

Frost School Council Minutes

Feb. 9, 2010

HUB 123

3:30-4:45

Present: Christian Roberson (Chair), Nancy Betchart, John Donovan, Gail Carr, Terri Dautcher, Ellen Murphy, James Whiting, Frances Williams

Unable to attend: Gale Beckwith (student), Trent Boggess, Kylo Hart, Mardie Burckes-Miller, Mary Ann McGarry, Daniel Moore, Mark Okrant, Josh Smith (student), David Zehr.

Scribe: Nancy Betchart

Review of December 10th minutes. There were no corrections or additions to the December minutes.

Bylaws Change: Update: The recommended bylaws change of FSC composition was approved by the Faculty at the February 2010 meeting.

Discussion regarding Policies and Procedures for Distance Education:

Ellen Murphy led a discussion of the document she had drafted regarding online education policies and procedures. Some of the main topics of discussion included the following:

- *Course syllabus reviewed for best practices in online learning and to insure course objectives and assessments can be met in the new format.* Council members agreed that quality assurance and continuous quality improvement of online courses is an important component of online courses and programs. Again, we discussed who should have access to “observe” an online class, e.g., the department chair (or designee), the dean, and/or the provost with notice to the instructor. The council recommends that every faculty member who is teaching online should have at least one online course reviewed each year by both the department chair (or designee) for content and by a staff person from the Office of Online education for best practices in online course pedagogy.

Some of the “red flags” for course quality include high drop-out rate, low completion rate, student evaluations and the pass rate. These could trigger a request to evaluate a course.

- *Online delivery of end-of-course evaluations* was discussed. A request from the student trustee, Annie Gagne, to put all end-of-course evaluations online is being discussed by various groups and will have an effect on the process for students evaluations of online courses as well. Daniel Moore is facilitating this discussion.

There was general discussion about who should get copies of the end-of-course evaluations. It was agreed that the chairs and the deans should review end-of-course evaluations.

The remainder of the discussion was about the processes to follow to have the document reviewed and approved. It was agreed that the following groups should be given an opportunity to review and weigh in on the recommendations in the document:

Faculty Welfare
Assessment Task Force
Council of Chairs
College of Graduate Studies (Faculty Council)

We agreed that Ellen should be available to attend any meetings by these groups in order to share in the discussion and answer any questions. Prior to sharing the draft document with these groups, Nancy agreed to talk with Provost Bernier about any other groups we should share the document with and who should propose its approval to the faculty.

Change in Learning Management Systems Ellen informed the group that the former TAG group has been discussing whether to move to Blackboard 9.0 or to an open-source LMS such as Moodle. Either one will be entirely different than the current version of Blackboard and will require significant course re-development. Francis Williams, who has experience with Moodle, was supportive of that system. The decision regarding which system to adopt will occur in March. Transition to the new system will involve running both Blackboard CE 6 and the new system simultaneously until all courses are converted to the new system.

Discussion: Frost School Priorities Ranking Terri Dautcher distributed a summary of the rankings for priorities for the Frost School and discussion was deferred until the March meeting.

Updates: Nancy shared copies of the new Frost School brochures. Also, of the 96 letters sent to students who had left PSU with over 100 credits, 9 had contacted the Frost School about completing their degrees and 2 were already re-enrolled and scheduled to graduate in June. (Since the meeting 1 more has enrolled and 1 more has contacted us and 15 letters were returned with addressee unknown.)

Next meeting. March 9th, 3:30, HUB 123

Meeting adjourned at 4:35.