Distance Learning Committee Recommendation - Changes in Scheduling Distance Learning Courses
[approved 5/27/10]

Rationale/Background
1. In November 2009, Academic Senate Executive Council requested that the Distance Learning Committee (DLC) provide a recommendation that would address this question:

   "Does attendance at a DL course "mandatory" orientation meeting supersede the requirement that students attend the first meeting of a traditional course?"

   This question arose because there have been time conflicts between the "mandatory meeting" time of a DL course and the regular first meeting time of a traditional course, resulting in the student missing one of their first meetings of a course and being dropped from one of the courses for non-attendance. At the time of this request from AS Executive Board, traditional course meeting times were coded into Banner while the "mandatory meeting" times were not coded, so time conflicts could not be resolved by Banner.

2. In April 2009, the Academic Senate approved Resolution 2009-11 which included 2 issues:

   - provide less confusion for registering and enrolled DL students
   - to display the DL course on-campus meetings times on the student's printed schedule

   In resolving these issues, it was determined that in order for the on-campus meetings times to display on a student's printed Schedule, those meetings need to be scheduled into Banner.

3. Also, it has recently come to the attention of the College, that apportionment for seat time (on-campus meetings) in DL Courses has not been collected because those on-campus meetings were not scheduled into Banner. To correct this situation so the College can immediately collect this apportionment, <u>DL course on-campus meeting dates, times and locations need to be coded into Banner.</u>

4. As with apportionment, the reporting of MIS data to the Chancellor's Office will be more accurate when the on-campus meeting times are scheduled into Banner.

Note: As in the past, the scheduling of on-campus meetings in a DL course is at the sole discretion of the professor teaching the DL course. Also, DL course offerings should be in accordance with the instructional methods indicated in the approved DL Course Amendment Form for that particular course. Contractually, DL faculty are evaluated on Form H.2.e [Student Evaluations of Distance Learning Faculty]. Evaluation regarding course orientation is included on that Form.

Recommendation:

In light of the rationale explained above and to address the learning needs of Mt. SAC students as our first priority, the DLC recommends the following with respect to scheduling of DL courses:

1) DL courses <u>without on-campus meetings</u> will be designated as "online" courses when scheduled into Banner

2) DL courses <u>with any on-campus meetings</u> will be designated as "hybrid" courses when scheduled into Banner

3) Faculty will continue to have the right to schedule their DL courses as they deem appropriate for maximizing student success. Faculty may schedule many on-campus meetings or no on-campus meetings in their DL courses.

   a. **One or more on-campus meetings in DL courses ("hybrid")**
   <u>Faculty who schedule on-campus meetings in their DL courses can expect students to attend all on-campus meetings, as all of those meetings will be prominently displayed on the student's official printed Mt. SAC Schedule.</u> When all on-campus meetings are scheduled into Banner, students will be able to view ALL of the required meetings of the course BEFORE they register for the course in the online Schedule of Classes, rather than hear about them at the orientation meeting, which is usually too late to enroll in a different course that suits their schedules.

   Also, faculty who schedule on-campus meetings in DL courses need to be aware that they may be preventing students from enrolling in any other courses that have on-campus meeting times at the same time as the DL course meetings. DLC recommends that DL faculty who schedule on-campus meetings in their DL courses should schedule all of their course meetings (first week meetings as well as other meetings during the term) within one class "block" and not across two different class "blocks". (Scheduling across two different blocks will prevent students from enrolling in courses in either of those two different blocks. The least impacted blocks are 3:00 – 6:10 PM and 3:35 – 6:45 PM blocks.)

   b. **No required on-campus meetings in DL courses ("online")**
   For faculty who do not wish to schedule on-campus meetings in their DL courses, the DLC recommends using one or more of the following or other flexible methods for providing an orientation to the DL course:

      o Email students before or on the first day of the term to verify enrollment, and ask for a response from students by a certain date (***Mt. SAC email is to be used for all official College email communications.)***

      o Email students to direct them to an online orientation to the DL course, facilitated through Blackboard or Course Studio, that includes an activity with student response to the professor by a certain date

      o Direct students to a first week activity which requires a response from your students by a certain date

      o Direct students to complete an online tutorial about using Blackboard that gives notification and time stamp to the professor that the student has completed it

      o Direct students to an opportunity to meet with you at an optional on-campus meeting in the first week of the term, where Blackboard access/exploration as well as course-specific handouts can be given to students