



DISTANCE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Adopted Minutes

February 27, 2012

Room 101

2:30 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Chair Dale Crandall-Bear called the meeting to order at 2:34 p.m.

Roll: Dale Crandall-Bear, Chair; Karen Cook; Marylou Fracisco; Jeffrey Lamb; Scott Ota; Philip Petersen; Roy Pike; Philip Summers; Robin Sytsma; Connie Adams

Guests: Gene Thomas

Absent/excused: George Dugavietis; Mary Gumlia; Sandra Rotenberg;

Mary Gumlia submitted her written resignation by email prior to the meeting.

Roy requested adding a discussion to consider written plans on how the Committee should be run. Dale pointed out that the White Paper is the DE Committee's official document and the only changes made were in Committee representation based on the College reorganization.

1. Approval of Minutes – December 12, 2011 and January 30, 2012

Motion to Approve December 12, 2011 Minutes – Roy Pike; Seconded – Jeff Lamb; Passed – Unanimous

Motion to Approve January 30, 2012 Minutes - Roy Pike; Seconded – Karen Cook; Discussion – Mary emailed corrections which Connie incorporated and forwarded to the Committee. Also, for clarification, "LMS Selection" was added to Item 2, first paragraph, last sentence; Passed as amended – Unanimous

2. LMS Platform Selection – Issues from Academic Senate Meeting

Dale emailed four documents to the Committee in preparation for this meeting: LMS Timeline; Pilot Program draft; DE Course Master List, and; LMS Compensation ideas. He reported that clarification was needed on issues brought up at the February 27th Academic Senate meeting. The topics were: 10 + 1; support; cost; pilot programs; migration; compensation, and; timeline. Dale had meetings with Senate President Watkins, EVP Reyes, and S/P Laguerre, and great progress has been made on all issues. Dale emailed documents to the Committee to use in today's update. He reported that President Watkins received confirmation from the State Academic Senate office that LMS is not an Academic Senate issue. Jeff noted that the Academic Senate should be included in an advisory capacity, but not for approval and Dale added that it would clearly be just for advisory.

Roy queried about the role of the DE Committee. Dale responded that the DE Committee, as a subcommittee of the Academic Senate, is also involved in an advisory capacity. Some DE members served on the LMS Selection Committee, but it was not a DE subcommittee.

EVP Reyes negotiated with Canvas to include premium support at a 50% discount for a 3-year contract. It is the top of the line support, accepting calls 24/7, and increases the first year Canvas cost to \$205,000. Canvas noted that not many clients need or use the premium support. Dale will request that support data is reviewed after the first year, but it will be in the contract for three years if we want to keep it. Dale

clarified that changes to RFP requirements must go to all companies, but vendors can change proposal items and this was not official contract negotiation. Support changes are a preliminary discussion of price as an amendment to the RFP and prices are not shared with other vendors.

3. Pilot DE classes

EVP Reyes asked Dale for a DE Committee proposal of what pilot programs would look like. The Committee will not make the decision but EVP Reyes will discuss the proposal with the deans and probably with S/P Laguerre. If administration agrees to a pilot program, it will be small with no more than six classes and not a full summer program. Canvas would allow this test run to practice classes and automatic batch migration while instructors test out minor migration. DE member input is needed. A key component of a pilot program would need instructors to be part of a team and very open to others looking at their courses in order to be thoroughly vetted and examined as the program goes forward. They would mentor colleagues to help them get courses ready and know what to look for.

Comments/questions

Roy shared concerns raised by counselors that they might be left out of the process since they can't easily leave their desks to attend meetings and the program would not have benefit of their discussion. Dale replied that a counselor would mentor in their own department. Jeff pointed out that there may be five academic schools next fall, and counseling in student services is a very different area. It might be best to at least consider a pilot in each school and one in counseling. Dale agreed to recommend that. Marylou was concerned that starting pilots in early May could be difficult for instructors to prepare and be ready for and for students to know about and register during end of semester activities and finals. Dale responded that the initial idea was to run an eight-week summer session, but EVP Reyes raised the point that feedback could be too late for the fall term. Dale pointed out a pilot program would not be bound to any schedule and EVP Reyes would like to be done by July 1st. Marylou opined that feedback would be ongoing well before the end of the pilot program. Dale switched over his eCompanion courses to Canvas two weeks ago and is receiving feedback from students.

