LAS POSITAS COLLEGE
DISTANCE EDUCATION COMMITTEE MEETING
FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2012
10:00 AM, ROOM 2410
MINUTES

LPC Members Present:
Scott Vigallon (TLC-Classified; co-chair)
Richard Dry (Arts & Comm.; co-chair)
Frances Hui (Arts & Comm.; Library)
Howard Blumenfeld (MSE&PS)
Vicky Austin (Adjunct Faculty)
Breanna Krumins (ASLPC)
John Ruys (Deans)

LPC Members Absent:
Jane McCoy (BCATSS)
Deanna Horvath (Arts & Comm.)
Janice Cantua (Admissions & Records)

Guests: none

AGENDA:

I. **Call to order:** The meeting was called to order by co-chair Richard Dry at 10:03 a.m.

II. **Approval of minutes from Jan. 27 meeting:** Vicky made a motion to approve the minutes. Howard seconded. Minutes approved.

III. **DE Accreditation guidelines evidence:** The committee brainstormed ways to gather evidence to meet the guidelines. It got through four issues.

IV. **Updates**

i. **Blackboard upgrade in June:** The next Bb upgrade will be scheduled for June 4. Spring grades are due the previous Friday. The LPC-Chabot DE Subgroup decided to upgrade to 9.1 Service Pack 7. We are currently on SP5. The subgroup discussed moving to Bb's latest version, SP8, but because SP8 has a completely new design and because we typically don't move to a version until it is deemed reliable, it felt that SP7 is more appropriate. Moreover, the Snapshot tool that moves data from Banner to Bb is being phased out beginning in SP8, and time would be needed to plan and test a new process. However, the subgroup felt that the committees at both colleges should make the final decision. The LPC DE committee was fine with going to SP7.

The TLC will offer 3 workshops on SP7. Each workshop will be identical and will take place March 1 from 2-3 p.m., April 4 from 1:30-2:30 p.m., and May 2 from 1:30-2:30 p.m. Info and tutorials are also available in the BOLT course, and instructors will have access to the Bb test server to play with the new features and enhancements. Scott will send an email to all Bb faculty later today.

ii. **Academic Honesty Statement and DE:** The committee's recommended additions to the Academic Honesty Statement were approved unanimously by the Academic Senate on Feb. 22. Melissa Korber said she will work on getting the additions into the catalog. Scott updated the statement on the web.

iii. **Online Materials Fees**: The state chancellor's office proposed language went to the Consultation Council last week, then is supposed to go to the Board of Governors for a first reading in March, then to the BOG for a second reading in May. The main revisions were to remove the word "tangible" and to include this section:

"Where instructional materials are available to a student temporarily through a license or access fee, the student shall be provided options at the time of purchase to maintain full access to the instructional materials for varying periods of time ranging from the length of the class up to at least two years. The terms of the license or access fee shall be provided to the student in a clear and understandable manner prior to purchase."

After January's DE meeting, Scott took the advice of the committee and created a link on each online and hybrid information page that brings students to a page that explains more about possible fees. There is also a link from that page to the Math Department's page on course fees.

V. **Online tutoring:** Math and Writing tutoring for Spring 2012 has gotten off to a slow start. Thus far, there has only been 1 session of Math tutoring and 3 sessions of Writing tutoring. On Feb. 6, emails were sent to all Blackboard students reminding them of the tutoring available.

VI. **Online Evaluation Procedures:** Scott tested guest access to see if this would satisfy the parties wanting to change the evaluator time limit and the amount of the course an evaluator can access. He found that on the one hand, instructors are able to control which content areas that evaluators would have access to. On the other hand, guest access is limiting, so evaluators won't have access to tools such as the discussion board, blogs, journals, wikis, and quizzes. Without such access, it's doubtful that evaluators would be able to answer all of the questions on the evaluation form...if they are trying to do so while accessing the courses on their own. Of course, evaluators could access these tools during the tour with the evaluatee. The Blackboard system admin would still have to manually input a guest and manually take out a guest from the course. The admin would also have to create multiple guest accounts and enroll them in separate courses because if just one account was created for all evaluators, all evaluators would have access to all courses to be evaluated...if there is overlap in dates and times.

