ANTELOPE VALLEY COLLEGE
DISTANCE EDUCATION AND TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE
AGENDA
May 14, 2013
3:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.
L 201

To conform to the open meeting act, the public may attend open sessions

1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL
   The Distance Education and Technology Committee (DETC) meeting of May 14, 2013 was called to order   at 3:34 p.m. by Dr. Nancy Bednar and Dr. Charlotte Forte-Parnell, Co-Chairs.

2. OPENING COMMENTS FROM THE CO-CHAIRS
   Dr. Charlotte Forte-Parnell stated she had not received the survey results from the state, but will make them an agenda item for the first meeting for Fall 2013.

   Dr. Nancy Bednar expressed her appreciation of the work the Distance Education and Technology Committee had conducted during the 2012-2013 academic year, including hotlinks on Blackboard to download Google Chrome, Mozilla Firefox and Safari browsers. She reported the production site is up and running for the username and password page, helping students navigate online through summer and into fall.

   Dr. Bednar reported Blackboard is purchasing a significant number of textbook companies that will impact McGraw-Hill and Pearson online textbooks. She explained students will be provided a code to use upon registering. Dr. Bednar reported that textbook companies are aligning themselves with learning management systems.

   Dr. Bednar announced there will not be a DETC meeting on Tuesday, May 28, 2013. She stated she will distribute an email the 2nding week of the fall semester announcing the August 27, 2013 first DETC meeting for the 2013-2014 academic year. Dr. Bednar stated she will submit the annual DETC report to the Academic Senate.

3. OPEN COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC
   None.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES
   a. April 23, 2013 Minutes (to be provided) *A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes of the April 23, 2013 Distance Education and Technology Committee meeting. Motion carried.*

5. ACTION ITEMS
   None.

6. DISCUSSION ITEMS
   a. Flex Credit for Turnitin Webinars and Training in Blackboard
      Diane Flores-Kagan reported a request from faculty for Faculty Professional Development (FPD) credit for Turnitin – plagiarism check technology for teachers and students. Ms. Kagan explained the training as a good incentive for Standard 1 FPD credit. Nancy Masters, Senate coordinator explained the 2013-2014 FPD program was already established and to keep the idea in mind for a proposal for the 2014-2015 FPD program. Ms. Masters suggested

Approved: August 27, 2013 Distance Education and Technology Committee Meeting

Ms. Kagan contact Kathryn Mitchell, FPD Co-chair to see if the program could be umbrellaed under an approved category for the upcoming year.

7. SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

Dr. Bednar suggested reestablishing DETC subcommittees at the beginning of the 2013-2014 academic year.

    a. BE Workstation Guide

       Dr. Bednar reported the BE Workstation Guide is in currently being developed.

    b. Faculty Issues – Mentorship, Guidelines for Course Development; Rubric for Course Evaluation

       Dr. Bednar reported she and Dr. Parnell will participate in an online conference in June 2013. She stated that Walter Briggs has done great research with colleges that provide an introduction to online courses. She explained that if AVC would develop an online course introduction program for approval through AP&P, online faculty could provide it to their 2014-2015 students. Dr. Bednar reported a 50% reduction in online courses due to lack of retention.

       Diane Flores-Kagan reported very few faculty members on the Student Success Task Force. Dr. Parnell stated Magdelena Caproiu as the only faculty member on the committee. She suggested more faculty are needed if online classes are a focus. Dr. Bednar suggested approaching the Senate to change the committee structure to include more faculty.

       Dr. Bednar explained that Ms. Maria Clinton, Senate President will seek approval from the CCC to secure the position of DETC Faculty Co-Chair as a permanent member on the IT Steering Committee.

       Dr. Bednar explained that as an accreditation committee, DETC is waiting for a report from the consultant. She expressed appreciation for the Board of Trustees selection of Ms. Patricia Marquez as interim President/Superintendent, that authored the 2010 self-study and understands how to get things passed with the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges.

       Dr. Parnell discussed the State Authorization Act to be included in the DETC annual report. She explained the reciprocal relationship necessary with any state, where a student takes an online course and lives in another state. Dr. Parnell addressed the necessity to communicate at state level how to address the authorization requirement.

       Dr. Bednar discussed a mobile application for Blackboard, and explained the change and the college is required to pay extra for it. Diane Flores-Kagan stated groups are an integral part of the grade for one of her classes and recommended groups in Blackboard. Dr. Bednar recommended discussing the idea with Mr. Rick Shaw, who would likely suggest groups via Google.

       Dr. Bednar commended the DETC for the success of Goal #5 – to clean up the website.

