

Present: Stacy Anderson, Marilyn Bejma, Cheryl Cluchey, Teresa Cook, Elise Gramza, Jacklyn Hughes, Leonard Johnson, Elaine McCullough, David Nichol, Theresa Raglin, Todd Stanislav, Robbie Teahen, Michelle Teschendorf, Deb Thalner and Spencer Tower

Call to Order: 10:31 a.m.

Robbie welcomed Michelle Teschendorf to our group, who replaces Paula Hagstrom, and followed this with round-the-room introductions.

STUDENT ASSESSMENT

SmarterMeasure was at the Sloan conference, and Deb is working with the small group to determine if this is the best product for student assessment. Institutions that use SmarterMeasure are mostly community colleges, some require students to take the assessment, some make it optional; but there are no schools currently using it as a gatekeeper. It is used for one-on-one coaching, for or in an orientation course, such as FSUS, or as a first online assignment. Some schools break it down into two sections; some put it into a BlackBoard-like course.

When correlated with student grades, different schools got different results. Time management and readiness for online were more related for some, for others technologies were more related. SmarterMeasure recommends we run it for a while and then do the correlation before we try to use it as a requirement.

Deb will share their report with everyone.

Robbie reported that the small group looking into student assessment will be chaired by Deb, and anyone not already on this committee who would like to be should contact her.

SLOAN CONFERENCE

Deb reported that it was interesting to see all the tools available, many of which are for student identification. Robbie commented that at a recent HLC conference in Lisle, student identification was highly stressed.

Deb also reported that there were lots of products for tutoring and proctoring support.

Cheryl commented that surveys indicated faculty want good discussion from online students, and students want the same thing in return from their instructors.

Spence reported that one trend he noticed is terminology of learning analytics. A lesson learned from the Amazon website is that when a student registers online, he could receive a prompt saying "You have been closed out of this course; you may be interested in this other course that fulfills the same requirement." Institutions have invested a lot of money in data analysis, such as how early can a

prediction be made as to when a student is going to finish. Vendors can collect and analyze the data for courses. Written and learning analytics are the trend.

Elaine asked if such software is available, and Spence answered that there is a tool in BlackBoard Analytics that is capable of handling such analyses.

The keynote speaker from Pew Research Center spoke on internet trends, how broadband has expanded, that users have changed from consumers to creators who are participating, not just observing. Social networking is changing also. Instead of searching on sites such as PriceGrabber, the trend now is to see data on what friends are thinking and posting about products.

82% of teenagers take their phones to bed with them to be immediately informed. We are increasingly living our lives in a constant state of "partial attention." We are always looking for something more important; we are better at searching; we are more self-directed. However, we do have a tendency to only expose ourselves to information that agrees with what we are looking for.

Professional development for online faculty has proven to be most helpful when faculty talk to someone who is teaching the same class. We should focus on this through activities at the college, department and/or class level.

Other trends are for users to write and create apps and a desire for plug-and-play to create an app.

All attendees agreed that Sloan attendance was worthwhile. Our university would be wise to continue to send participants, especially those who have not attended before. The presentations are all posted on the Sloan website; and as Sloan members, all we need are passwords to view the presentations. All Ferris faculty have the capability to set up their own accounts. It was also very helpful that several from Ferris attended at the same time, with communication between them on a daily basis.

Because the conference is so large, it was not a good opportunity to get to know people from other schools. In the past, prior to attending a conference, Robbie has initiated meetings with others to take place during the conference; and this has worked out well.

The Sloan conference is geared toward faculty and teaching, with many vendor presentations, a lot of "best practices" from other schools, and a lot of tools and technology.

STATE AUTHORIZATION

Cheryl stressed that we must work with our legal team to be in compliance as quickly as possible. Numbers indicate that about 60% of schools are in the same position we are as far as state authorization is concerned.

Robbie has concerns about our compliance and suggests we work on this. The state of Michigan has 66 state-based institutions, but it also has 100 institutions approved to offer education for the state of Michigan.