Observer access won't work because in order to use it, a student in the course would have to be chosen so the observer can "shadow" this student. This feature was set up for parents of students in K-12.

Scott relayed the info above in an email to Jane on Feb. 10. He followed that up with an email Feb. 16 that told her that instructor can block access to courses, effectively ending an evaluator's time in the class. She replied she would pass along this info. Richard said that because of this, adding the evaluator in as a student is the best way to deal with the time issue because the instructor would be able to block the evaluator at the deadline. Evaluators might still be able to access more content than allowed, but they would have to operate under the honor system here and only access what they should access.

The DE Subgroup would like both colleges' committees to develop a joint statement on how much time evaluators should have while inside of a course and how much of the course they should have access to. At our January DE Committee meeting, we decided that evaluators should have access for no more than 24 hours, and while they are in a course, they should have access to 1 week's worth of work or 1 module. This is an attempt to simulate the face-to-face evaluations as much as possible. Chabot's committee wrote up more extensive guidelines, which were shared with our committee. Our committee decided to survey the LPC DE instructors to get their feedback on this issue. Scott will develop a short survey, send to the committee for review, then send to the DE instructors. Ultimately, a statement will be sent to Chabot, and hopefully, we can agree to something.

VII. **Microsoft Office problem fix in Bb:** Since the Bb system was upgraded in January, there has been a problem with users opening MS Office files in Internet Explorer. The user gets confronted with a login screen. According to Bb, this is an IE browser issue, not a Bb issue. But to solve the

problem, the fix is to turn on persistent cookies to the system. This gets rid of that login screen, but the drawback is that if a user exits out of a browser running Bb instead of clicking Logout, the next person using that same computer can launch a browser, access Bb, then use the previous users' login. This can be problematic in instances where students and/or instructors share computers. Upon recommendation by the DE Subgroup, persistent cookies is currently disabled in Bb, but the subgroup wanted the college committees to discuss the issue. LPC's committee was satisfied with the solution.

Scott sent an email to all LPC Bb users Feb. 16, explaining the issue and offering workarounds.

VIII. **Last day of attendance for DE classes:** At our January meeting, we considered adding to our DE drop policy the inclusion of language similar to the instructor's withdrawal option in face-to-face classes that says "…an instructor may initiate a drop if the student is absent for a total of four (4) consecutive or six (6) cumulative instructional hours and/or two (2) consecutive weeks of instruction." One option we came up with would be to say that DE instructors may drop students if they have not logged in for two weeks. A second option would say that DE instructors may drop students if they have not participated in the class for two weeks.

One of LPC's DE instructors offered a solution: "DE instructors may drop students if they have not submitted work and/or accessed the class for two cumulative or consecutive weeks." She explained that an and/or approach would cover classes that do not have assignments due for 2 weeks. The committee liked this solution, and after some discussion, decided to delete the words "cumulative or" and just go with two consecutive weeks.

The solution will be sent to Chabot. If agreement can't be reached, we'll probably go at this alone.

In December, we discussed the fact that the Feds said that the new methods of meeting the requirement include evidence of discussion board posts, completed assignments or emails between student and instructor. LPC can restore any work submitted through Blackboard, but emails will be more problematic. Should we inform faculty about archiving email even though it is just one of the ways to include evidence? The committee decided that Scott should do so and also give instructions for how to archive email in GroupWise and to tell DE instructors to investigate archiving if they don't use GroupWise for their classes.

IX. **Waitlist and DE classes:** The committee would like to propose increasing the number of students on the waitlist for DE classes to 40. Two reasons: 1) Students can conceivably add every DE class on the schedule to their waitlists because there are no class time conflicts like there are in face-to-face classes; and 2) Students who really want a f2f section of a class will go the DE section's waitlist for that course, and when they get in the f2f class, they remove themselves from the DE waitlist. The committee asked Scott to send this request to VP Janice Noble and also to District CTO Jeannine Methe.

Richard brought up the issue of DE instructors emailing students on the waitlist who then have 48 hours to decide, and other students now seeing those open slots and wanting in the course. Scott said this was discussed at a Technology Committee meeting and will seek an update.

X. **Other issues:** None broached.

XI. **Next meeting:** March 23, 10-12 in Room 2410

XII. **Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 11:38 a.m.