       Dr. Bednar discussed face-to-face orientation for online courses, and the issue of inactive codes until Friday of the first week of school – a problem that addresses Goal #7 – better retention. A suggestion was made to have Mr. Greg Krynen, Technical Training Technician, create something for students to watch.

       Dr. Bednar reported that Greg Krynen is continuing to monitor the Course Management Systems, and is doing a good job on technology issues in the classroom. She is no longer receiving complaints regarding computer software systems.

    c. Accreditation and Other Legal Issues
    d. Website avconline.avc.edu and Data Collection – leave this alone. Clean up group page and use appropriately.

8. ADJOURNMENT
A motion was made and seconded to adjourn the May 14, 2013 Distance Education and Technology Committee meeting at 4:29 p.m. Motion carried.

MEMBERS PRESENT		
Dr. Nancy Bednar	Priscilla Jenison	Ron Mummaw
Dr. Charlotte Forte Parnell	Diane Flores-Kagan	Ken Sawicki
Walter Briggs	Dr. Scott Lee	John Toth
MEMBERS ABSENT		
Charles Hood	Dan Scott	Joseph West
Greg Krynen	Rick Shaw	Mike Wilmes
Dr. Tom O'Neil	Scott Tuss	Brandon Zavala

Approved: August 27, 2013 Distance Education and Technology Committee Meeting

ANTELOPE VALLEY COLLEGE
DISTANCE EDUCATION AND TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE
AGENDA
August 27, 2013
3:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.
L 201

To conform to the open meeting act, the public may attend open sessions

1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

2. OPEN COMMENTS FROM THE CO-CHAIRS

3. OPEN COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES
    a. May 14, 2013 Minutes (to be provided)

5. ACTION ITEMS

6. DISCUSSION ITEMS
    a. Consensus Workshop – Dr. Nancy Bednar (attachment)
    b. Mission and Goals – Dr. Nancy Bednar
    c. Practical Strategies for Motivating and Retaining E-Learners – Dr. Charlotte Forte-Parnell (to be provided)

7. ADJOURNMENT

Committee Decision Models

Notes

Community college committees use various decision models, three of which are described below. There are advantages and disadvantages to each model. Many collegewide shared- or participatory-governance committees operate by consensus, which is good practice in part because it tends to facilitate a feeling of fairness in the process and to produce results with the widest buy-in across constituency groups, but developing consensus sometimes takes considerable time. Majority vote yields a clear-cut decision relatively quickly, but may obscure the opinions and viewpoints of dissenting members. A mixed model allows committees to adopt majority rule for some decisions and consensus for others, but the situations to which each model applies must be carefully defined and the rules must be applied consistently.

Consensus

Consensus is a way to arrive at a shared understanding and a mutually agreeable path of action for the greater good. A formal process of achieving consensus ideally requires serious consideration of the positions of all members. Attention should be given to dissenting opinions, so that issues can be fully examined. However, consensus does not mean unanimity: Dissent on minor points, or even mild dissent on a major point, is to be expected. As long as all representatives have had a chance to speak their minds, a few dissenting opinions should not keep the group from finding a solution acceptable enough for the committee to move forward.

Majority Vote

Majority vote is a decision rule that selects the alternative that has the support of a more than half the votes. If there are more than two choices on which to vote, a committee can elect instead to use plurality, a decision rule that selects the option with the most votes.

Mixed Model

Some committees find that a mixed model for decision-making, in which consensus applies in certain prescribed situations and majority rule applies in others, works best for them. It is important that committees reach a careful, proactive conclusion on which decision model is to be used for which situations, that those situations are mutually exclusive, and that the rule is thereafter applied

consistently. For instance, a committee may use consensus for most decisions, but reserve majority vote for one or two specific types of decisions.

Note that using majority vote as a fallback method to resolve a lack of consensus is not an appropriate application of the mixed model. Most of the time, such an approach merely serves to undermine members' confidence in the collaborative decision-making process.

This workshop focuses on the application of consensus in participatory-governance committees at AVC. I have seen this approach work extremely well in committees at all levels, from college councils and budget committees down to departmental workshops, but in my judgment it is especially useful in the collegial consultation required in the California community colleges.

