreement amongst the membership whether this was indeed the case. The committee asked the Chair to contact the Assessment Office to determine the answer to the following questions:

1. Are courses being assessed?
2. How often are courses assessed?
3. If courses are assessed, is the assessment process any different from online courses than face-to-face courses?

The Chair reported back to the OEC committee their findings, and a recommendation to the Faculty Senate concerning this matter was drafted and accepted as follows:

**Faculty Senate Recommendation:**

*The Online Education Committee investigated whether there were assessment differences between parallel online and face-to-face sections of the same course. Discussions with the assessment office indicated that all courses were assessed based on outcomes. All courses have outcomes. Not all courses are assessed every year, but all courses are assessed on at least a 5-7 year cycle. All sections of a course must be assessed on the same outcome. The method of assessment, however, may differ between any section of a course. This suggests that parallel face-to-face and parallel online courses can be assessed using different methods and, therefore, method of assessment is not strictly a face-to-face vs online issue. It was ascertained that all new courses being developed have to submit an assessment plan. The possibility does exist that an old course may exist without outcomes being clearly defined. However, the committee felt this is a fairly remote possibility due to the 5-7 year cycle of assessment, and it is likely in the very near future this will be completely remedied. The committee concluded that unless method of assessment for all courses is a priority the Faculty Senate wants to address, no further action on this item by this committee is necessary at this time.*