

10 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Attending: Ellen Haneline, Dave Nicol, Cheryl Cluchey, Elaine McCullough, Enid Carlson-Nagel, Kristin Salomonson (part of day), Rick VanSant, Bill Knapp, John Urbanick, Robbie Teahen and Leonard Johnson (part of day).

Absent: None

Introduction of New Member

Gloria Lukusa-Barnett who had been an invited member of the group but was unable to participate much during the fall semester is on sabbatical this semester. She is being replaced by Rick VanSant, a faculty member from the College of Education and Human Services. Rick was invited because of three important roles he fills: (1) He teaches fully online courses, which is the focus of this group's attention; (2) He is a FerrisConnect trainer, so brings this experience; and (3) he is reassigned half-time this semester to the Faculty Center for Teaching and Learning to assist with varied projects to develop faculty, including the New Faculty Orientation and Transition program.

Sharing of Senate plan and Membership

The proposed activities and current membership of the new Senate ad hoc committee for online was distributed. In general, the Senate group sees its role as being the link to the Senate regarding online learning. One of their concerns is the class size issue.

Update on the Class Size Progress

Robbie shared the current status of the class-size concern, since that continues to be an issue in the minds of many for a variety of reasons. Last summer a draft policy was proposed to the FFA that was consistent with findings from our research about other institutions' practices. In short, that proposal was that class size should be determined at the departmental level and be consistent with the size already determined to be optimal for particular courses, as approved on the UCC documents. There is concern about that being the policy and believe online classes should be smaller than face-to-face sections. Therefore, in November, the Office of Academic Affairs recommended that the FFA and Senate each appoint three individuals to serve on a class-size committee to make a recommendation. The VPAA will also appoint three administrators to this committee – one from Academic Affairs, one dean, and one department head or associate dean.

Review of Priorities

At an earlier meeting, this group identified what they considered to be their priority issues for attention. There was some discussion about our priorities with great concern expressed about limiting students' access to online courses because they are in demand. The tension between the pedagogical considerations (resulting in the lowering of some maxes, thus limiting access) and the business model (the institution's need to achieve higher productivity – staffing fewer sections) was explored in detail. There is a great concern that the class size issue be addressed soon. Faculty resources are limited. It is believed we should not/cannot cap at a set number – it has a lot to do with what the face-to-face approach is. Several offered the observation that some of the cap size concerns is due to online class management as it has been noted that some faculty have moved to an individualized approach in the online environment when they would have managed the class differently face-to-face. For example, they would not answer the same question 20 times in the face-to-face classroom, and the methods for answering the same question just once in the online classroom are not being utilized.

There was extensive discussion about the determination of priority audiences. Some are uncomfortable with establishing these priorities but think we should have sufficient offerings for all comers. However, given the limited faculty resources and the current class-size environment, we cannot serve as many students in some key areas in online as we do face-to-face. Therefore, the group concluded that the first priority needs to be focused on students who are enrolled in online programs. The earlier “priority audiences” list was refined to this:

1. Students enrolled in online programs
2. Students who must enroll for online courses, (in order to complete a degree)
3. Students who choose online courses when there are face-to-face options available

Cheryl Cluchey noted that as of the Friday, January 9, the final day before classes begin, there are 229 students on wait lists. Many of these are for classes in the Humanities. There was conversation about how we encourage more faculty to prepare themselves to teach online sections if that is what our student clientele wants. The group reviewed the FFA contract that specifies that online sections must first be offered to qualified members, although we have many who are not interested in teaching these classes. Reference was made to contract section 7.2a.2 – non-traditional methodology – b – first offered to qualified members. If insufficient volunteers, members may be assigned consistent with procedures. There is concern about faculty being assigned if they are not well suited to or prepared for online teaching.

Faculty Training

There was agreement that we need to make training more available and accessible to help people manage online classes more effectively so they are not unnecessarily inundated with masses of e-mails, etc. We need to consider offering PDIs for continuing updates because those early adopters may not have updated their skills with the advances in technology and pedagogy. In general, there is a belief that more training is needed for new faculty and improving the capabilities of existing faculty.

