

**Present:** Stacy Anderson, Marilyn Bejma, Cheryl Cluchey, Teresa Cook, Julie Coon, Elise Gramza, Jackie Hughes, Robbie Teahen, Michelle Teschendorf, Deb Thalner, Spencer Tower and John Urbanick

Excused: Leonard Johnson, Elaine McCullough

**Call to Order:** 10:01 a.m.

## STARFISH SOLUTIONS

Jackie made connections via conference phone and computer screen to Brad Schultz of Starfish Solutions, a software services company. Brad gave a presentation on what Starfish has to offer:

The Early Alert feature gives tools to create flags (customer determines what kinds of flags are needed by surveying faculty). All those on campus who have a relationship with a student will see the flags for that student. Some systems may already be built into Blackboard. Flags can be automatic or manual. We can build into Blackboard specifications that when a student hits above or below a certain number, a flag would be raised, such as when a student misses class a third time, a flag would be raised, or if a student doesn't sign into Blackboard for a week, a flag could be raised. Starfish provides "best practices" based on other companies that use its product.

The Connect feature is used to connect students with systems that will help them. When a student schedules an appointment, that person gets all the information on this student in a folder. Appointment will post to a calendar and an e-mail can be sent (optional).

Starfish can participate in single sign-in. There will appear a separate tab in Blackboard. The e-mail option (reminders) can be global or a person can opt out. Starfish can bring data in from Sungard Banner for reporting and/or tracking purposes. Appointments and flags appear on the homepage when an instructor looks into Blackboard and clicks on the Starfish tab. Courses and relationships are taken from Blackboard. After submitting surveys, everyone who has a relationship with the student will see the results. GPA, degree audit, plans, courses, grades and attendance all appear on opening a student's page. We, as customer, would determine where the data gets pulled from. We have the ability to have information kept private in notes within the system (private information stays between the student and who marked the notes private).

Tracking is when an instructor is following information pertaining to the student entered by anyone else who has a relationship with that student. Appointments show all appointments made by a student and any activity as it pertains to that appointment. Notes are any notes (not private) taken when someone meets with a student. Network surrounds a student with a network of help (Circle of Care).

Deb requested data on schools that have implemented this program, and Brad will send them to Jackie.

We thanked Brad for his demonstration and continued our discussion of Starfish. Jackie thought we could have the Early Alert side rolled out for online classes, as the automated feature is very attractive. With it, flags could automatically go to Financial Aid. Spence felt that we should first see if such features can be built into Blackboard.

Jackie reported that Brad will be on campus for the MiBUG (Michigan Blackboard User Group) Conference at MCO on March 16. The conference will also have Blackboard people in attendance, and we should try to schedule a late afternoon meeting with them.

Teresa acknowledged that many faculty are aware of students who are not actively engaged in their online courses, but are unsure as to how to deal with this. Cheryl commented that her group will contact the fully online students that have not logged into their courses if the faculty let them know. They will call and/or e-mail to make sure they are not having technical difficulties and make sure they intended to be in the course. Many faculty use their service, but not all. Faculty should report any student that has not logged into their course by the end of the first week or two to Record's office as there may be some Financial Aid implications. CPTS tried to get a report in order to know which students are not logging in, but the report only showed whether they logged into FerrisConnect, not the actual course, so determined having faculty let them know which students were not logging in was more accurate.

Robbie reported that Blackboard is moving in the direction of automated processes, and we need to let Blackboard know what we really need, and what are the things we most want improved. We need to get a collective voice to let our Provost and President know what we need. We also need instructors to attend the American Association of Community Colleges Conference this year from April 21-24 in Orlando, FL. A team representing multiple colleges (maybe 8) is needed to have our presence be felt and to gather information from multiple sessions. There will be a high Blackboard presence there.

Jackie reported that the Blackboard World Conference is July 10-12 this year in New Orleans, LA. She will send a link to the group with details.

John reported that Blackboard executives were on campus yesterday to discuss issues of attendance, financial aid and making sure we could do what we want. Some of the topics discussed were Blackboard Analytics, alignment of Blackboard with FSU's needs and goals, and Development Ed. John emphasized to them that attendance and authentication were most urgent.

Migration is progressing. Most faculty are building from scratch in fear of migration problems, but Michelle reported that she migrated with no trouble. Deb will contact Don for follow-up reports.

Deb requested that we go out and see what some of the big issues people have are, by contacting trainers and mentors, for discussion at our next meeting. She will then compile a list for a meeting with Blackboard, possibly on 3/16 or late on 3/15 if they are coming to town that day.

John reported that a pilot project of Blackboard Analytics is planned to be run at Grand Rapids Community College this year.

Robbie requested that we ask what are the questions we want easy answers to as a dean, as an instructor, etc.

#### **POLICY ON ASSURING QUALITY ONLINE COURSES**

Robbie distributed copies of the draft policy assuring quality online courses that was composed before our recommendations. Our recommendation states that we will review courses – is the policy what we intended? Michelle commented that currently, no one reviews adjuncts' courses. Faculty cannot view

adjuncts' courses without being given permission by the adjunct. Robbie reported that part of the budget was to pay for lead instructors, who would mentor courses under them. Deb commented that adjunct face-to-face courses have a full-time faculty go out and review them. Julie reported that the Quality pilot program in her college is to have coaching without judging. Please e-mail Robbie any suggestions for editing the draft of policy, and she will get a revision out to everyone.

Faculty should be reporting to deans any courses they feel have problems. The Faculty Center is offering courses on Quality Matters, and perhaps we can get the word out on this more effectively. We could provide faculty with a list of qualified QM people, and possibly highlight certified people at our faculty awards ceremony. An important consideration is whether or not non-tenured faculty should review tenured faculty. This may be an item for the Academics Standards Committee. We don't want to limit the choice of reviewers; possibly offer non-tenured faculty from outside the college of the faculty being reviewed.

Robbie reported a small group has volunteered to work with our media group to help develop a common shell design that has a really desirable look.

Michelle asked where we are with getting an online portfolio for students. Jackie offered to demo at a future meeting the e-portfolio feature that is available now if we'd like. It is available, but just not turned on currently.

#### **SUMMER ENROLLMENT**

Cheryl reported that 3-4 courses are full. The waitlists have 133 names. Enrollment is down from previous summers, possibly due to no Pell Grants in the summer as well as students having used all of their aid in fall and spring. Also, possibly because so many students are working while going to school, they are choosing to take the summer off from school to work more hours.

#### **OTHER**

Robbie distributed copies of the Newsletter of the Online Teaching and Learning Committee published by the Department of Languages and Literature. She asked us to think of how we can get this newsletter out to more people and will talk to Elaine because it is so relevant and should be in the hands of everyone.

#### **NEXT MEETING**

Thursday, March 15, 2012 10:00 am to 11:30 pm CSS-302

Meeting adjourned at 11:45 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Marilyn Bejma