Originally two pilot programs per school were proposed, but the budget concern has stripped it down to one per school. Roy reported he is close to an agreement with the US Forest Service to use online technology for international studies. He has cleared the first two hurdles and will meet tomorrow with a US Forest Service representative. They are anxious to move forward and S/P Laguerre is interested in adding international studies. Roy queried if it would be wise to pilot one of those, which could be a course already taught. Philip queried how adjunct virtual lab instructors could be compensated to pilot a course. Dale recommended members and faculty discuss these questions with their colleagues and dean. EVP Reyes and the deans will decide which courses to pilot. Jeff suggested listing a variety of course types. The list included: courses with a lot of students, media or technology; a paired course; hard science with a lab; career tech, and; large lecture classes. Marylou asked if Canvas will limit courses. Jeff replied that the Canvas cost is based on FTS and didn't think there was a limit to the number of shells. With College growth the price can go up, but since it is actually shrinking the price may be lower. Jeff suggested that instructors without a pilot class could participate and experience all the bells and whistles of an online class by creating eCompanion as a reference for their face-to-face class. Dale reported that negotiations will occur after Governing Board approval and the contract would be signed in late March or early April. Instructors were encouraged to construct a Canvas course as soon as they can. Once the Canvas shell is created, a click of the button will transfer it over.

Roy queried if a late start class could be planned if it was over by June 30th, the end of the eCollege contract. Dale suggested he check with his dean. Karen requested the College say “no” to canned courses. Jeff noted that some courses are text driven and will go easily into any platform, while others are heavy with web technology. He would like to see some cutting edge technology and see how that plays into the new platform. Marylou has been spending 15 hours per class per week rewriting courses and finds it a challenge to load it all. Dale responded that Canvas will have file folders in one zip drive to load and even manual transfers can be done in bulk.

Dale asked for ideas about early start vs. summer term for pilot programs. Karen opined motivated instructors would be chosen and they could be ready for early start. Marylou raised concern about how students, completing their semester and finals, would be aware of and ready to start the classes. Scott replied that they’d have to be marketed. Roy opined once they are announced they will fill and Karen added that it would be important to keep in mind what would fill. Jeff pointed out online classes fill but agreed with Marylou that overlap of spring and pilot classes could cause confusion. He recommended pilots start a day or more after semester end. Dale will train pilot instructors and invite everyone else to participate.

Scott considered that, if summer school is cancelled, school resources and logistics might dictate an earlier pilot program. Dale replied that those are two separate decisions and pilot classes will be the test ground for everyone. General agreement from the Committee was to begin the pilots right after the end of spring semester.

4. Migration

Migration can be done manually or automatically. Dale conferred with eCollege, EVP Reyes, and Canvas. A SCORM package test export from an eCollege course was sent to Canvas. SCORM is a format to batch file export and should work with any other company. When Canvas loaded it into their shell it had a lot of file formats native to eCollege and did not work as it should. Dale stated eCollege has clearly not cooperated and has not sent the release form that he requested. Canvas plans to write some scripts for the native files, which must be decoded, to automatically transfer and then create a mapping program. Dale asked the Committee to pass his message onto colleagues that auto batch migration is not ready to go and it may be just as much work as manual. Dale proposed the transfer be done in two phases. Instructors should have a choice to manually copy their own course content into a new shell and receive compensation or leave their content for batch transfer. A smaller batch group would be a time savings for Canvas. Manual copying would be done in May and batch transfer in June and July to have courses ready by fall. Marylou requested instructors have the option to work on their courses after finals and take responsibility to have their courses ready in time. They could sign a statement as to their choice. Dale would need to change the deadline to July 1 or 15, though it is important to know that after June 30, eCollege access may not be available. Scott suggested hiring someone to migrate shells as another option. Jeff responded that there are restrictions as to who can look at shells and Dale added that it could be more expensive to pay IT. General agreement was to complete migration in the summer.

Final points made: agreement would be made that pilot courses would be transparent but not used for peer review; instructors should back up all files before June 30, and; let colleagues know that as soon as he gets the go-ahead, Dale intends to begin training which will answer many questions.

5. LMS Timeline

- Academic Senate meets next Monday, May 6th. Dale and Senate President Watkins will work on a resolution considering compensation, support, and costs, in order to move forward with agreement from the Senate.
- President Watkins and Dale will meet as soon as possible with S/P Laguerre. He wants to address costs, hear from the Academic Senate, and he is ready to move forward and put LMS on the Governing Board agenda March 14th or 21st. Staffing support issues need to be addressed and we are pushing to increase that.