Emerging strategies – We need to consider encouraging a trickle-down approach. Ruth Mirtz did a workshop in English for 14 faculty. She showed others how to use voice insertion, as one example. There is a faculty committee in English that is helping and mentoring others. The model is becoming “distributed.” There is some thought that the FCTL might best do the generic training with the discipline specific training being done at the College or program level. There is a definite need for discipline specific mentoring and coaching. It was noted, however, that the “mentoring” model used for the first year in FerrisConnect was not effective.

Meeting Changing Demands

The group agreed to review the goals and priority audiences twice each year. We anticipate that a tension will continue to exist between the demand we believe exists for more online options and the colleges’ ability and/or interest in meeting it. Part of this reluctance stems from the lower enrollment for some courses and in other cases to a belief system about the experience that should be provided for our on-campus students.

The “pay for performance” model used in a few other institutions was reviewed and discussed. In this situation faculty are paid on a per-student basis. There is some general hesitation about this approach. The fear being whether integrity may be compromised by those most interested in what they could earn versus what students would learn. There was also concern expressed about the limitation that exists in the number of courses a faculty member is allowed to teach without special FFA approval. For example, Elaine suggested that she and others may be amenable to adding an additional class for overload pay,

i.e. a 6th class. At this time, this exceeds contract limitations. This idea was thought to be more acceptable by the community. A benefit to this model is that the potentially lower productivity is in the overload mode and then not as costly as when taught as a part of base load.

Roles to be Filled in Planning and Organization

The “goal” identified on the agenda was to determine what was needed to move online program, administration, and delivery more significantly into the colleges. The group went down this path for a while until someone asked and then remarked: “Why are we doing this? It makes no sense.” This was the consensus view. This belief was based upon the fact that additional infrastructure would be required in each college and that this did not appear to be the most efficient or effective approach. Thus, the group brainstormed which activities should be centralized and which should be done at the colleges in support of online courses and programs. The list follows.

Decentralized (in the colleges)

Administration of online offerings at college level (selection of personnel, decisions about offerings, etc.)
Discipline specific mentoring for faculty and students
Sponsor Program online committees
Faculty contracts (preparation)
Transcript analysis
Space for any personnel
Equipment for personnel (each person has about \$3,000 of equip)
S&E
Designated college liaison/champion (such as Debbie Buck in AHS)

Centralized

Lead administrator
FCTL training
Instructional design
Instructional technology support
Marketing – web and conventional
Admissions liaison
Training – certification
Standards – peer review
Resource management
Advising
Contracts (such as technology, etc.)
Funding
Admissions for online/non-traditional
Advising – dedicated online advisor(s)
Data analysis
Evaluation

Benefits of Centralized

Economies of scale
Increased consistency
People skilled in their areas – vs. several “parts”
Eliminate redundancy

Single-site access for students

Probably does make sense to have colleges do the faculty contracts since they have to handle that paperwork anyway, but they need to have the money to do it. Recording centrally enables us to determine what the total costs are.

Consideration of Fee

Not likely to find support for adding a fee.

Lead Administrator and Support Roles

The group believes the first position that needs to be filled is a person whose full-time commitment is to online learning because of the current and future size of the effort. Along with this position, there needs to be administrative/clerical support. Following are the expected duties. Some guidance was provided by position postings in other schools for “Director of Distance Learning” and similar titles.

- Resource management (people, funding, allocations)
- Planning
- Quality control of delivery – overall delivery and service
- Content-specific learning belongs to the College
- For example, at Weber there is a “Before class checklist;” “first-week-of-class checklist;” throughout semester checklist; final week of class checklist. FCTL could oversee the development of these checklists, but they should not be the enforcers. Would need to work with faculty to develop these quality checks.
- Faculty contracts (coordination/management – prepared at College level)
- Assessment
- Evaluation

Instructional Design

- Needs to be multiple designers (for beginning faculty and continuing development of faculty)
- Post-tenure review (could be made to work – process needs to consider design characteristics of learning)
- Tenure review process (are there ways to use current processes?)

