

Present: Sandy Alspach, Stacy Anderson, Marilyn Bejma, Cheryl Cluchey, Teresa Cook, Elise Gramza, Leonard Johnson, Elaine McCullough, Ron McKean, David Nichol, Theresa Raglin, Larry Schult, Robbie Teahen, Spencer Tower

Guests: Adnan Dakkuri, Mary Holmes, Jackie Hughes, Gloria Lukusa, David Marion, James Nystrom and Doug Zentz

Call to Order: 10:30 a.m.

OPEN FORUM

Robbie opened our meeting with introductions all around, followed by a brief history of E-MAT and where we stand today. A general conversation was called for, with all recommendations made being considered in future revisions of our goals.

QUESTIONS, ANSWERS AND GENERAL COMMENTS:

- Q: Is there a testing center at Ferris for students in the Big Rapids area where we can send them for test proctoring?
- A: The CPTS here and at other Ferris locations statewide; and in the future, Fritz would like to turn one of the rooms in FLITE into a testing center; the need for one is recognized.
- Q: The security and implementation of security – how is testing going to be done – what kind of fixed rules will be in place?
- A: Testing in the Math program has been done in FCTL since its inception, and it has a written policy in place. Cheryl has been contacted for out-of-town student testing, and students in the military usually have a place on base that is accessible for testing. Arrangements are made on an individual basis. This is something that we will consider as an E-MAT group. If we want to attract international students, we must address this issue.
- C: A one-time live class is needed; a training video is not enough. We should not assume the students know how to navigate the system, or that they will go and watch a training video.
- A: A face-to-face session may preclude some students, but use of Skype would be fine.
- C: An instructor must allow time for students' responses because of different time zones; training videos cannot address everything. Training in the actual class far surpasses that online.
- C: There is an ongoing potential policy for students to get certification; some of these proposed policies should go through the Standards and Policy Committee before being implemented. If E-MAT's goals are going to be policies, each issue in the large directives should be addressed by the Standards and Policy Committee.
- C: Set up some type of premise as to how Blackboard will look – consistency and the importance of it. Many students have complained of not being able to find things, that things are not in the

same place in every class. Training must be consistent with how things will look to the student in Blackboard.

A: Students have face-to-face instruction in Blackboard available to them now on campus; fully online is still to be resolved.

Q: How about policies related to instructor responsiveness?

A: People who choose to teach online must be responding to their students in a timely manner. We are not the only school with this problem, but that is no excuse. There are issues with academic freedom, work issues, etc. involved; but we need exact language on all expectations for each detail in our plan. The best way to approach this issue is for instructors to take a lot of time with their syllabi, and start day one with a syllabus quiz. Students will understand right from the start what is to be expected. Whatever is expected of faculty should be written down and approved.

Q: How supportive are you of the recommendations?

A: Look at every course before it is approved for online.

C: As new courses are developed, they should be reviewed; this should be a faculty or peer review rather than by administration. Faculty peers could be the choice of the course developer.

C: There appears to be a conflict between the two methods of teaching; we should offer online courses that are certainly as good as our face-to-face classes.

A: Any instructor who is not comfortable with teaching online will never be forced to; we will find someone else to teach those courses.

Q: A student-complaint policy has been put in place for on-campus students, but what about students who are not on campus?

A: Such a policy would fit in the Planning and Administration Recommendation (#9). Having a policy in writing would definitely result in less frustration.

Q: Should this be under #1, or should it be a separate detail?

A: Our current complaint policy needs to be expanded to include online teaching. Something could be included in the class syllabus on what to do if a student is frustrated.

C: This policy should not be different than the face-to-face policy.

A: This would be the same policy, just different processing. When taking an online class, a student may feel she is on her own, unless she is aware of others with the same complaint. We should revisit what the policy is now to see what needs to be addressed.

E-MAT CHARGE

Robbie felt it is time to update our group charge to reflect current policy.

Our discussion resulted in the following suggestions:

- #1: as is, with the addition of, "conduct an annual review of strategic directions"
- Revise #2 to read, "Recommending and reviewing policies, standards and procedures"
- Revise #3 to read, "Recommending the prioritization of financial investments . . ."
- Change #4 to read, "Recommending roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders"
- Are #4 and #2 redundant?
- "Assessment" needs to be in here somewhere
- Add instruction on how to replace members and to determine the length of service

SPARC FEEDBACK

No concerns were raised at the SPARC meeting.

RECOMMENDED MAXIMUM COURSE ENROLLMENT

Teresa Cook e-mailed our group the proposed policy prior to meeting today. Its impact if passed would be that all courses (including online sections) would be set up at the maximum enrollment UNLESS the subject matter faculty member(s) fills out a Form F asking for a reduced cap for the online section.

If you are the only one teaching online in a program, how can a peer review be accomplished? Policy allows for and guarantees that the proposal still goes forward. At the college level, the dean is the only one who can stop a proposal. When determining course caps, the time allowed to teach a course should be part of the rationale (shorter summer vs. fall or spring semesters). As with experimental courses, the proposal goes straight from the dean to the provost. The use of Form F offers the opportunity to make the case for a smaller course cap; and the numbers can be renegotiated each semester. If Form F is not approved, faculty has the choice of teaching the course or not at the maximum enrollment.

BLACKBOARD 9.1 TRAINING

Jackie reported that training has released and can be accessed through our website and MyFSU. A university-wide notice has gone out, and 150 faculty will be trained this fall. Please help spread the word that training is available, and a mobile app will be available next semester. Faculty who take the time to do the online training will save themselves a lot of time in the long run.

We are off to a strong start; most calls from faculty are to learn how to access features that were in the older version. Jackie is hoping that only about 100 faculty will need training next August. She recommends the week before the fall semester starts as a good time to do a refresher, and she plans to launch a communication campaign to get faculty thinking ahead for the fall.

NEXT MEETING

Thursday, September 29, 2011 10:00 am to 11:00 a.m. CSS-302 Special meeting to prepare for October Senate meeting

Meeting adjourned at 12:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Marilyn Bejma