**Management Association Committee for Employee Relations (MACER) Meeting Notes – 18 February 2021**

**Present for Union**: Louise Michaud, Jennifer Levesque,:Linda Giampa, Kathy Holmes, Steve Russell, Liliana Brand

**Present for Employer**: Jennifer Mezquita, Bill Heineman

The meeting through ZOOM started shortly after 3:00 PM on Thursday 18 February. Chapter President Linda Giampa chaired the meeting.

1. **Fall 2021 Class Modality Options -**  Kathy Holmes outlined the class options which Bill Heineman agreed to.
2. **100% ONLINE**----no scheduled meetings at all (BANNER coded like usual: -01A), referred to as “Asynchronous”

**2 - 50% ONLINE – Using ZOOM or equivalent program**

**ONE ZOOM MEETING A WEEK -- AT A SPECIFIC TIME. THIS TIME WILL BE PUBLISHED and cannot be changed by faculty**!

Remainder of instruction in cyberspace, referred to as “Synchronous”

**3 - 100% ON CAMPUS**…mostly courses with labs (health, some science)

**4 - 50% ON CAMPUS IN PERSON (PHYSICALLY) ONE MEETING A WEEK—AT A SPECIFIC TIME.**  **THIS TIME WILL BE PUBLISHED and cannot be changed by faculty**!

Remainder of instruction in cyberspace, referred to as “Hybrid”

While the terms were used in this meeting, Bill indicated that labels for each modality will be developed that will be descriptive to students. For example, asynchronous, synchronous are not meaningful to students and will not be used. While the synchronous (#2) option ordinarily, requires only one zoom class meeting per week, faculty may institute a voluntary class meeting as they can also do for fully on-line classes. Students may not, however, be required to attend such additional sessions and additional class meeting times, will not be published.

Bill indicated that the option used in other institutions where half of a class meets on one day, the second half of the class meets on another day will not be used at NECC.

1. **Workload Calculation** – Linda asked if different modalities would be considered separate “courses” for workload calculation purposes. Bill replied that for the purposes of workload calculation, 100% on-line, 50% on-line and 50% on campus (#1, #2, #4) are all considered per the Distance Education agreement and on the Workload Computations Form as “on-line or hybrid.” Therefore each iteration would only be considered as a “section” rather than a separate “course.” So if a member had a 50% on-line US History I and 100% on-line US History I and a 50% on-campus US History I, those would be 3 sections of the same course.
2. **Cleaning Between Classes** – Bill indicted that classes will be schedule so that there will be a class period where the room will be empty to allow for cleaning before the next class period starts. For example, class might be held in a room 8:00-9:15. Then from 9:30-10:45, the room would be empty to allow for cleaning, then a class might be held in the room 11:00-12:15. Synchronous (50% on-line -# 2 option above) might be scheduled for the 9:30-10:45 time. A discussion ensued about having spaces on campus where students could go to attend the synchronous classes that would be safe and quiet.
3. **Room Use** – Given state requirements that rooms only have 33% occupancy (up from 25% recently), only larger rooms will be used and he did not envision more than 25 students in the larger rooms, (for example, Lecture Hall A, C-311, Hawrliciw Theater). Occupancy data is based on square footage. If fire regulations allow 32 students, 33% occupancy to meet the requirement would be 10.
4. **Accommodating Changes – College Wide** - A discussion ensued about what happens to a class when the College has to change plans due to an increased danger of COVID. Bill explained that most likely, most classes which had an on campus component would revert to a synchronous all on-line modality (Option 2 above, where no campus presence is required, but one zoom meeting per week is required).

Steve Russell asked if this would be the case, even when a faculty members had not had the training for the synchronous on-line class. Bill replied yes. Steve suggested that the training be offered to all faculty even those not signed up to teach in the synchronous on-line modality, so that they would be prepared for such a possibility. Bill agreed that this is a good idea.

1. **Accommodating Changes – Individual Circumstances** - If an individual faculty member, due to personal circumstances, was no longer able to conduct on-line classes, Bill suggested that accommodations would be made, just as an in pre-COVID world when faculty members became ill or otherwise unable to teach during the semester. Bill strongly suggested that faculty members who believe that they could be prevented from teaching face-to-face in the fall, indicate on their preferences that they would only be open to teaching options 1 or 2 above, which do not require any campus presence.
2. **Accommodating Changes – Students** - Steve asked what happens when an individual student’s circumstances change during the semester. Bill said that this situation, too, would be handled in the same way as it was in pre-COVID times when a student is unable to finish the semester. Steve asked if this could be handled between the instructor and the student, for example, allowing the student to complete all of the work on-line. Bill said this would be the preferred way to handle such situations.
3. **Masks for Students** – Linda asked if masks will be provided for students. Bill replied yes, faculty would be provided with a supply of masks to distribute to students who may have forgotten to bring one to campus. Bill added, however, that there has been very little problem with students not wearing masks. Perhaps, he said, that up until now, most students were in the health care professions. That will not be the case in the fall so we need to be prepared.
4. **Budget and Retrenchment** – Linda asked how the budget situation for FY 2022 looked and if Bill anticipated any retrenchments. Bill replied that the governor’s budget for FY 2022 is essentially level funding, which he said was not too bad. Bill did not anticipate retrenchments for FY 2022 unless the budget situation changes drastically or unless enrollments substantially decrease.

Bill further explained that from time to time, areas need reorganization and positions might be eliminated due to changing needs. At the same time, people might be hired to meet those needs.

1. **Professional staff Vacation Time** – Linda reminded the group that unused professional staff vacation time greater than 375 hours is converted to sick time on June 30 and then eliminated on December 31. There is a provision in the contract for members to appeal this so that they can keep it. Linda said that it would be a good idea to remind staff about the appeal provision, but more importantly, to urge them to take their vacation time. Linda indicated that recently there has been no problems, of which she was aware, with supervisors refusing members’ vacation requests. She wanted to ensure that the present pattern continues. Bill urged that conversations about vacation time be held early so that supervisors and colleagues could plan the work area’s work. Steve suggested that members of each work area consider if possible, optimum times of the year for taking vacations. Bill agreed that this was a good idea.
2. **Snow Cancellations** – Linda asked that messaging about individual snow days be more precise so that virtual operations are included in the cancellation notice. Also, Linda suggested that a memo be drafted to give overall guidance about cancellations in a more virtual environment. Bill agreed and also mentioned that this would have to include synchronous classes. He stated that when the college is closed, the remote synchronous classes (Option 2 above), along with any on-campus class sessions should not meet.
3. **New Program Formats for Fall** – Bill indicated that there would be some changes within on-line academic programs beginning in Fall 2021 that would include more 8 week sessions and other alternatives. More information on this will be forthcoming.

The meeting ended at about 3:45.

**Next MACER meeting is Thursday 25 March at 3:00 PM.**

Respectfully submitted,

Stephen Russell, Ph.D.

NECCPA Secretary