

QUEENSBOROUGH COMMUNITY COLLEGE
The City University of New York

ACADEMIC SENATE

COMMITTEE ON DISTANCE EDUCATION

To: The Academic Senate

From: Stanley Garfunkel, Chair, Committee on Distance Education

Subject: Annual Report

Date: June 9, 2006

This was the initial year of existence for the Distance Education Committee and all Committee members had experience teaching fully and/or partly online courses.

The Committee met regularly during the year, with the objective of developing a set of specific recommendations to be forwarded to the Office of Academic Affairs. The diverse backgrounds of the Committee members, including the different disciplines represented and the different online teaching modalities employed, resulted in many lively discussions and differing points of view. To further facilitate discussion, the Committee had a Blackboard site created, allowing all Committee members to read and post information related to the Committee's work.

In February, 2006, a set of initial recommendations were sent to Vice President McColloch:

1. The registration process must be changed to make sure that students know that they have registered for an online class.
Several members of our committee, for example, have walked into their partly online class on the first day of the semester and found that more than 90 percent of the students in attendance had no idea that they had registered for an online class. We have also had students tell us that counselors (advisors) have steered them to such classes because they were still open (without making any reference to the fact that the student was registering for an online class).
2. We would like to see STX-100 enhanced to include a module on Blackboard and a module on online classes.
Both of these topics need to be discussed in QCC's "Introduction to College Life" course.
3. Some methodology must be developed to make sure that all online classes are designated as such in the Schedule of Classes (both online and in the printed version).
While Department Chairs undoubtedly possess this information, at times this information is not forwarded to the Registrar. Consequently, there have been quite a few instances when an online class has not been designated as such in the Schedule of Classes.

After it became obvious that many different viewpoints existed with respect to a number of issues the Committee felt it should explore, the Committee decided to develop a questionnaire

and distribute it to faculty who had taught at least one (fully or partly) online class. The questionnaire garnered an 87.5% rate of response, and the results were used by the Committee to formulate further recommendations which were again forwarded to VP McColloch:

1. Given the small number of fully online sections being currently offered, at this point in time we recommend that student evaluation of faculty in fully online classes that have no face-to-face meetings be accomplished by mail, in much the same way that faculty vote in faculty elections (i.e., using multiple envelopes). The student evaluations could be mailed to an administrative office at the College, and then forwarded to appropriate Department chairs.
2. We recommend that students registering for fully online classes be required to have a minimum GPA for 2.0
3. We recommend that STX-100 be made a required course, and that computer literacy be made a part of this course (although students might be given the option of “testing out” of the computer literacy module of the STX-100 course).
4. We recommend the following class size limits:

For an online section (fully or partly)	25 students
For an online section (fully or partly) that is also WI	20 students
For an online section (fully or partly) that is also an Honors section	20 students
5. We recommend that a faculty member should have some formal training related to teaching an online class prior to being assigned such a section, i.e., that the faculty member has completed a course dealing with online pedagogy from some organization. To this end, we recommend that QCC develop a daylong (or multi-session) seminar on online teaching.

As Chair, I would like to thank each member of the Committee for their zeal and dedication to Distance Education. Additionally, the functioning of this Committee would not have been possible without the tremendous contributions of Bruce Naples, our Administrative Liaison.

Respectfully submitted,

Stanley Garfunkel