Where we have interns is also a concern, as certain states are more concerned than others. Robbie commented that the federal government has deferred to states, which makes things more complicated than complying with one federal law. The consequence previously was that being noncompliant meant no federal aid, but now it means we are breaking state laws. Our only alternative is not to accept students or internships from certain states. Robbie reported that the University of New Mexico School of Nursing expects to restrict their school to New Mexico residents only.

Robbie feels we can review 3 states per month, starting with November. This means we will be through 36 states in one year. The phrase “within their state” differs from state to state. Recruitment sometimes is a trigger, sometimes having an intern in the state, sometimes a student in an online course, sometimes having a faculty member from out of state.

Cheryl reported that we cannot do a targeted mailing because it targets a certain destination, but placing a national ad is permitted.

We will proceed with our current activities until we have new rules in place.

DRAFT POLICY FOR ATTENDANCE

Robbie discussed the draft she e-mailed to all. Most of the procedures came from the current policy. She asked the group if we are comfortable:

1. That we try to blend the two together.
2. That we expect the same from online as face-to-face.
 - a. Can we force the weekly issue if we don't force it in face-to-face classes?

COMMENTS/QUESTIONS:

- The federal government makes the assumption that we can tell when a student is not attending and then return the federal aid.
- Face-to-face attendance is being questioned in other committees as well.
- Federal aid must be returned if a student attends only one part of a multi-part course.
- Officially we sign agreements that we do monitor these things, and we can tell when students are not attending, and we do return financial aid.
- We may be more vulnerable than others to an audit because we are a high-volume online institution.
- BlackBoard does not authenticate and cannot track student attendance.
- Mary Holmes sends reports of log-in times.
- Instructors could record engagement time needed for a course.
- What happens if a student is absent, then returns to class and catches up?
 - We are only concerned with students who have stopped attending completely.
- Use the wording “is engaged as required by the instructor or the course.”

- Base attendance on what is stated in the class syllabus.
- We need to communicate that this is what the federal government wants and possibly reference those colleges that have been audited, so faculty can see the reason we are requiring this.
- The federal guidelines read, “Attendance must be academic attendance or at an academic activity.”
- Instructors could require a sentence from students once a week.
- Attendance may include an exam, tutorial, attending a study group, etc., as shown in Robbie’s e-mail.
- Federal government needs the date the student last attended class.
- Reading posts is not considered an academic activity.
- A log-in alone is insufficient.
- It is the instructor’s responsibility to meet activities set forth by the government.
- Courses must be designed in ways that comply with the requirements.
- The federal government is not looking for a policy but for practices.
 - How do we begin to enforce anything without an in-place policy?
- What are the consequences if faculty are not willing to track attendance?
- Any draft policy could be a part of the last goal in our E-Learning recommendations.
- A policy is an enforcement.
- A faculty member has to have some knowledge of what the student is doing.
- Online is much vaguer compared to face-to-face methods.

Robbie will revise her draft to recognize different methods of instruction. Our goal is to draft a policy to be submitted to the Policy Committee and then on to the Academic Senate.

BLACKBOARD TRAINING

Jackie reported that classes are scheduled through January 2012. Atomic Learning class last Tuesday had about ten people in attendance, and another class is scheduled for this Friday. Everyone is invited, faculty and staff. Please encourage attendance, as numbers are being tracked.

ROUNDTABLE

Teresa reported that a student she spoke with is still going to five different places online to get his homework, and she fears we will lose our web-enhanced and blended-course students. **Robbie suggested this as a topic for our next meeting: Extending the policy of requiring all fully online courses use FerrisConnect as their portal to include blended and web-enhanced classes.**

Robbie reported that a credit hour has now been mandated by the federal government for college-level work: for every hour, two hours’ work is expected outside the classroom. The HLC has adopted this as its policy. On our website in the Academic Advising Guide it is stated that for every three hours’ credit, three hours outside are expected.

Elaine asked Spence for a report on Atomic Learning to be published in her newsletter, as well as information on the Sloan conference from those who attended. The deadline is November 30, and she would appreciate any contributions from anyone with news.

Cheryl reported that Monday, her group will start making calls to those on waiting lists. The automated online waiting list placement is still working wonderfully.

NEXT MEETING

Thursday, December 1, 2011 10:30 am to 12:00 pm CSS-302

Meeting adjourned at 11:56 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Marilyn Bejma