



RÍO HONDO COLLEGE

25 Years of Distance Education at RHC

Distance Education Committee (DEC) - Minutes
Regular Meeting: February 12, 2024 – 1:00-2:30 p.m. - Zoom

Members Present:

✓	Caroline Durdella	✓	Carol Sigala		Irene Truong
✓	Airek Mathews	✓	Eugene Blackmun	✓	Melanie Fierro
✓	Zulma Calderon		Jose Millan	✓	Shirley Isaac
✓	Gabriela Olmos	✓	Angela Medina Rhodes	✓	Hank Fung
✓	Ann Tran	✓	Angel Ho	✓	Scott Jaeggi
✓	Sheila Lynch	✓	Lydia Llerena	✓	Kenn PiersonGeiger
✓	Abbie Perry		Bianca Urquidi	✓	Tim Scholefield
	Michelle Pilati	✓	Jennifer Tanaka-Hoshijo		Don Miller (Guest)

<p>I. Approval of Distance Education Committee Special Meeting Minutes – November 27, 2023</p>	<p>Action: Motion made by Scott Jaeggi. Seconded by Dr. Melanie Fierro.</p> <p>Votes: AYE: 14; NAY: 0; ABSTAIN: 1</p> <p>Minutes for Special Meeting of November 27, 2023, were approved without discussion.</p>
<p>II. 1.5-hour trial meeting time</p>	<p>Dr. PiersonGeiger discussed the change in meeting length from 1 hour to 1.5 hours for the spring 2024 semester. This change is only a trial and will be adjusted if necessary.</p>

<p>III. DEC Coordinator Report – Dr. Kenneth PiersonGeiger</p>	<p>In the interest of time, this report’s time was deferred to “Informational Items.”</p> <p>Dr. PiersonGeiger specified that all items listed under “Informational Items” on the agenda would only serve as updates to the committee. Any action that needs to take place will be deferred to the following meeting.</p>
<p>IV. Office of Distance Education Report – Dr. Airek Mathews</p>	<p>In the interest of time, this report’s time was deferred to “Informational Items.”</p>
<p>V. POCR Club Report – Jennifer Tanaka-Hoshijo</p>	<p>Professor Tanaka-Hoshijo had notified the chair that she would be arriving late, so the report was deferred indefinitely.</p>
<p>VI. CVC Exchange</p>	<p>Dr. Mathews provided an update on the California Virtual Campus (CVC) Exchange enrollment count for Rio Hondo College (RHC). He also informed the committee that there is currently an issue with RHC students cross-enrolling. This issue is being investigated and may be addressed by the next DEC meeting.</p>
<p>VII. <i>Canvas Impact</i> Communication tool</p>	<p>Dr. Mathews provided an update on the <i>Canvas Impact</i> tool. According to the <i>Canvas</i> representative that Dr. Mathews met with, this tool will only be available to <i>Canvas</i> administrators and will not be available for use by faculty. The communication tool may be used by administrators to provide help messages to students and faculty who are unfamiliar with <i>Canvas</i>. Experienced users will be able to opt out of receiving these messages.</p> <p>Dr. PiersonGeiger stated that this issue will no longer be deliberated on by the DEC since faculty will not be using it.</p>

<p>VIII. Campus efforts at identifying fraudulent students</p>	<p>Dr. PiersonGeiger provided an update on a request that was made at a previous Academic Senate meeting in connection with addressing the issue of identifying fraudulent students. The Office of Academic Affairs and the Office of Distance Education collaborated to create a document entitled, “Handling Fraudulent Class Enrollments and Suspicious Student Engagement.” This informational document was sent out to faculty at the beginning of the spring 2024 semester.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professor Blackmun provided a comment stating that, while he believes it is important for the DEC to discuss this issue, the real solution will probably have to come from the state level. Any policies recommended by the DEC will not address the root of the issue, which is finding a way to prevent these fraudulent students from enrolling in the first place. • Professor Lynch commented that 50% of one of her face-to-face courses had been made up of fraudulent students. • Professor Llerena requested clarification on an earlier agenda item related to RHC students cross-enrolling in the CVC Exchange. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Dr. Mathews stated that the issue that RHC students are having is due to <i>Instructure’s</i> purchase of <i>Parchment</i>.
<p>IX. Automated test proctoring demonstrations</p>	<p>Dr. PiersonGeiger stated that the Distance Education professional development events are underway, and the first event was held on February 9, 2024. He urged the committee members to review the most recent <i>DE Newsletter</i> and sign up to attend the upcoming test proctoring demonstrations.</p> <p>Dr. Mathews provided more information on the upcoming demonstrations, which will be recorded and shared with faculty who signed up to attend the event. A survey will also be sent out so that faculty members can vote on which product they feel is best to move forward with.</p> <p>Dr. PiersonGeiger also asked that members discuss these tools with their colleagues as this is their chance to come together and decide on which product best serves faculty and student needs.</p>

<p>X. DE-related cybersecurity protocols – Tim Scholefield, Director, ITS</p>	<p>Dr. PiersonGeiger introduced Tim Scholefield, Executive Director, Information Technology Services, and member of the DEC.</p> <p>Mr. Scholefield gave a presentation on the cybersecurity breach that occurred last fall and provided more information on what is being done to combat the influx of fraudulent students. A “Frad Squad” was created during winter to identify patterns of fraudulent student behavior. This data is being provided to the Chancellor’s Office to aid in mitigating fraudulent student enrollment.</p>
<p>XI. Course merging process & “pilot”</p>	<p>Dr. PiersonGeiger provided an update on the course merging process and pilot recommendation that the committee discussed in the fall. A <i>Canvas</i> shell was created to give faculty details about the course merging process and the training requirements to maintain compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act. President Flores requested a pilot of the course merging process occur to monitor its effectiveness.</p> <p>Dr. PiersonGeiger introduced Sheila Lynch as the newest member of the DEC. She will be serving as a substitute for Dr. Cynthia Lewis while Dr. Lewis is teaching abroad this semester. Professor Lynch is also the only participant in the course merging pilot and will be providing feedback on the course merging process.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Rhodes requested a report on the pilot be generated to aid with adjusting and planning for course merging during the summer term.