For a rich trove of additional information on consensus, I recommend that the Library acquire Lawrence E. Susskind, Sarah McKearnen, and Jennifer Thomas-Lamar, *The Consensus Building Handbook* (Sage, 1999). This is the best single-volume practical treatment of consensus I have seen, and I have borrowed liberally from it for this workshop. The following is Susskind's take on the advantages of the consensus approach over the most common alternative:

> *We believe that something greater than a bare majority achieved through voting is almost always more desirable than majority rule. Moreover, the formalism of parliamentary procedure is particularly unsatisfying and often counterproductive, getting in the way of common sense solutions. It relies on insider knowledge of the rules of the game. It does not tap the full range of facilitative skills of group leaders. And, it typically leaves many stakeholders (often something just short of a majority) angry and disappointed, with little or nothing to show for their efforts.*
> *—Susskind et al*

I. Definition of Group Consensus
    A. Consensus does NOT mean:
        1. Unanimity (though striving for unanimity is fine)
        2. This solution is the top choice of all members.
        3. Majority opinion
        4. Silence of some members so that the rest can move on
    B. Consensus DOES mean:
        1. All members have been given the meaningful opportunity to speak about the proposed

recommendation (or solution, conclusion, choice, decision, or other result).
2. The group has considered the interests of all in good faith.
3. Overwhelming agreement on the recommendation: All members can live with the recommendation. (But see "Overwhelming Level of Support" on page 8 below.)
4. Once the group has made its recommendation, all members agree not to try to block, obstruct, sabotage, or undermine it.

II.   Thinking about Consensus: Distinguishing between Interests and Positions
A. Positions represent the territory someone stakes out in a discussion—what he or she says ought to be done. Positions (unlike, say, beliefs) might well change after new information is received or circumstances alter.
B. Interests are more stable than positions, and comprise the needs or desires that underlie those positions.

III.   Helpful Steps on the Road to Consensus
Note: This section assumes that the applicable committee is the appropriate body to make a recommendation on the issue that has come before it.
A. At the first meeting of every year, agree on the ground rules for its meetings and other work, including the decision model to be followed (consensus in this case), responsibilities of the convener and members (including minutes and other documentation, communication with constituents, etc.), behavioral expectations during meetings, and so on.
B. For each major issue, the group should:
1. Determine the timeframe within which a recommendation is required, if any.
2. Ensure that all members understand the issue before the committee reasonably well. Any member who does not feel sufficiently well informed should ask for clarification of all sides of the issue from members who do.
3. If appropriate, determine the essential criteria for a good solution (e.g., organization, cost, scale, scope, acceptance), and ensure that all members understand and buy into those criteria.
C. It is best practice for members of each college-wide participatory-governance committee to adopt an institutional perspective, rather than a narrow

departmental, functional, or constituency-specific one, in considering issues that come before it.

D. The convener, chair, or other facilitator bears substantial responsibility for the success of consensus-building. A well-trained facilitator should:

1. Keep the discussion on track according to the agenda, in order to reach a decision in the timeline required.

2. Remind the group of the ground rules, and take corrective action when someone violates them.

3. Adopt a neutral or nonpartisan stance, or at least set aside his or her preferences during deliberations, to facilitate open discussion by all participants. A neutral stance, however, must be balanced with the need to guide the deliberations in a productive direction.

E. Constructive Deliberations (Adapted from Susskind et al)

1. Every member should strive to maintain a problem-solving orientation, even in the face of strong differences and personal antagonism. It is in everyone's best interest to live by the committee version of the Golden Rule: Behave as you would like others to behave.

2. Every member should express concerns or disagreement in an unconditionally constructive manner. That is, there should be a premium on reason-giving and explanation. Those who disagree with the direction in which the discussion is headed should always explain the basis for their disagreement.

3. Every member should be fully present at each meeting (i.e., not texting, checking email, playing solitaire, and the like) and attend to every speaker. Each should listen in a meaningful way, open to altering his or her position while still maintaining the interests of his or her constituency and the College as a whole.

4. Every member who finds it necessary to disagree at any point should disagree without being disagreeable. Interrupting, rolling eyes, and steamrolling others with your voice are examples of being disagreeable.

5. Organize subcommittees whenever necessary to gather information and draft options or preliminary proposals between meetings, both to improve the product and to optimize the efficient use of everyone's time in the main meetings by focusing the discussion. (Identification of alternative solutions—a

Notes

"larger pie"—that will permit more participants to join in the consensus is important, especially in the early going.) Such subcommittees should have a clear task, preferably conveyed in writing.

