

Distance Learning Advisory Committee Meeting
Minutes - March 9, 98

The meeting of the Distance Learning Advisory Committee (DLAC) was called to order by Chair Lee Todd following the meeting of the Council on Postsecondary Education (CPE) on March 9, 1998. Several members of the CPE remained for the DLAC meeting.

Members present:

President Kern Alexander
Barbara Burch for President Ransdell
President John Shumaker
President Mary Smith
President Charles Wethington
President James Votruba
President Hanly Funderburk
President Ronald Eaglin
Jim Ramsey
Jim Nelson
Virginia Fox
Secretary Viola Miller
Gary Cox
Lee Todd, Jr.
Merl Hackbart
Jack Moreland
Norma Adams
Ken Walker

Staff Present:

Sue Hodges Moore
Larry Fowler

The first items of business were formal presentations by three consultants experienced in the development and operation of "virtual universities". The speakers were, in order:

Sally Johnstone
Mary Beth Sussman
Phillip Swain

Following these presentations was an extensive question and answer session involving the consultants, DLAC members, and others in the audience.

Chair Todd also noted a need to move forward in developing a statewide or regional needs assessment and President Votruba noted that the Achilles Heel of "virtual universities" has been failure to properly assess what is really needed. Chair Todd suggested that a committee be established as soon as possible to find out what is already available in terms of assessment and how we might use resources such as the survey research centers at UK and UofL to gain additional information as to who our customers will be.

Ginni Fox suggested that much might be learned by an analysis of the several thousand students that have participated in distance learning courses through KET and KTLN. These students could provide good baseline data. Larry Fowler noted that extended-campus coordinators have gathered data for years on student taking courses at remote sites. They have also conducted much of needs assessment that has been done in this area.

Merl Hackbart then asked about the relationship of the various subcommittees that were discussed to day and how those committees would relate to the Policy Work Group and the Pilot Work Group. Following discussion, it was concluded that the various working committees would function as advisory to the DLAC through the Policy Work Group. The Pilot Projects group would receive and/or initiate projects (such a needs assessment) and recommend them to the DLAC. The process would be very much like the CPE process where policy issues raised by anyone are brought to staff (or, identified by staff); staff seeks input from advisory groups, prepares its recommendations, and forwards to the CPE. In this case, the staff would work with subject area subcommittees composed largely of institutional personnel who are experts in areas such as financial aid, then through the Policy Work Group and then the DLAC.

Chair Todd indicated that institutional personnel would be involved in the various subcommittees but hoped that the time had passed that every institutions had to have a representative on every committee. He indicated a need to move forward with small groups that can move rapidly toward implementation. He noted that there were several areas where we might be able to move rapidly. These include Web development, needs assessment, and a program in business. It might be necessary to hold off on the competency-based piece given the status of KCTCS at the moment. What is going on with UPS, JCC, UofL, and KyTech might form the basis of a pilot project. Low enrollment classes are still a concern.

Following more general discussion, the meeting was adjourned.