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6. Support

Dale reported that Canvas has amazing website service and a tremendous help-desk. As an open source community people can bring in topics and can search for answers. Dale will send a master course section count list to all online instructors. If an instructor teaches the same course in fall and spring, it is listed only once. Courses taught as fully online and as eCompanion count as one. A course taught by two different instructors counts as two shells. Karen has ten eCompanions and doesn't teach all of her classes every semester. Dale needs to have that kind of information before he sends the master list to Canvas. Canvas will then set up empty shells for every course taught and that becomes the master resource. Courses will be manually or batch migrated and fall courses will be copied over into shells. Canvas will be willing to work on the process before the contract is signed. Dale requested members work with their schools to identify the best shells as soon as possible. Workshop focus will begin with the pilot instructors and others can participate. Contract negotiations will begin right after Board approval, training will follow in late April, empty shells will be manually migrated first, and the pilot session will be launched with a possible date change as Marylou requested. Dale explained he doesn't know the legality of what Canvas does ahead of contract but they have done last minute scrambles before.

Jeff recommended information be forwarded to Jim Ennis in IT and noted there has to be appoint where Jim and Barbara Fountain, Director of Admissions & Records, are included in support discussions. Scott heard from IT colleagues that nothing will be connected to BANNER in the beginning so everything for the pilots will have to be done manually at first. Dale responded that the pilots will test BANNER connection. The colleges Jeff contacted that have worked with BANNER said migration was fairly fast and easy. Scott suggested forwarding a calendar for batch uploads to Canvas. Dale is setting up a conference call with Canvas, Jim, and Barbara to start the process.

The Committee has four more meetings in which to create policy for new courses, recognize mechanisms for instructor and student contact, and recommend what that might look like. Members need to speak with colleagues for follow-up in these meetings. Jeff heard that Les Hubbard gave strong recommendations for regular student contact and no canned courses. A good list of guidelines is in the DE white paper. It makes sense that a subcommittee of the Academic Senate could take the role to recommend content, Title 5 alignment, guidelines for the quality of courses, and best practice recommendations.

7. Compensation

Dale suggested discussion priority be on the four issues at the top of his compensation document to decide on a recommendation. After that, Gene Thomas, official union negotiator, can answer questions. Gene pointed out there are no provisions in the contract for stipends for special assignments. To move this forward quickly, stipends should be converted to hourly rates. Using stipends would require opening the contract and would take much more time. Members discussed their very different ideas of how much time migration would take per course. Compensation decisions need to articulate that it is for migration and not creation. Karen noted she has eCompanion online courses, grade book, and full courses. Dale agreed there is a tremendous range. Members were mostly in agreement that using required flex hours (24) and optional (36) was better than the small \$250 compensation. Many faculty have used their optional flex and felt there is no option to compensate fully. Using the flex hours would basically be paying \$2500 and would be beneficial for instructors who have unused flex time. The general agreement was based on those being the only two choices. Gene noted the deans could approve 36 hours of optional flex without the Faculty Association getting involved. The Flex Cal Committee sets up what goes on during flex. It should be faculty driven time but is sometimes administration driven, such as with needed accreditation work. Gene will have to research and check with the district regarding using 24 hours of required time for migration of course content. Marylou pointed out that it is surely part of professional development and development of good online courses. Gene opined that \$250 is insulting for all the work faculty will have to do. Dale reported that numbers were tossed about at various meetings. Gene needs feedback on adjuncts numbers as they only have about 3-5 hours of required flex and they would have to be considered fairly. Dale concluded that the issue of adjunct compensation will be more difficult to resolve than full-time. Gene stated it may cost \$2500 per adjunct to complete their migrations and even batched migration will take a lot of work. Four hours of required flex or a stipend of \$250 would not be fair. Members agreed it will be important to have clarity on the amount of time needed and the number of adjunct instructors. Roy Pike stated that administration had said eCollege was too costly but they should have looked at all the factors up front, including compensation and migration and not put the decision back on us. He added that hours required will be a guess until pilot courses are completed. Some members agree a range of 6-8 hours is an average needed for migration of a course. Gene pointed out it could cost about \$125,000 if there are 50 adjuncts at a rate of \$250. Dale noted the savings that were expected by switching the LMS have already been committed to a new dean. Marylou noted adjuncts might be paid but could end up with no classes to teach. Gene will check with the state senate, Sandy Dillon, S/P Laguerre, and Flex Chair Chuck Spillner regarding required flex limits and whether hours could be spread past one year. Dale will get counts on adjunct courses. Roy noted that when he worked for the state, they would keep a record on the books of what they couldn't pay and committed to a compensation amount at the return to normalcy or as a lump sum at retirement. Karen responded that it would need to be something measurable. Gene suggested it is best not to look to the future.

Meeting adjourned at 4:29 p.m.