Attendance: Robbie Teahen (facilitator), Ellen Haneline, Leonard Johnson, Dave Nicol, Cheryl Cluchey, Elaine McCullough, John Urbanick, Bill Knapp, Don Green (guest)

Absent: Rick Van Sant, Kristen Salomonson

Agenda

- Review of the Deans' planning meeting
- Review of the EMAT goals

In the Deans' Unit Action Planning meeting, Academic Affairs followed Pharmacy's presentation. Robbie Teahen presented the goals and budget for Ferris' online effort in fiscal year 2009-2010. The Deans understood the need for a formal online budget and the monies to support the effort in spite of the budget constraints Ferris is presently experiencing. The most difficult task the Council struggled with is to find a solution in balancing what they know the student needs to be and the corresponding demand for online courses , to what is feasible fiscally and pedagogically. In addition, the University has a responsibility to balance its online demand for resources against the demands for resources on campus. Out of this discussion, the Deans divided themselves into three task groups in order to identify options for a balanced solution. The three task groups were (1) strategy for online, (2) enrollment management which would target space, and (3) program management, which would identify programs to be eliminated or added as well as evaluate the health of existing programs. The last group wasn't to identify programs to be eliminated or added, but to create criteria by which to evaluate the health of a program and need to add a program. The task groups were to return with their solutions at their next Tuesday Deans' Council meeting. Since there is no additional money, the question becomes, "How do we keep moving forward?" The conclusion was that the University needs to do so within its current resources.

The committee to develop a strategy for online learning at Ferris was comprised of Ellen Haneline, Robbie Teahen, Leah Monger, and Don Green. This committee agreed on the following:

- Ferris has the opportunity to grow CAHS online as the College is currently experiencing growth in all of its online programs.
- They reviewed Capella, University of Phoenix and other for-profit institutions, but concluded they did not want to be like them.
- Ferris should identify/benchmark where it is currently in the marketplace and identify where it could/should be.
- There is growth potential in online programs, if the University develops the correct model.
- Ferris must exceed the cost of running its online programs to allow growth to take place. Some of the suggestions where changes need to occur in the current practice were:
  - ➢ Change the instructional staffing model. Class sizes need to be adjusted to create an affordable model and practice. For example, one option could be the FFA's acceptance to allow faculty to voluntarily take on a second overload. Another option might be paying

faculty extra on a per-SCH or per-student basis when caps are exceeded (with a maximum limit). It is recognized both of these options are faculty contract issues.

➢ Redefine tenure, evaluation, service, and instruction to include the online environment situation (faculty contract issue).

➢ Assure the quality of instruction and content online with faculty mentoring and faculty coordinators should more adjuncts be hired (faculty contract issue).

➢ Online organizational structure and strategy must be formalized.

  o Don Green will contribute more to the cause. On the other hand, he expects remuneration for the costs in addition to some extra money for the investment. His contribution will be to free Cheryl's and Kathy's time to be more available to support online courses and programs. This does not address the eventual need for a director of online learning but it does give the University greater capacity in certain student support services.

➢ Develop an active student outreach service process. Ferris needs to be more proactive, not reactive, with its online students. There needs to be a process in place that allows for contacting students that have not logged in for their course at specific intervals. This can be accomplished by either the faculty or a student service representative calling the student to determine what the issue is and what needs to happen to rectify the situation.   In the for-profits, a similar model of intervention has proven to be successful in retaining students.

  o The University needs a sophisticated tracking system for student participation in online courses. How are students served in Capella or University of Phoenix. What is done to keep the students engaged? Ferris is good at recruiting, but it needs to learn how to increase its student retention. Retention needs to be part of the solution to the online model and practice. Every campus Robbie has visited for the HLC, be it a public or private institution, knows every semester how its face-to-face and online courses are doing. Ferris doesn't have an accurate count of how many students it loses in its online or face-to-face courses.

➢ Another idea is to charge the degree-granting undergraduate colleges with a goal for them to increase their online enrollment at least 10% with students who are not on-campus.

➢ A common model at Ferris is to allow an increase in work load and then add resources in response. CAS faculty may not be able to teach all the online courses in demand as faculty required to teach at least one face-to-face course per semester in this College. This practice will inevitably create a road block in being able to teach "enough" online courses. Consequently, the University will continue to struggle to meet the online demand for courses supporting online programs.

