eCampus Faculty Senate Advisory Committee Meeting
November 15, 2012

Present: Gloria Vavricka, Thomas Freeman, Kathryn Zuckweiler, Patricia Cruzeiro, Roger Davis. Lisa Kastello, Mary Daake, Steven McGahan, Julie Saalfeld

Absent: Ralph Hanson, Sheryl Heidenreich

Chair Election:
Thomas Freeman was unanimously elected as chairperson for the eCampus Faculty Senate Advisory Committee for 2012-13.

eCampus Updates:
Online Worldwide is in the process of putting together a Distance Education Symposium/Conference on May 10, 2013 at the UNL City Student Union. This will also be the same place/time/day that NU Tech Day is being held. The keynote speaker for the Distance Education Symposium/Conference has not been identified yet, vendors need to be lined up, and track sessions are in the planning stages – so there is quite a bit to do before any announcement is made promoting the conference. The timeframe may be a factor in attendance since it is just after spring commencement and the beginning of the first summer session.

In mid-December, Gloria will be sending out the announcement for Summer 2013 Distance Education Stipend Applications and in mid-February, the Fall 2013 Distance Education Stipend Applications will be announced.

Steve handed out the faculty training schedule for Spring 2013. There is a Collaborate session being held today. Steve estimated that there are approximately 60-70 faculty members who were trained on Collaborate this semester, and there has been good feedback about using Collaborate versus Wimba.

Presentation and discussion by Mary Niemiec, Executive Director of Online Worldwide:
After Mary’s presentation at the eLuncheon on November 1, 2013, Kathy asked if she could share some concerns that she spoke with Mary about.

- There is concern and confusion about the MAE in Spanish and MBA degrees that were not approved to be offered online. According to Mary, the Council of Chief Academic Officers (CAO) plays a role in the approval process. Questions arose over this function as these are academic programs that have been approved by their campuses, and the CAOs of UNL and UNO formally have no role in deciding upon academic programs offered by UNK. There does not appear to be any documentation properly authorizing the CAO group to exercise such veto authority. The policy either needs to be amended
or the process needs to eliminate the CAO’s approval step. Mary did agree with this as she further clarified that Online Worldwide does NOT approve online programs to be offered by a campus. However, if Online Worldwide does not approve the program, then the program cannot be advertised on the Online Worldwide website, and Mary will not recommend to President Milliken that the program charge the distance education tuition rate. This matter is not clear.

Roger recommended that the issue of the existence, role, and authority of the CAO group be brought to the attention of the Faculty Senate Executive Committee so they could agenda the matter when they meet with the administration to get further clarification regarding these concerns, which they could then report back to this committee and the Faculty Senate.

- Kathy also stressed the point from Mary’s presentation that OWW will only market those programs that have been approved.

- OWW has also stressed the fact that there needs to be more collaboration between campuses when submitting a new online program for approval.

Several committee members stated they were frustrated at not having enough time to address their concerns with Mary at the eLuncheon. One of the reasons for having OWW come to UNK and meet with the members of the College of Education, Art, and Music was to see what they could do to help increase enrollment for those departments. They were informed that if OWW is going to do any program marketing, they would need matching funds. Unfortunately, most departments do not have enough funds to contribute.

Roger informed the group that the NEA (National Education Association) has a program that they call their Academy. It was created as a result of the huge demand for online education for teachers. The NEA has set up this screening tool and if you are a teacher you can go to the NEA website and look at this list of courses/programs that have the gold seal of the NEA, which is a reassurance that your money is being well spent and that the courses/programs offered are not from some fly by night outfit. The NEA did approach OWW and ask if they would like to be a part of this, which would give OWW access to a pool of 3.5 million teachers, and OWW declined. Part of the condition of coming on board with NEA was that OWW give NEA members a modest tuition break.

Online Worldwide is pursuing the idea of offering MOOC’s (Massive Open Online Courses) and would like feedback from the campuses. To educate the committee, the following discussion took place:

Typically, MOOC’s are designed for massive audiences, where students do not pay any tuition or admission fees and are not awarded college credit. The following link to The New York Times article on “The Year of the MOOC” was shared with the committee:
http://www.nytimes.com/2012/11/04/education/edlife/massive-open-online-courses-are-multiplying-at-a-rapid-pace.html?pagewanted=all

Steve showed a couple of sites and courses to illustrate MOOCs...the big three companies offering them are: edX (only one of the three listed that is non-profit), Coursera, and Udacity. Most of the courses offered are computer science related. MOOCs are categorized as being similar to correspondence study or telecourses. The structure usually consists of no textbooks, a lot of online readings, lots of video, no assignments are turned in, quizzes and exams are given, no instructor/student interaction, peer grading, and questions are answered by crowd sourcing. There are two types of students who take these courses – actives & lurkers. On Udacity’s website, you can go into the course and see chunks of the course before enrolling. All three systems share the same basic pattern of ...videos, some readings, and take a quiz.

Julie will send out a doodle to determine when our next meeting in January will be. Happy Thanksgiving!!

Respectfully submitted
Julie Saalfeld