# Distance Education Committee Minutes from Jan. 30, 2019

Present: Karen Bishop, Sherie Burgess, Sarah Phinney, Elisa Queenan, Sam Aunai

1. Sam shared the ACCJC letter dated January 25, 2019, that outlined the colleges reaffirmation of accreditation for only 18 months, and the compliance issue regarding regular and substantive interaction (RSI) in distance education (DE) courses.
2. The committee discussed their strong belief that RSI is occurring in our DE courses, however there was concern as to how to demonstrate this to the satisfaction of a visiting team. This is especially difficult when the RSI happens outside of Canvas or even through Canvas tools that are only visible to the instructor and student-recipient(s), as is the case with the Canvas InBox and messaging students through the gradebook.

The committee decided that the best option, to alleviate any confusion, would be to modify our existing Regular and Effective Contact Policy, and include a stipulation that at a minimum instructors must do either of the following:

* 1. Send an announcement using the Announcement tool in their Canvas course twice a week to the class.
  2. Communicate to the class twice a week using another tool of their choosing. This must be followed up by either sending at least two class Announcements through Canvas, or by taking a screenshot of the two outside communications that clearly shows the date and contents of the communications. Then, saving the screenshot to a special folder in the Files area of their course.

1. Karen will see if Academic Senate can vote on approval of the REC changes at their next meeting. In the meantime, the DE Committee will work on finalizing the language.
2. Sam shared that he had a discussion with the Academic Senate President, and President-Elect regarding this issue. They discussed some ideas for how we might want to ensure that our DE courses include regular and effective contact, aside from the procedures already in place. They will discuss the issue with the full Senate at their next meeting.
3. The committee discussed both short-term and long-term, ongoing training for DE faculty. It was agreed that in the short-term, the DE Committee will coordinate a meeting with each division separately, and record the meeting so those who could not attend could review the meeting later. During this meeting, the DE Committee will remind the division of existing RSI policies, give a demo of Canvas tools that can assist with ensuring RSI gets documented, and field any questions.  
     
   In terms of ongoing training, the committee agreed that it would be great to have a session during flex days that is dedicated to DE issues, and require all DE faculty to attend. This session would be recorded so that faculty who are unable to attend (part-time faculty are not required to attend flex days), will be able to watch it at a later time.
4. The committee also recommended sending out an email immediately, to all DE faculty, to remind them of the college’s policy on RSI and the KCCD policy.
5. The committee discussed the revisions that it crafted a couple of years ago to the district-wide course evaluation form for online courses. After reviewing these earlier suggestions, it was agreed that they would be very helpful, and although it may be difficult to get this form changed since it is used district-wide and would also involve negotiations with the faculty union, that it is important enough that the committee will begin to pursue these changes. Sherie will start the union dialog.
6. The committee also discussed the possibility of ensuring that RSI is outlined in all CORs for DE courses.
7. Next meeting, Feb. 13, 2019 (2:30 PM) in L-405