

Present: Stacey Anderson, Enid Carlson, Cheryl Cluchey, Bill Knapp, Elaine McCullough, Dave Nicol, Kristen Salomonson, Rick Van Sant, Robbie Teahen, John Urbanick (left early). Guest for early part of meeting: Kathy Fisher

Absent: Ellen Haneline, Leonard Johnson

Withdrawal Reports

The group reviewed the current version of the withdrawal and grades-above-C report. The group agrees that the information will be more useful than prior (and no) versions. Instead of two years' data, the group prefers to have future reports include the current three-year span to see any possible trends, including improvements. There is an interest to know how our data compares to that of others, and Enid was asked to try to gather this information. It was also suggested that we do some "intra-group" comparisons, among colleges, within colleges, etc. As the Colleges prepare their online development plans, use of this data should be included. The group confirms the concern raised by Dean Haneline in an earlier e-message: Withdrawals is not the most important measure; we need to reach a point where we are comparing achievement of learning outcomes, whether face-to-face or online. However, the group concludes that this is one piece of information that is valuable in identifying improvement opportunities and that a pretty reasonable hypothesis is that if students are not completing the courses, they are probably also not achieving the learning outcomes. Kathy will provide a revised version that groups by colleges.

Preliminary Eduventures Report

The group reviewed the preliminary information provided by Eduventures resulting from our university-wide survey. Concern was expressed about the low percentage of return, suggesting no ability to generalize, but there was agreement that the results reflect the views of this group of more than 500 students. In addition, Rick suggested that we ask whether the results "make sense" based upon our other information. For the most part, what we learned seemed to make sense. Foremost among this group of students' concerns is the availability of courses, and the possible support services tested appear not to be as important. However, both on-campus and off-campus students were surveyed, and the on-campus student has far better access to face-to-face services. Additional breakouts of the data by Eduventures should reveal whether the distant student has different perceptions.

Questions were raised about whether we would have been better served to select a representative sample and make greater attempts to get responses. Further, the length of survey was probably a factor in our limited response rate. At the same time, we wanted enough detail on which student service the student was interested in (or not). Offering incentives in the future was encouraged.

Next Study

The group explored what next study would be useful. The following options were presented, but there was also no compelling question that surfaced within the group. The question for members to consider is "what question do we need additional information about?" Who do we need it from? The possible ideas included these:

1. Drill down further into this data set by doing a more in-depth analysis of some of the findings. For example, what are the FerrisConnect problems referenced? What are the gaps in timelines with instructor feedback, etc. It was suggested that telephone interviews may be helpful here to gain a fuller, likely qualitative, understanding.

2. Suggestion was that we use Eduventures for something less do-able by us, as we are able to generate quickly some routine quantitative surveys.
3. Elaine suggested we may want to do an intensive pre-post with the group that is joining the Lang and Lit department's Community of Learners, in partnership with FCTL. This had some interest because of the captive audience and the possibility to do some pre-post inquiry.
4. Another was the faculty's interest in using different technologies, their experience teaching online, their need for support, etc. At FAB yesterday, questions about knowing what the priority technologies are for faculty at large was the proposed possible subject of a survey by FCTL or FAB.
5. Bill suggested an interest in knowing about the technology students are using and would use, such as handheld devices, laptops, clickers, laptops, frequency of texting, whether texting is limited by their service provider agreements, etc.
6. Dave thought a faculty survey might address how faculty have evolved over the years in their use of technology, what has driven their evolution (e.g. peer pressure, pressure from students, desire to reach students). His thought is that if we understood this process, we might be able to better support faculty advancement in the effective use of technology.

Instructional Design

At the Big Tent meeting, beyond the issues of class size and overlapping groups, the main concern raised was that concerning the quality of instruction in the online environment. One action item coming from that group was the expansion of instructional design capacity. A small group of individuals has been at work to develop a response to this need. Present thinking is to create a faculty learning community around this topic with deliverables to include a design course and/or a prototype model course.

Prior Faculty Survey

Bill and John shared that a survey of the faculty last year regarding FerrisConnect generally should provide some guidance in our planning efforts. Bill will distribute that report to all E-MAT members.

Distance Education Report Publication

Without the exact quote at hand, but recalling that it was less than \$3,000 for all at the University to access an online version of the Distance Education report, the group decided that they did not feel there would be much use for this document and that it would not likely be widely read. Some felt that a more useful approach would be to have a graduate student, as an example, scan them and share synopses occasionally . . . like one tip of the week. It was agreed that we would NOT go to a university e-version and that Robbie would route issues to Elaine so that she could incorporate some highlights as she sees appropriate into the Lang and Lit newsletter.

Costs of Online Instruction for Fall

The total costs of online instruction for fall are still pending the arrival of the data from one college. The due date is today. We will then be able to share an overall perspective of total direct costs of instruction for online instruction this semester along with the revenue derived from online. Again the topic of not attributing services like the FCTL or FerrisConnect to just the online environment was reiterated. As soon as this information is complete, we will know whether the budgeted online supplemental faculty amounts (that will be transferred to the colleges at yearend) will be sufficient. It is possible that it will be, because it appears that the majority of online teaching is by regular faculty inload. More detail on this topic will be forthcoming at the next meeting in October. Beginning imminently, budgets have to be better managed across the University with an expectation that expenses will not exceed budgeted amounts. This may mean fewer sections being offered. Prior practice has been for excess supplemental costs to be covered by Academic Affairs at yearend.

Planning

It is expected that planning will be accelerated this year, and whatever requests we may wish to submit will need to be prepared potentially as early as December. The planning process and timelines are forthcoming. The Deans' Council has plans to meet each Wednesday afternoon beginning next week to set strategic directions for Academic Affairs – and thus the University in large part. Certainly the place of online in that plan will be one major focus area. Robbie suggested that we crystallize OUR vision for the online to feed to that process, while Dave observed that the plans of E-MAT for online may better flow from the AA plan. In the end, we should expect an iterative process. Thus, vision elements will be a topic of future consideration so that these ideas can be offered to the Deans' Council.

Spring Calling

Because of challenges of getting a good list, best scenario is to have faculty identify any students who have not logged into their courses within the first two days and provide this list to CPTS for follow-up to get them assistance or to fill their slot if they intend to drop.

Next Meetings

There will be one meeting per month planned for the fall. Invitations will be forthcoming.