

Faculty Senate Information Technology Committee

April 16, 2010

Attendance:

Richard Medina, Ricardo Bernal, Bob Wren, Carolyn Awalt, Nigel Ward, Sunay Palsole

1. The minutes were approved.
2. Nigel reported that he presented our document, the Technology Literacy Checkup and Roadmap for UTEP Students to the Faculty Senate on the 13th. No issues were raised.
3. Sunay discussed the implications of the System's decision to close the UT Telecampus.
 - a. He already had a plan in his pocket for how to adapt to a proposed alternate business plan for the TeleCampus, although not for this exact outcome nor this timing. The plan is therefore being adjusted and brought forward, for this Fall.
 - b. There are some 240 courses that UTEP has been offering through the UT Telecampus. Transitioning these to the UTEP version of Blackboard will involve a lot of labor, but is not technically that tricky. No courses will be lost just because of this move.
 - c. A big issue is supporting students from other campuses who wish to take UTEP courses. Already there are 374 such students registered for fall classes. There are login-type issues and registration-type issues, and plans are being fleshed out.
 - d. Another big issue will be support for distance learning. The UT Telecampus provided 24/7 support and online tutoring. UTEP is likely to commit resources to provide, perhaps by outsourcing, a similar level of support.
 - e. In the UT System the significant providers of distance learning, besides UTEP are, Arlington, Permian Basin, Dallas, Brownsville, and Panam. These institutions, and also the Coordinating Board, seem committed to distance education, so it's not going to go away.
 - f. A letter with many of these points has been sent to the Deans, etc., and will eventually find its way down to the general faculty.
4. Carolyn raised the issue of quality control of UTEP-hosted online courses. Apparently there was an oversight in this recently, but it has been remedied and proper checks will be done in the future.
5. Nigel observed that it had been a productive year and thanked everyone for their contributions. There will be no meetings until the Fall.
6. The meeting adjourned at 11:45.