➢ Ferris needs to decide how to handle full-time faculty who teach wholly online programs. Some colleges require faculty presence on campus at least some of the time. Some colleges don't require any presence. Does this need to be an institutional policy, or can it be left to each college to make their own "attendance" rules?

Comments:

Funding model: John Urbanick commented that Ferris did have a funding model for growth at one time. Colleges were to be rewarded for increases in their enrollment, but the reverse was not true for college decreases in enrollment. Although Academic Affairs received the tuition revenue growth of $269K, the total expenditures increased by six million. There needs to be a balance between those colleges that are growing and those that are shrinking.

Adjuncts: As we reviewed the possibility of having more adjuncts teach courses, it was asked what the contract stipulation was for adjuncts. According to the faculty contract, there cannot be more than 18% adjuncts for on-campus courses; off-campus courses (those coded as off-campus) do not have the same percentage.

Student priority for online courses: Currently the priority for enrollment into online courses is for students who are in online programs or who are outside of the Big Rapids community and can't take a face-to-face course. The goal for online programs and courses is to broaden the "net" and make those courses available to all, regardless if they are on- or off-campus students. It was noted that Ferris has an opportunity for growth right now. However, Ferris needs to be strategic in its offerings and open to reviewing its current practices, particularly if it prohibits new students from taking online courses. For example, if Ferris allows the Colleges to offer its summer online classes to only its on-campus students, those departments embracing this practice essentially are not growing. Ferris needs encourage new audiences, if it is to grow.

Flexibility & new programs: Don Green's perspective is that Ferris has seen its biggest days on campus unless it offers new programs. For example, COET is developing an energy systems program. Bill Knapp said he noticed that there is a greater interest from Ferris students to have courses that are more flexible. They are expecting education to come to them with flexibility and convenience. Ferris is currently in a position to accommodate them in a variety of ways that can meet their needs. For example, offering more blended courses is a viable option. Ferris also needs to reach out to community colleges as they are growing the fastest, particularly in these economic times. If Ferris really focuses on tying these students into our programs from all over the State we can bring in many new students over the next two years. However, flexibility may need to be offered in how the programs are delivered. But, the problem remains – the Ferris need to increase its online program inventory. Right now, Ferris is at capacity with its online programs. To grow and compete, Ferris needs to offer additional product. We have to have programs to sell. In order to develop new programs, we need funds to develop them online. If Ferris is not going to pay for development, then there will probably be no more courses. AHELL suggested to pay for modules versus courses and essentially develop reimbursement for module use in royalties, i.e. if "I used them, I pay for them. "

Anticipating numbers in courses and meeting demand: When programs are developed to be run in cohorts, it makes it easier for administrators in the supporting colleges to anticipate the student enrollment in the required courses in any given semester.

Deans' Council response to these goals and EMAT's goals.

What is our instructional model that will allow the University to provide online learning without losing money? For the University to benefit from online growth, it has to have money left over to provide for infrastructure and instructional support. The following is a list of several options that the University can consider.

- o Every college functions a little differently and their programs also function differently depending upon the curriculum. One possibility could be to have each college be responsible for a staffing model that does not exceed a specific percentage of cost to revenue. For example, if the model requires costs not to exceed 65% to revenue generated, the average class size would need to be 26 students per class to break even. Another example of a model could be using a combination of adjuncts and full-time faculty. In this scenario, again, the costs don't exceed a specified percentage to revenue generated. However, in this model it will be necessary to include a stipend for compensating people who mentor and coach adjuncts to ensure the quality and integrity of the program.

Ferris needs to learn to work differently. For example, some faculty who teach online still try to make a 1:1 conversion to their online classes. They do not take advantage of some of the services offered through the FCTL which could help them make adjustments in their online course design and teaching. In the budget, monies were reallocated from administrative services (a director and an assistant) to instructional design services with the thought it would add more value to students and faculty.

Robbie suggested EMAT align its goals to those that Don, Ellen and she created. If any large discrepancies occurred, then Robbie would flag them as they appeared. Robbie committed to get back to the EMAT group within the week if any "red flags" occurred.

The meeting adjourned on March 6, 2009 at 10:00/a. The next meeting is scheduled for Friday, April 24 at 8:30/A in CSS302.

Respectfully submitted,

Enid Carlson