

## **Distance-Learning Subcommittee Report, Spring 2002 Updated** **University Curriculum Committee**

### **Distance-Learning Subcommittee Members (2001-2002)**

Sally Botzler (UCC, convener), Suzanne Burcell, Beth Eschenbach, Nancy Frost (UCC), John Gai, Carl Hansen, Bill Herbrechtsmeier, Mary Kay, Jeremy Ketelsen, Steve Newman, Linda Phillips, Riley Quarles, David Riesenfeld, and Phil Zastrow

### **Schedule of Meetings**

November 2, 9, and 30, 2001; January 18, 2002; March 5 and 29, 2002; April 5 and 30, 2002

### **Purpose of the UCC Subcommittee**

As noted in the UCC Minutes of Meeting #2, September 19, 2000, the UCC Chair established the subcommittee in response to the Academic Senate's resolution addressing the UCC's February 7, 1995, report on Distance Learning. The Senate "resolved that they would maintain the policy making responsibilities but the UCC was charged with oversight and review of educational quality in distance learning programs. The subcommittee was given the responsibility to "explore the responsibilities of the UCC and ways to accomplish these responsibilities."

### **Selected Documents Reviewed**

- Distance Learning Subcommittee's May 2001 report
- List of issues identified by the committee in spring 2001
- The "UCC Report on Distance Learning, February 7, 1995"
- Calstate LA Guidelines on "Technologically Mediated Instruction"
- "Whence and Whither Distance Learning at HSU?" by Bill Herbrechtsmeier
- President McCrone's June 8, 2001, response to the Draft Interregional Documents on Distance Education of the Western Association of Schools & Colleges
- "Best Practices for Electronically Offered Degree and Certificate Programs" initially drafted by the Western Cooperative for Educational Telecommunications
- Forms used at Indiana State University to facilitate course development; ISU adheres to the Regional Accrediting Commission's documents on distance education including the "Best Practices" section online at <http://www.wascweb.org/senior/bestelectronic.pdf>

### **Subcommittee Presentations/Activities**

- Collaborated with Courseware Development Center staff on a technology survey of all HSU instructors that was distributed early in the spring 2002 semester.
- Participated in search for permanent Instructional Media Services Manager; Steve Newman was selected.
- Bill Cannon shared several strategies for providing broader campus support of distance education including four critical areas of concern: 1) focus and market; 2) technologies and delivery mechanisms; 3) incentives (i.e., faculty development); and 4) ongoing support structures.
- Riley Quarles summarized major themes of faculty responses to the technology survey including faculty desire for time to participate in course development activities and their preference for individualized and regular small-group training sessions.
- Steve Newman presented an organizational chart showing all units and committees involved with distance-learning technology on campus.
- Carl Hansen described some of the challenges and opportunities for distance learning offerings through Extended Education.
- Joan Van Duzer provided a case study of ITEPP's online American Indian Education course (AIE 330), which is viewed by the subcommittee as a prototype for developing effective courses and programs. It was suggested that a "lessons learned" section be added.

## **Recommendations**

Given the University Curriculum Committee's charge by the Academic Senate to provide "oversight and review of educational quality in distance learning programs," the UCC's 2001-2002 Distance Learning Subcommittee recommends that, with the support of the Office of Academic Affairs, a UCC instructional technology subcommittee be established for the 2002-2003 academic year with responsibility for collaborating with HSU's Center for Support of Instructional Technology (CSIT), the Director of Extended Education, and the Faculty Development Coordinator to create an instructional technology long-range plan that can be submitted for the approval of the Academic Senate and the Office of Academic Affairs.

The plan needs to take into consideration Humboldt State University's unique contextual characteristics (infrastructure, regional needs, faculty/student interests and concerns, etc.) and to include a system that addresses all five components of the regional accrediting associations' "Best Practices for Electronically Offered Degree and Certificate Programs"--1) Institutional Context and Commitment; 2) Curriculum and Instruction; 3) Faculty Support; 4) Student Support, and 5) Evaluation and Assessment. The plan should address the following concerns.

1. Concerns related directly to faculty and staff, including:
  - a. The means by which faculty and staff are reimbursed for the efforts required to develop technology-mediated instructional modules.
  - b. The means by which the University supports and coordinates efforts of faculty and staff to seek and secure resources aimed at improving practice in distance-learning contexts.
  - c. The means by which the University supports and coordinates efforts of faculty and staff to conduct research on the effects of and/or effectiveness of technologically-mediated instruction.
  - d. The means by which departments earn credit when a course is offered via some distance-learning modality.
  - e. Advocacy and support for faculty and staff engaged in technologically-mediated instructional approaches--including the faculty RTP process.
2. Concerns related to assessment, including:
  - a. The design and implementation of assessment strategies for documenting faculty and student indicators of the overall quality of technologically-mediated instructional approaches.
  - b. The means by which student and faculty indicators from item a) are provided to those engaging in technologically-mediated instructional approaches.
3. Concerns related to special designation of courses, including the possibility of designating courses/sections that conduct at least a portion of the course via some technologically-mediated approach so that they are distinguished in both the catalog and the schedule.
4. Concerns related to coordinating and disseminating information and experience surrounding distance-learning modalities.
  - a. The need for information regarding the frequency and depth with which HSU courses are imbued with technologically-mediated instructional approaches and the degree of success realized by various approaches in disparate contexts (discipline, teaching mode, level of instruction, audience).
  - b. The need for information regarding the delivery of Humboldt courses on other campuses via technologically-mediated means, or alternatively the delivery on the HSU campus of courses originating from the outside.

Subcommittee members are in agreement that an HSU Office for Institutional Research should be funded and staffed to assist with this and other curriculum improvement and program review activities.