



DISTANCE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Adopted Minutes

**March 12, 2012
Room 101
2:30 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.**

Chair Dale Crandall-Bear called the meeting to order at 2:37 p.m.

Roll: Dale Crandall-Bear, Chair; Karen Cook; George Daugavietis; Erin Duane; Marylou Fracisco; Jeffrey Lamb; Scott Ota; Philip Petersen; Roy Pike; Sandra Rotenberg (phone); Philip Summers; Robin Sytsma; Connie Adams

1. Approval of Minutes – February 27, 2012

Motion to Approve – Roy Pike; Seconded – Robin Systma

Discussion: Corrections made as requested by: Dale – In Item 2, line 7, change “Academic Senate” to “10 + 1” and; At the end of Item 2, add from Academic Senate President Thom Watkins – “*The following is what I reported to Dale: The selection of a learning management system most certainly is an academic and professional matter and should be determined primarily by faculty - but there is nothing in regulation to prohibit the imposition of an LMS by the administration.*”

Passed as Amended – Unanimous

2. Pearson Proposal

On March 2nd, Dale sent an email to the DE Committee to update everyone on Dr. Laguerre’s LMS decision which included the following points:

1. Extend Pearson/eCollege for three years on the basis of Pearson’s free LMS proposal. Exact particulars of the arrangement to be clarified in contract negotiations. This would give us much-needed relief from both the budgetary pressures and the truncated transition timeline.
2. Use the interim period to plan for adequate support staffing for our DE Program in the years ahead.
3. Begin a transition to a new LMS in Year 2 (2013/14), starting with pilot courses and continuing with a gradual phased transition between the old and new LMS platforms in Year 3 (2014/15).
4. It is understood that the new LMS will be Canvas (the LMS recommended by the Selection Committee), provided that we can work out the financing and assuming that a better LMS does not appear in the meantime.

Dale reported that S/P Laguerre recognized and honored the work of the Selection Committee and stated clearly to the Senate that Canvas will be the new LMS. Dale suggested completing migration in two years rather than three. When S/P Laguerre met with the Academic Senate on March 5th, several objections and concerns were raised. S/P Laguerre responded that, if he goes into contract negotiations with Pearson and isn’t satisfied, he would cut the Pearson contract to one-year and migrate to Canvas next year. Dale also pointed out that Pearson came to S/P Laguerre before to offer eCollege free with the purchase of digital books. Although he wasn’t interested at that time, it was probably the budget that caused him to revisit the free LMS. Dale sensed that S/P Laguerre is aware of concerns faculty have raised, his strategy is to get the best deal possible with Pearson which would buy a couple years if it works, and the migration can be prepared and implemented during that time. S/P Laguerre has realized

that staffing is an important issue and needs to be increased. He began calling other colleges, especially those that use or are moving to Canvas, and found they all have way more staffing than here. He also told the Senate that he would welcome faculty piloting with Canvas now to more quickly work out the bugs to ensure a smooth and efficient transition. Faculty could do as much or as little with eCompanion pilots as they want or the more ambitious might pilot online. He shared that he plans to pilot all of his courses next year, he has already switched his eCompanions over to Canvas and he is receiving very good responses from students as well as finding a few bugs, such as using the roster which doesn't go through BANNER. Philip Summers queried if others had problems with gradebooks over the weekend and explained that eCollege did an update and half of his eCompanion assignments got dropped. He did not get a satisfactory answer from tech support, no formal email notification came from eCollege, and customer support was poor. Dale will follow up on that.

Dale reported he spoke with 6-8 instructors who would like to pilot next fall. He'll send a message out to faculty, make a list of those interested, and create a users' group for a fall semester start. He will clarify with Canvas that copied content can be easily migrated. Philip questioned if, at some point, another decision will be made as to cost effectiveness. Dale replied that S/P Laguerre's two caveats were if finances aren't available and if something better comes along. S/P Laguerre asked Dale to work with him and create a list of what needs to be addressed with Pearson. Selection Committee members, Ruth Fuller and Les Hubbard, and DE Fine Arts representative, Ferdinanda Florence, were invited to share their significant concerns, which Dale will report to the DE Committee. Dale distributed copies of the Pearson RFP response that outlined their proposal (also emailed on March 11). Jeff clarified this was an addendum to their original RFP response.

