

Senate ad hoc Committee on Online Education

Progress Report

Question

- Is quality of education important

and

- How can we ensure high-quality education at Michigan Tech?

Committee Membership

- Brian Barkdoll (Senator from Civil/Environmental Engineering)
- Carlos Amador (Senator from Humanities)
- Glen Archer (Electrical Engineering)
- Chad Arney (CTL)
- Alex Guth (Provost's Office)
- Kedmon Hungwe (Cognitive and Learning Sciences)
- Michelle Jarvie Eggert (Engineering Fundamentals)
- Libby Meyer (Visual and Performing Arts)
- Aurenice Oliviera (Electrical Engineering)
- Radheshyam Tiwari (MEEM)
- Jeff Toorongian (CTL)

Review of Current Senate Policy 12-19

- Rationale is HLC and federal guidelines.
- Be qualified in 12 months of policy; courses reviewed in 18 months.
- All instructors will be qualified to teach online courses (Quality Matters for example).
- Not about content, just course structure and design.
- Emphasizes continuous improvement.

Issues Discussed So Far

- The Higher Learning Commission by which MTU is accredited has criteria regarding online ed that MTU has to comply with.
- MTU would like to move in the direction of expanding our online offerings.
- Many instructors do not have a background in education and may have not had training in pedagogy.
- Some cmte members had experience teaching online with other institutions and training was required there also before teaching online.
- Without training, instructors might teach like they were taught, for better or worse.
- Currently training is being required for an instructor to teach online but it is causing some instructors to complain.

- Training takes more time than is being stated and may not be compensated and supported.
- Any mandatory training is resisted by many people, especially when not compensated.
- There are already so many mandatory trainings that it seems overwhelming to many instructors.
- Making materials accessible, while federal requirement for funding under the American Disabilities Act, takes a lot of time and we are not really trained for it. What's the best way to get all teaching materials accessible?
- Are there ways to improve the training?
- Currently \$500 is given to those who take the ED5101 training.
- Can accessibility be separated out of the training and handled differently?
- Some units compensate their instructors more than others for getting training. Should it be uniform??
- Many universities are ensuring quality of on-line courses.

HLC Guidelines for the Evaluation of Distance Education

1. On-line learning is appropriate to the institution's mission and purposes.
2. The institution's plans for developing, sustaining and, if appropriate, expanding on-line learning offerings are integrated into its regular planning and evaluation processes. (d. Plans for expanding on-line learning demonstrate the institution's capacity to assure an appropriate level of quality.)
3. On-line learning is incorporated into the institution's systems of governance and academic oversight. (b. The institution ensures the rigor of the offerings and the quality of the instruction. d. On-line learning courses and programs are evaluated on a periodic basis. e. Contractual relationships and arrangements with consortial partners, if any, are clear and guarantee that the institution can exercise appropriate responsibility for the academic quality of all on-line learning offerings provided under its name.)

4. Curricula for the institution's on-line learning offerings are coherent, cohesive, and comparable in academic rigor to programs offered in traditional instructional formats.

5. The institution evaluates the effectiveness of its on-line learning offerings, including the extent to which the on-line learning goals are achieved, and uses the results of its evaluations to enhance the attainment of the goals.

6. Faculty responsible for delivering the on-line learning curricula and evaluating the students' success in achieving the on-line learning goals are appropriately qualified and effectively supported. (b. The institution's training program for on-line learning faculty is periodic, incorporates tested good practices in on-line learning pedagogy, and ensures competency with the range of software products used by the institution. f. Students express satisfaction with the quality of the instruction provided by on-line learning faculty members.)

7. The institution provides effective student and academic services to support students enrolled in online learning offerings.

8. The institution provides sufficient resources to support and, if appropriate, expand its on-line learning offerings.

9. The institution assures the integrity of its on-line learning offerings. (The institution has in place effective procedures through which to ensure that the student who registers in a distance education course or program is the same student who participates in and completes the course or program and receives the academic credit. Federal requirement.)

Survey Planned

- Cmte to conduct a survey asking attitudes towards what it would take for you to be willing to teach online.

Any Thoughts??