

Minutes from DBLC meeting on 9/12/18

In attendance: Steve Greenlaw (chair), Paul Boger, Hall Cheshire, Allison Grimes, Marisa Martinez-Mira (secretary), Mara Scanlon, Jesse Stommel, Jo Tyler.

Meeting started at 3:36 p.m.

(1) Meeting started with #3 of the agenda (Proposal deadlines). The new dates to submit proposals to the Distance and Blended Learning Committee are:

- October 3rd, 2018 to submit proposals for Spring 2019.
- November 2, 2018 to submit proposals for Summer 2019.
- January 18, 2019 to submit proposals for Fall 2019.

(2) After deciding on these dates, the committee discussed item #2 of the agenda: Plans for the year: Accessibility:

Allison Grimes commented on how accessibility issues should be mentioned on syllabi, listing some of the things that faculty can address/do to make their courses accessible.

Hall Cheshire mentioned his meeting with Nina Mikhalevsky, where they discussed accessibility issues. This led to a discussion with regards to the purview of the committee, more specifically, whether a proposal can be rejected if it does not address accessibility properly. As a committee, we have the authority/obligation to guarantee that all online classes are accessible, and we can require that faculty members address these issues in their proposals.

Mara Scanlon mentioned that online teaching is not particularly incentivized at UMW, therefore rejecting proposals only because they do not address accessibility properly might discourage professors if they are thinking about submitting a proposal for an online course. Hall Cheshire suggested offering some compliance window to update online courses and meet the new standards for accessibility. As a committee, we can be proactive and create a set of rules that future online courses need to meet and (re)evaluate existing courses to make sure they incorporate accessibility requirements productively. The committee decided that we will continue our discussion about how to make this work, and will focus on addressing all these issues with the appropriate language.

(3) The committee also discussed another item in section #2 of the agenda: A new, streamlined proposal – the older form can still be used until 2019. We examined the draft that Jesse Stommel and other colleagues wrote for a teaching a majority online course proposal and discussed/suggested editions to the text (e.g. language, best way to phrase questions about how the course fits as an online course, how to incorporate accessibility standards, etc.). Part of our discussion focused on how to pay for the resources that would allow professors to make materials accessible to all students (e.g. video captioning, audio transcripts), since it is their right, and we have an obligation to provide it. After discussing more editions to the text, all voting members of the committee voted in favor of the new proposal.

Meeting was adjourned at 4:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Marisa Martínez-Mira