<p>XII. Pre-term/Post-term student access to <i>Canvas</i></p>	<p>Dr. PiersonGeiger provided a brief update and summary of the “Pre- and Post- Term Student Course Access” document that was drafted last fall. He said the committee must specifically decide how many days students would have access to course materials before and after each term.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. PiersonGeiger opened discussion on “Pre-Term Access.” • Dr. Sigala suggested 3 days for pre-term access. • Dr. Rhodes suggested 5 days for pre-term and 3 days for post-term access. She reminded the committee that there are more faculty members outside of the committee and that they may use <i>Canvas</i> differently. • Professor Lynch requested clarification as she felt the language may be too prescriptive and would place an undue burden on faculty who do not want to publish their course early. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Dr. PiersonGeiger reiterated that this is not a requirement being placed on faculty. • Dr. Fierro requested clarification on whether faculty would be allowed to publish their courses sooner than 5 days before the term's start if the committee votes on 5 days. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Dr. Mathews specified that, regardless of the number of days decided, students will not be able to submit any assignments before the course's official start date. Courses will open on their set date, but faculty can publish their course early to provide read-only access of course materials to students. • Professor Blackmun suggested that faculty follow the published start and stop dates. • Dr. Rhodes reminded the committee that this is not a requirement. This is simply a suggestion to allow faculty to provide early read-only access to students if they choose to. • Professor Tanaka-Hoshijo suggested adding verbiage to the “Pre-Term Access” section specifying that students will have read-only access to course materials. • Dr. Sigala stated she was okay with changing the number of days to 7 based on suggestions from other committee members. • Dr. Rhodes echoed Professor Lynch’s sentiment on the language being too prescriptive.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. PiersonGeiger shared that he was reluctant to change the verbiage in the ways suggested because it contradicts other language in the document that specifically states that these are recommendations. • Professor Lynch brought up that the current language could create a contractual issue as some faculty might interpret it to mean that they are expected to “get to work” before the semester begins. • Professor Jaeggi requested clarification on where this document will be available for viewing and shared Professor Lynch’s concern of the potential contractual conflict. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Dr. Mathews stated the document would be on the RHC website. • Dr. Mathews suggested changing the language to: <p style="margin-left: 40px;"><i>“Faculty have the ability to publish their courses prior to the start of a term to provide students read-only access to the course and to familiarize themselves with course requirements.”</i></p> • Dr. Rhodes expressed confusion as to why the specific number of days was being removed from the pre-term language. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Dr. Mathews shared that the number of days was most important in relation to post-term access to course content. Due to a change in <i>Canvas</i> settings, faculty can publish their courses when they deem it appropriate, and the number of days of pre-term access was there to serve as a suggestion to new faculty who might be looking for guidance. • Dr. PiersonGeiger and Dr. Rhodes both shared that they are not comfortable with removing the specific number of days. Dr. Rhodes suggested keeping language that states the specific number of days. • Professor Lynch suggested adding an extra sentence that recommends a specific number of days. She asked Dr. Mathews for guidance on how many days should be given. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Dr. Mathews shared that, based on his knowledge and experience, 7 days is usually the standard for pre-term access to ensure that students have time to review course materials.
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- In the interest of time, Dr. PiersonGeiger requested a vote be made on the new language:

“Faculty have the ability to publish their courses prior to the start of a term to provide students read-only access to the course and to familiarize themselves with course requirements.” A sentence recommending 7 days of pre-term access will be added to the document.

Action: Motion made by Dr. Carol Sigala to change the “Pre-Term Access” verbiage. Seconded by Dr. Angela Rhodes.

Votes: AYE: 16; NAY: 3; ABSTAIN: 1

Changes to the “Pre-Term Access” language were approved, with a sentence specifying 7 days of early access to be added.

- Dr. PiersonGeiger opened discussion on the number of extra days for “Post-Term Access.”
- Dr. Rhodes suggested 5 days.
- Professor Lynch agreed with the suggestion of 5 days, as the amount of time is limited due to grades being due at some point.
- Dr. Fierro requested clarification on whether language should be added to specify student access as read-only.
- Professor Jaeggi stated that adding specific language that students will have read-only access will not work for post-term access because students will need to be able to submit late assignments.
- Dr. Durdella suggested adding that the extra 5 days may be given at the instructor’s discretion.
- “Post-Term Access” language was changed to:

“At the instructor’s discretion, students may be given an extra 5 days after the end of the term to provide access to the course solely for the purpose of submitting late work. After those 5 days, course access will be limited to read-only.”

Action: Motion made by Dr. Angela Rhodes to change the “Post-Term Access” verbiage. Seconded by Dr. Carol Sigala.

Votes: AYE: 14; NAY: 2; ABSTAIN: 3

	Changes to the “Post-Term Access” language were approved. Final discussion and action regarding the larger “Pre- and Post- Term Student Course Access” document will be added to the next meeting agenda.
XIII. Proposed process regarding LTI (learning tools interoperability)	Due to time constraints, this item was tabled for the following meeting.
XIV.	
XV. Data analysis of “Distance Education Training & Student Success Rate” and “Online Training Requirements & Re-certification Requirements – 2023”	Due to time constraints, this item was tabled for the following meeting.
XVI.	
XVII. Meeting Adjournment	The meeting adjourned at 2:31 PM. The next Regular Meeting is scheduled for March 11, 2024.