Distance Education Committee
Year-End Report 2020/21

A. Context and Overview

The Committee met by Zoom, as remote learning and working continued due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Continued "emergency" remote learning and consideration of the eventual return to campus influenced the focus of the DE Committee's time and energy. Laura Manson acted as Chair of the Committee in Fall 2020; while Joelle Adams acted as Chair for Spring 2021. Also in Spring, before Spring Break Maral Hyeler acted as Interim Vice Chair while permanent Vice Chair Tammara Whitaker was on leave.

The Committee aimed to support the SMC community through the unprecedented situation created by emergency remote learning and to also engage in creative, innovative planning for the post-pandemic landscape at SMC; however, a great deal of the Chairs' and Committee's time was diverted to conversations about the use of Proctorio at SMC.

B. Principles and Values

The Committee agreed that their work would be guided by the following:

- evidence-based pedagogy
- equity – students and faculty
- academic freedom
- strategic alignment with SMC and Senate goals
- DE Committee scope and functions
- shared governance processes and transparency
- [appreciative enquiry](#) - focus on opportunities rather than "problems"

C. Goals and Progress

1. **Review and revise scope and functions for Distance Education Committee.**

   The Committee reviewed the existing scope and functions and made changes to reflect a more proactive role and more focus on evidence-based practices and accessibility. The changes were accepted by the Senate.

2. **Create and disseminate a resolution about good practice for camera use in synchronous online learning environments.**
   This goal was completed in Fall 2021. The Chair and members of the Committee hosted a workshop to explain the resolution during SMC's Spring Flex Day, with 97 participants.

3. **Create and disseminate suggestions for good teaching practice in synchronous online learning environments.** In progress, with several Committee members attending relevant training in Summer 2021.

4. **Advocate for a broader range of distance education modalities at SMC.** Resolution passed through Senate and Senate Exec. Working with Curriculum Committee to address any ARs and curriculum processes (see goal 3).

5. **Advocate for expanded student WiFi access during remote learning.** In progress. Will consider context and developments in Fall 2021.

6. **Consider offering suggestions on effective, equitable assessment in online learning environments (Goal for Fall 2021)**

7. **Recognizing excellence in Distance Education** First annual award presented to Laura Manson on June 8, 2021.

D. What We Are Proud Of
- supporting the community with guidance on equitable camera use
- helping with challenges related to online assessment
- a smooth transition of leadership in the middle of the academic year
- creating the Distance Education Excellence Award, with Laura Manson as the inaugural recipient

E. Challenges
- lack of alternative proctoring options for distance education students in Santa Monica and at remote sites
- leadership transition in middle of academic year

F. What We Are Looking Forward To: Goals for 2021/22

Objective	Tasks	Timeline	Notes
leading and supporting the community through a paradigm shift in distance education to a broader scope of delivery modalities	• defining "synchronous" online teaching • sharing principles and practices for effective and equitable fully online synchronous teaching • recommending use of Canvas for all DE courses • advocating for resources and professional development	Fall 2021 Ongoing	in progress
advocating for improved access to hardware, software, and connectivity to create more equitable learning environments	• invite relevant SMC personnel to help us understand current processes and access • consider a resolution	Fall 2021	
advocating for instructional design support	• investigate practice at comparable colleges • consider a resolution	Spring 2021	
advocating for meaningful pedagogical professional development	• investigate practice at comparable colleges • consider a resolution	Spring 2021	

developing the Distance Education Excellence Award into an annual recognition event	• create criteria • create nomination process • advertise nominations • arrange reward • arrange recognition event	by June 2021	
helping students and faculty find solutions to challenges with remote proctoring	• evaluate potential proctoring solutions for distance education classes • support community with best practices for assessment	by June 2021	
becoming a local POCR site			not core DE Committee work, but related