Present: Stacey Anderson, Marilyn Bejma, Cheryl Cluchey, Elise Gramza, Paula Hagstrom, Ellen Haneline, Leonard Johnson, Meegan Lillis, Elaine McCullough, Dave Nicol, Robbie Teahen, Spencer Tower, John Urbanick

Guest: Fritz Erickson

Call to Order: 10:05 a.m.

Provost Erickson spoke to the group, confirming that the role of online learning is an increasingly important one, both fully online as well as blended courses. He asked the group to discuss where we are, where we see obstacles, and what we need to do to be able to get to our goals.

AN FSU ONLINE VISION

A Vision for online teaching has never been established by the university, although this was something urged during the first round of SPARC. We need to figure out how to use our resources and have an online-teaching plan for every college. Each college presently is looking at online teaching with a different view and different priorities. Some colleges are experiencing fewer students in their online courses than their face-to-face classes, but this is not consistent across the university.

When looking at our competition, we are well ahead of most, and this could be a great marketing point. However, we cannot accommodate the online demand as it is and need to have a standardized vision in place to move forward. This summer, two Math classes were offered: one online, and one in the classroom. Enrollment was six in the classroom and 22 in the online course. Of the 22 online students, 15 were in Big Rapids. Should the six have been moved into the online course? How does online demand translate into resource allocation?

Later clarification regarding online math class from Cheryl Cluchey: "I believe this is a little different as the instructor was using Tegrity while teaching the 2 and/or 5 (that's what was in the 2 sections of f-2-f) and then there ended up being 16 in each online section of MATH 117. The faculty was being paid for one combined section and was using the f-2-f to tape for the online. Also, many of the Big Rapids students were actually only taking online classes - some while on internship,so not sure that they were here for the summer."

We should look at the work we did a year or so ago. We came up with a good framework of what online could look like at Ferris. When we did put together a vision, there was resistance, pointing out that the university already has a vision, and that online teaching is a deliverable toward achieving the vision. What do we do when there are conflicting visions?

There is a strategic plan in place for online learning – it is an initiative under the Strategic Goal Number 1 for the university:

> **Goal 1: Become a demonstrable center of excellence in educational quality and student learning.**

1: Initiative 3 - Cultivate a stimulating, student-centered learning environment that integrates theory and practice.

- **The E-Learning Management Team supported a pilot training program in the use of Quality Matters as a framework for evaluating the quality of online courses. Several Ferris faculty and staff completed this intensive several-week training program and will serve as reviewers and trainers for future groups, in addition to making their courses accessible for others to review as models.**

Online teaching is critically important to the life of our institution. Once we have a plan, we will be able to commit the institution's resources.

PRIORITIZING ONLINE SCHEDULING

The President's view is that any student should get the classes he wants and needs. Should we be offering online classes to any student who is interested, whether that be an off-campus student or a student in one of our residence halls who prefers to work from his room at 2:00 in the morning rather than attend a traditional classroom setting; or, with limited classes being offered online, should priority be given to off-campus students? Data shows students today would rather chat and social-network electronically than communicate in person. Is it a safe assumption that this is also their class preference?

The trend in libraries for some time now has been to get information online whenever available, rather than come into the library building. Student expectation today is to be able to receive support any time, every day. The perception of parents is that when their student is away at college, he is working in a classroom setting; and when that student is home working online, he is not really "at school."

We all agree that the online experience is expanding, whether or not we are keeping up and ready for it; and we feel that if we cannot offer our students an online course they need, they will enroll elsewhere, where it is offered. About 25 percent of FSU students are currently taking online classes from multiple institutions.

ONLINE CLASS SIZE CAPS AND 24/7 SUPPORT

We need to address the issue of cap and how other schools are dealing with 24/7 support for online courses. Across the board, we are well under the average cap for online classes of 37.

The biggest student complaint of online teaching is that they do not know where their instructor has gone. Traditionally, office hours are offered to all of a faculty's advisees, not just those who are taking his/her courses. How does this affect the online professor, and how do we best expand service on weekends and late at night? Robbie feels the HLC visiting team this spring will be critical of the online access our faculty is currently offering.

Every faculty member feels they are the best to build their classes and the best to deliver instruction. If you have more than one instructor developing the online class, you will get differing opinions. We do

not have the lateral communication to help each other. Sharing with each other how to teach online will normalize our product and make it more uniform. At the department level, class size should be increased but still make sure the instructors are delivering the product. We will see a big jump in productivity if we can learn to share what we know with each other. The quality of the courses and delivery is in the domain of the colleges.

Many universities require instructors take an online course before they are qualified to teach online.

The College of Allied Health Sciences practices quite a bit of sharing and has a Master Syllabus. Every year, it has a "best practices" meeting.

FUTURE OF ONLINE TEACHING AT FSU

We have three decisions to choose from: 1) we can embrace and invest in our online future, 2) we can plateau and stay where we are, and 3) we can get out of the online business.

We need to identify whom we want to serve, and we have to establish our basics before we can offer online courses outside our community, nationally or globally. We should consider the effort it takes to support an online student opposed to a full-time on-campus student. Should we require an orientation of our online students? What are we going to do to help online students be more successful? Does our group take a leadership role to put together a mission, vision and strategic plan for online teaching?

At this time, the colleges are decentralized, not universal. We should strive to be decentralized and have autonomy at the college level, but within a university-wide framework. General directions are needed, to be tailored by each college toward its needs. We need a group to take us toward our process.

We are ahead of the game statewide, except for the for-profit schools. We should capitalize on this – dwindling resources are an issue. Plans that include growth give us opportunities to look for resources.

 A shortage of students for housing is becoming an issue. If we remove the satellite locations, would students come here? We highly doubt it and feel they would find another institution offering what they need. We must see classroom and online teaching as a collaborative rather than a competitive effort. Online issues are different to those of the classroom, but we are in terrific shape and opportunities are great.

Let's try to get a process in place. An earlier deadline is best so chaotic practices do not become institutionalized expectations. University planning cycles around February, and we will use that timeframe as our goal to have something in the planning process. Whatever we do has to be transparent and open to anyone. We will also consider a multi-year plan as a possibility.

KEY IT PRIORITIES

John talked about his hand-out of a e-mail from Jerry Scoby:

- August 5 Key IT priorities meeting was a listening session.

- o   Top five needs were asked for, and this handout is the outcome.
- New leadership on campus.
- We are not aligned with what he saw coming.
- What are the support needs for the university?
- IT is in the process of realigning resources to meet the university's needs.
- How do we get feedback from others on campus?
- IT is in the process of reassigning a vacancy for online learning support. This position has not been defined yet.
- How do we need to apply resources during the 24 hours?
- Tegrity issue: manufacturer does have 24/7 support.
  - o   An evaluation of alternatives to Tegrity is being conducted.
  - o   FAB has a subgroup to look at Tegrity.

Robbie reported that the A-HELP group will ask a representative to attend our meetings and report back to them.

NEXT MEETING

Wednesday, October 13, 2010, 10:00 a.m. in CSS 302.

Meeting adjourned 11:35 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Marilyn Bejma