Summary Notes: Distance Education Program Meeting  
Wednesday, March 9  2:30 – 3:45

Attending:  Eric Paul Shaffer, Stefanie Sasaki, Kara Kam-Kalani, Lianne Nagano, Mike Ferguson, Linda Laine, Rob Edmondson, Cynthia Smith, Gregg Gruwell, David Fink, Ross Egloria, Ralph Kam, Karen Hastings

Updates

Lianne announced that DE schedule for Summer and Fall is done. She will send out to the DE List serve for people to check for accuracy. She also asked that DE instructors check their course information on the UH DL site for accuracy.

Technology Users Advisory Group

Rob Edmondson reported on the TUAG group. Rob is a member of this group and is the only member who is also a DE faculty. This group is intended to review all technology services for all sectors for the society. Ensuring technology support for DE courses is part of this review and attention. He asked for feedback.

Issues:
Laulima seems to change a lot, and in some cases the capabilities of its tools seem to be diminishing.

- An example discussed was greater difficulty in uploading test questions; Laulima does not use standard formats used by publishers so more difficult to use publisher's information. Also, there needs to be clearer communication about what has been changed, what "will" be changed, when and why. These decisions are not sufficiently transparent.
- Numbering system on Laulima for courses is confusing and not intuitive. Also use of lengthy numbers to identify specific courses makes for unwieldy tabs and email addresses.
- It seems to be harder to email entire class – seems to be adding steps to make it more difficult

Rob clarified that the group is just starting to meet and clarify its scope and goals. He will posting a summary of DE concerns for TUAG members to review. TUAG has a Laulima site and Rob will post up on site discussion forums for expressed DE for TUAG members to review. He will let DE folks know when TUAG is addressing a topic that relates to DE.
If the issue of reorganization to ensure sufficient technical support is discussed, should emphasize that there is a need for clearer and explicit organization of technical support for DE purposes.

Another issue that TUAG should address is means to ensure that lecturers have sufficient technological support to offer DE courses (e.g. to supported by up to date software.) Several DE classes are taught by lecturers, should ensure necessary technical support.

Question was raised as to whether there is screening of students to make sure they have requisite technical capabilities. Library is often front line support for these students, some of whom do not have basic capabilities. Was noted that one project being worked on this semester is to create a technical page for students with clearinghouse information about tutorials, to minimize the need for one on one technical help (faculty and Library cannot have primary responsibility for technical tutoring for increasing number of DE students.) Need to make clearer what the minimum requirements are. Current DE site only has minimum indication of technical requirements.

Part of the problem is that every class is different; difficulty to establish consistent, standardized list of technical expectations for all DE students. Use of Laulima tools differs. However, should seek to find those areas that are shared – e.g. use of Laulima, and try to achieve as much uniformity as possible.

Question: is there adequate faculty training for example for Laulima? This is an issue on TUAG agenda.

Question: could there be a created template or best practices model of Laulima course. This is a goal to work on.

Perhaps look more closely at DE courses created by the College of Education. One of the things they stress is standardized models/templates of class design. Leeward also has a basic template which the majority uses, and then some instructors go beyond. HCC has enabled instructor freedom which has led to current conditions of course design diversity. If HCC faculty decided to accept templates, this would enable faster production of courses, and students would have more consistency, but would require instructors give up some choices. One possibility is to have a template of a course design that an instructor *could* use if they wanted, a standardized format which is an option but not required.

Maybe should build on the ‘show and tell’ sharing that took place at the Excellence in Aloha showcase; devise a way to post up examples of what people are doing or a model for people to view. Come up with a way to view what our colleagues are doing.

Eric commended the points Rob sent out prior to the meeting of issues he plans on bringing to the TUAG meeting.
If anyone thinks of an issue for TUAG, email Rob.

It was clarified that Rob is officially a UC rep, not directly serving as the DE liaison. The TUAG has been asked to consider including a DE representative on this group.

**DE Program Survey**

Those present reviewed and revised the existing survey instrument. There were also written comments from one person who could not come. ((Note – resulting draft was sent out to faculty for their comments.))

The group discussed the following changes:

- The goal is to have a survey instrument with questions that provide useful feedback on the *program* rather than instructor-specific information.
- Should eliminate comments about specific instructor. Instructors should be carrying out specific course evaluations to gage their effectiveness in instruction.
- Should run it every two years at least, and work more on evaluating and responding to results.
- Should add questions that give greater insight into program functioning. The questions will be focused on how to evaluate the program as a whole, including technology support and student services.

In discussing how to best find out the information about student enrollment numbers overall, the group discussed having data numbers run for this level of program evaluation (e.g. determining how many students enrolled each semester in DE, number taken over time, trends in enrollments in DE). This factual information can better be determined through IR reports rather than numbers from a survey. So, Ralph will determine what can be gaged from data pulls; if cannot be determined, then will try to find out from survey. The group identified issues we want to know more about: e.g. how many DE classes taken a semester; how many at HCC? At other campuses?

It was noted that response rate is uneven and not adequate. Some instructors ask their students to do the survey; some even build in inducements (e.g. extra credit points). Other instructors have clearly not even asked students to do it since they have consistently 0 responses. We have to work to have better response rates across all DE classes for program review and information. Some folks discussed ways to increase involvement: extra credit points given if students report having taken the survey; having it as *part* of the final exam, giving points to the entire class if a certain percentage of the class participates.