Instructional Technologist

- Training

Manage IT Pieces

- Mary Holmes
- Team effort
- Need help desk and services available

Student Services

Note – Debby works until 7 and busiest time is after 5

- Coordination of advising
- Enrollment
- Directing paperwork or people to right places
- Per student population: 1:700 is too many; maybe 300. Recently there were 1319 unique students /2290 registrations – 468 admitted to fully online programs
- Liaison to the programs (in some models, these people work for the dean)

Marketing

- Needs analysis/market analysis
- Promotion

Assessment

- Need to assure quality of learning. One reported that a faculty member teaching online did not expect the online students to learn as much . . . we need to assure consistent outcomes

Communication Management

Train with Quality Matters – people use to evaluate

Train with our best practices?

Certification program

Award program – process could be helpful

Creation of Office of Online Learning – FerrisOnline

The group is comfortable with the FerrisOnline branding and recommends a dedicated office for online learning. The group recommended that the location for that office may best be CPTS because they presently have the student support services. One member noted that he had seen more positions like our proposed director being advertised in the past 12-16 months. People in the office would be the Director and an administrative assistant.

The director needs to be a leader who beats the bushes, and finds resources. – This plan includes having each college responsible for providing their online learning plan. In Year 2, we increase the effort by adding support services, i.e. Student Services. EMAT believes we can limp along for one more year doing what we are doing. In Year 3, it will be important to add faculty in those programs which are growing.

It is suggested that FerrisOnline be designed so that it is self-sustaining; some centralized; some decentralized. The goal is to have the plan fully operational in three years. Following are several suggestions made by the group that were to be placed into a budget. (Editor's Note: This subsequent budget proposal has been developed and reviewed with the budget office as a concept and will be shared with the group at the January 23 meeting.)

Components of the Plan

- Web Services – Advancement Office or contract service – Cheryl will get estimate from J. Hegenauer
- Establish the FerrisOnline Office is a major step in the 3-year plan
- Director – 1st year - \$65-80K who will be responsible for coordinating all activities (e.g. Director, Online Education)
- Clerical Person – 1st year – Admin Assistant versus a person working at another's direction - \$40,000. The person filling this position needs to be an independent thinker
- Instructional Designer – 2nd year – add training in design and related topics
- Student Services – 2nd year
- Marketing Person (example)
- Year 2 – add 2-3 FTEs
- Year 3 – add orientation, assessment - additional FTEs
- Year 3 – add instructional designer

- Course Development Contract – Do we continue to pay for course development? We need to have policy concerning enhancement. Lot of schools do not pay for course development – but they pay for them to participate in training and work with designers.
- Make note: faculty will identify faculty needs as growth occurs.
- The Faculty Center for Teaching and Learning will coordinate and provide the appropriate training based on faculty needs.
- The following table is intended to begin to capture what items would be included in each fiscal year. The lack of time limited the E-MAT’s ability to more fully complete this list.

Year 1 (2009-2010)	Year 2 (2010-2011)	Year 3 (2011-12)
Establish Office of Ferris Online	Continue to establish FerrisOnline	Continue to establish FerrisOnline
Hire Director	Add Instructional Designer (1+) \$65,000	Hire additional Instructional Designer (2+) \$70,000
Develop college-specific student support model (combo of decentralized and centralized)	Replicate the student support model to two additional colleges	Add College-based Student Liaison
Add Administrative/Student support \$40,000		Add faculty
FerrisOnline – E-Learning Administrator support (IT position -paid for one year by President’s office).	E-learning administrator (IT position)	Add E-learning administrator for FerrisOnline
Website development - \$ - Pace and Partners - \$20,000		

It is clear that 100% of revenue will not be available for supporting fully online. Therefore, the proposal suggested that we build a budget with 50% - 55% of revenue to FerrisOnline.

Spring Semester – 46% of SCH of off-campus is online – suggesting that CPTS has a large stake in the outcomes because about half of their students are enrolled in online courses, and they are established as a self-supporting entity. Ability to sustain the group is predicated upon increased resources to make it happen.

These conversations will be continued at the next meeting scheduled for January 23, 2009.