

DBLC Meeting

December 10th at 11: 00 am

Attendees:

- J.D. Swerzenski, Assistant Professor, CDS, CAS, *chair for Fall 2025*
- Ping Yin, Associate Professor, CDS, CAS, *chair for Spring 2026*
- Maysoon Al-sayed Ahmad, Senior Lecturer, MLL, CAS. *Secretary*
- Brenta Blevins, Associate Professor, ENLI/CDS,
- Eric Lorentzen, Professor, ENLI, CAS

Meeting Minutes:

Discussion 1 : Canvas Course Design & Accessibility

- Jerry outlined concerns with the overcrowded Canvas course navigation menu (30+ items by default).
- Proposal: reduce the default menu to a smaller, intentional set of tools, with others enabled only if faculty choose to use them.
- Rationale:
 - Improves accessibility (especially for screen-reader users).
 - Reduces cognitive load for students.
 - Encourages more intentional course design.
- Broad agreement that this would benefit students, particularly in online and hybrid courses.

Discussion 2: Consistency & Cognitive Load for Students

- Multiple members emphasized that inconsistent Canvas layouts across courses create unnecessary cognitive burden.
- This is especially challenging for:
 - Transfer students
 - Students taking various online/hybrid courses
- There was strong support for initiatives that standardize core structures without restricting pedagogical freedom.

Discussion 3: Faculty Preparation for Online Teaching

- Discussion about faculty often having limited training or confidence in using Canvas effectively.
- Ideas discussed:
 - Optional or required pre-workshops for faculty teaching online.
 - Short consultation sessions (e.g., 30 minutes) instead of long training.
 - Use of templates and examples to model best practices.
- Strong sentiment that online teaching should be intentional, not just an in-person course moved online.

Discussion 4: Committee Scope & Role

- Acknowledgement that the committee's formal charge is course review, not faculty development.
- Consensus:
 - The committee can play an advisory and advocacy role.
 - DLS/Center for Teaching can bring proposals or resources for feedback.
 - Any expansion of the role should remain lightweight and manageable.

Discussion 5 : Course Reviews and Approval

- Members went over the submitted courses and provided feedback.

Approved Courses:

- CLAS 105: Ideas and Culture: The Roman World (*Emergency approval*)
- NURS 310 Professionalism in Nursing Practice (*Emergency approval*)
- EDUC 461 - Internship Seminar: Elementary (*Emergency approval*)
- CLAS110 Greek and Roman Mythology in Art and Literatures
- FINC 471E: Introduction to Financial Markets and Risk Management
- English 202K1: Writing about the Natural World
- SPAN 101, 102, 201, 202
- PSYC 305: Cognitive Neuroscience
- MDFL 201W : The World on a Plate

Discussion 6: Templates & Centralized Resources

- Strong positive feedback on Maysoon's syllabus template.
- Agreement that:
 - Templates should be **guidelines, not mandates**
 - Faculty should retain flexibility, but the required information must be present

Discussion 7: Leadership & Timeline Notes

- JD announced stepping down as chair; Ping will take over.
- Committee will next meet **earlier than expected** (late January / early February) to review Fall 2026 courses.
- DBLC webpage dates were outdated and confusing and need correction.