

District Chair Meeting Minutes

Feb. 11, 2016

2:30-4:30pm FFA 215

Members present: Kim Linduska, Jim Stick, M.D. Isley, Chris Moon, Beth Baker-Broderson, Andrew Neuendorf, Buzz Hoffman, Randy Smith, Rich Roberts, Joe Danielson, Will Bond, Katherine Dowdell, Ilima Young-Dunn and Delora Hade

Guests: Joe DeHart, Carolyn Farrow, Mark Steffen

1. Strategic Priorities: Joe DeHart & Carolyn Farlow: A handout was distributed (see attachment) for discussion of proposed 'strategic priorities' for the college. Joe & Carolyn reviewed the history of strategic planning at DMACC and emphasized that these are discussion points only at this time. They want feedback from faculty, staff & administration before moving forward with plans. Rob & Kim will be discussing these at their planned campus forum meetings in the next few months. The main strategies areas are: Going to College, Finishing What You Start, Advancing Your Career and Improving What We Do. Each area has measurable metrics to allow us to track progress on each strategic priority. Discussion ensued regarding various metrics, how some would be measured, timeline for implementation and possible ideas for additional metrics.
2. Update on Summer Contracts: Deans and Provosts received the list of approved faculty and ECHs for summer contracts this week. The numbers look very similar to what was offered to faculty last summer, with cost savings were primarily through retirements. Some faculty will not be offered a summer contract; those faculty will be contacted before the deans & provosts share the list with district chairs and group leaders. Staffing should be within the limits of the total number of ECHs approved for summer in order to meet budget projections. Faculty with full summer contracts are allowed to teach overloads, if desired. When selecting classes to teach, faculty should choose those with the highest likelihood of making enrollment in order to avoid last minute surprises/changes.
3. Update on Distance Learning/On Demand Courses: Mark Steffen described an initiative to offer online courses of varying lengths, with start dates staggered each month throughout the typical 15 week semester. Many late start course are already offered through departmental regular scheduling, but these courses are being marketed differently. Only 6 on demand courses were offered in the fall, so there is insufficient data at this time to make decisions or conclusions at this time. It was noted that the late start PSY and SOC classes had atypically high attrition rates for fall term. Mark Steffen will be collecting data on the success of the courses as the program continues.
4. Web-blended course requirements: Additional conversation with Mark Steffen centered on concerns regarding web-blended classes. Distance Learning has little to do with overseeing these courses, viewing them as campus-based classes under the direction of the dean or provost. A problem was identified with this approach, as district chairs are not included in the process of courses being designated as web-blended and may not even be aware that a course in their area is partially online. Mark agreed that it would be good to alter the approval process for web blending to include the district chair in the notification procedure. It also appears that the requirements to web blend a course are not well known or standardized. Mark Steffen told the group that the basic requirements are for a 50/50 split between f2f and online components.

This is a change from some years ago, when 2/3 f2f and 1/3 online was the norm. Some campuses may still have that requirement. It was suggested that we have additional conversations about what web-blending should look like; this may best be accomplished in discipline-specific meetings.

5. Accreditation: An accreditation visit for DMACC will occur in the next year. This is not a comprehensive visit, as we have been sending information regularly for 7 years and this is more like a check-up. A faculty volunteer was requested to be on the accreditation team for a visit to NIACC in April; Katherine Dowdell offered to fill that position.
6. Essential Learning Outcomes: Many of the district chairs were involved in drafting new general education competencies for DMACC last summer. These learning outcomes have been reviewed and approved by the deans and provosts. Next steps include decisions about establishing benchmarks and mapping these outcomes to discipline course competencies. This will be further discussed at the next district chair meeting scheduled for March 10, 2016.

Submitted by Katherine Dowdell