6. When appropriate, brainstorm to expand the range of options considered.
   a. The best way to encourage creative, productive brainstorming is to adopt a formal ground rule to withhold criticism when alternatives are suggested during designated brainstorming sessions. Withholding criticism in this instance is an indication of neither support nor agreement.
   b. *Every member should adopt the following attitude during brainstorming: "Yes, and..." not "Yes, but...."*
   c. Record all suggested ideas in a comprehensive list that can be seen by everyone.
   d. After brainstorming, if the committee established essential criteria for a good solution up front (see above), then members should evaluate alternatives according to those criteria. Start by ruling out any alternatives that fail to meet the criteria, either in immediately obvious ways or after some reflection by the committee.
   e. The final recommendation might involve combining or modifying the remaining alternatives to elicit consensus.
7. Consensus building is more likely to emerge if viewed as a group enterprise. All members should avoid attributing or claiming authorship of specific ideas or packages.
8. Whenever a member in good faith remains opposed to the current draft of a recommendation approaching consensus, then he or she should always be ready to identify concrete changes that will help him or her join in the consensus.

F. Decisions (Adapted from Susskind et al)
   1. As discussion on a given recommendation proceeds, the convener should periodically ask whether members can think of any "improvements" to the proposed agreement. Such an approach is more positive and productive than asking for objections.
   2. Straw polls (which are NOT the same as votes) can be helpful for testing the scope of agreement along the way. Each time such a straw poll is used, it is important for the convener to explain that the results

are intended not to seek commitments, but to explore the level of agreement that has been reached.

a. One commonly used, efficient straw poll technique is the Fist-to-Five.

    i. At a suitable point in the discussion of a proposed recommendation, the convener asks for a show of hands as follows, and records the results:

        (A) 5 Fingers: This is a wonderful recommendation; I support it enthusiastically, and will happily advocate it to my constituents!

        (B) 4 Fingers: This is a strong recommendation; I support it fully, and will urge my constituents to do the same.

        (C) 3 Fingers: I might not agree entirely with this recommendation, but I support going forward with it for the good of the College, with no further discussion needed, and will tell my constituents that it represents the best solution available to us.

        (D) 2 Fingers: I have a few minor issues with the recommendation as it stands, and would like answers to a few specific questions before joining a consensus.

        (E) 1 Finger: I have numerous minor or medium-sized issues with the recommendation as it stands, and have some concrete suggestions for changes to improve it.

        (F) Fist: I have one or more major objections to the recommendation, cannot live with it as it stands, and will be happy to share my reasons with the group.

    ii. Interpreting the results

        (A) If all hands show three fingers or more, then the group has reached consensus.

        (B) If any hands show two fingers, then the group should answer the applicable questions, and, after discussion, make any minor changes in the

Notes

recommendation that the group regards as warranted.

(C) If any hands show one finger, then the group should entertain the applicable concrete suggestions, discuss them, and make any changes in the recommendation that the group regards as warranted.

(D) If any hands show a fist, then the group should listen to the reasons, discuss them, and make any changes in the recommendation that the group regards as warranted.

(E) After all such issues have been addressed, the convener may call for another Fist-to-Five poll, and the cycle may continue.

3. In the vast majority of cases, a group that follows the steps above will be able to reach consensus, even on contentious issues. The process might well have taken longer than the traditional up-or-down vote, but the result will typically produce greater satisfaction among participants, their constituents, and the College community than a vote would have produced.

4. Sometimes, however, even after all concerns have been heard and the rest of the group has reached consensus on a recommendation based in part on consideration of those concerns, a very small proportion of the members finds it impossible to join in the consensus on that recommendation within the required timeframe for a decision.

a. Prior to making its final decision, the group should make one final attempt to satisfy the concerns of the holdout(s), usually by asking those who "cannot live with" the current recommendation to make a concrete suggestion for a modification that would make it possible for them to join in the consensus, without making it impossible for anyone who has already expressed support for it. If incorporating the suggestion(s) makes it possible for all to join in the consensus, then the final recommendation can go forward.

b. The College, under the leadership of the College Coordinating Council, should adopt one of the following practices for resolving cases in which such a final attempt to reach consensus fails:

Notes

      i.   Overwhelming Level of Support: Settle for an overwhelming level of support for the recommendation that goes as far as possible toward meeting the interests of all. In part because the size of committees varies so much, it is difficult to specify a percentage of support that would constitute an overwhelming endorsement in every case, but in my judgment and that of Susskind et al, it would be hard to claim consensus if fewer than nine of the members in a committee of at least 10 joined in it.

     ii.   Back to the Drawing Board: Send the proposal back to the originating person or body, with a summary of the most recent state of the discussion, either for further work to address the remaining objections before coming back to the committee, or for a peaceful burial.

    iii.   Another practice that fits the College's needs and culture.

5. Documentation
   a. Documentation and dissemination of the final recommendation in the minutes or meeting summary are crucial.
   b. Documentation of the discussion and process that led to that decision is very useful in gaining the campus community's understanding of the decision.