Pearson Learning Studio is the new name for eCollege. Their new landing page will allow viewing of messages for multiple courses but there are no changes beyond that. At \$80 for ebooks, Pearson reported students would save money as the average cost is \$111. The material would be integrated into the LMS. A bookstore employee told Dale that federal regulations require the campus to purchase materials through Barnes & Noble, which would add to the \$80 Pearson fee. Contractual arrangements would have to go through the system. Roy noted fire course textbooks cost around \$100 and revisions occur every other year.

Other comments, concerns and questions::

- There should be some control of pilots, maybe through a select group, as policy has been to use only one platform.
- Pearson may not want to continue if their sales criteria aren't met. This will be a test for them.
- Data indicates less than 25% of students choose ebooks and many instructors don't like to use them.
- Would students who prefer to purchase hardcopy have to pay twice?
- There would likely be a disadvantage for students who don't purchase digital copy, if that is an option.
- If instructors use the same materials for more than one class, how that would be handled?
- Would instructors have the option to use hardcopy rather than ebooks?
- Many students prefer to keep books for reference and don't want the material to disappear after the class is over.
- If possible, it would be helpful to find out the current bookstore digital sales.
- Is data available on the effects of ebook use on memorization, learning, retention, and overall student success to back up Pearson's statements?

- Would faculty have to use digital content and, if so, will there be other options?
- Will Pearson offer digital textbooks or prepackaged content?
- If digital purchase were required, it would take away student choice and force some into a learning environment with limited access and beyond their computer skills.
- Caution against canned courses if Pearson is pushing content.
- \$80 would be the flat fee, whether the regular price is higher or lower.
- Per Title 5, it is illegal to charge access fees, and digital textbook fees should not be called “materials” fees.
- What if instructors want their own bells and whistles?
- Costs will fall on the College if students print their books out. Copying would have to be carefully monitored or could potentially become a big expense.
- Would all students using Pearson textbooks, or only online students, have to purchase ebooks?
- The College will save a lot, if two years are really free with eCollege.
- Pearson has to allow use of other publisher’s content.

Dale expressed concern that the written proposal was quite different from the oral presentation when Pearson claimed there would be no benchmarks for specific sales. Jeff opined their projections were based on consistent increase here and the expectation that increases in offerings and students would continue and would naturally create a growth in the number of students using their products. Erin noted that, even if there were a major surge in online, it wouldn’t guarantee instructors would adopt Pearson. Jeff replied that Pearson would look at, all things being equal, 30%-35% of our faculty use Pearson texts, based on a study done with our library.

Marylou pointed out that it doesn’t say only “online” classes adopt Pearson texts. Sandy confirmed they are counting people here who currently use Pearson, not just online instructors, because only online wouldn’t support this. So this is about taking teachers who don’t necessarily teach online and asking them to use digital textbooks. It doesn’t mean they have to teach online but it does force them into an eCompanion sort of environment although she would guess that 90% are using Pearson online as well as the textbooks. Sandy also opined that most teachers who use textbooks with online chapters, tests, and interactive assignments, are using them, otherwise publishers would not be creating them. Marylou queried if instructors are mostly using all the bells and whistles, but not necessarily having their students buy ebooks. Sandy replied that students have to buy textbooks to have codes for online access to materials. Instead of going to a textbook website, students would log into eCollege, which is probably better to keep our content going through one portal as much as possible. Students could get all content online and wouldn’t need to buy physical textbooks. Erin queried if that implies that instructors who don’t teach online would be encouraged to use ebooks instead of physical textbooks. Sandy affirmed that is the group that Pearson wants to move online. Publishers make more money from ebooks and access codes can’t be resold. She added that this is the direction textbooks are going anyway with these one-use access codes and content can be locked. Digital content is usually available a year or so beyond the semester used.

Proposal language needs to be much more specific and clear to address faculty concerns. Scott opined the College should have some negotiation leverage as only a couple California Community colleges are still with them. Dale will recommend a one-year transition time, if that is what faculty recommend. He

believes Dr. Laguerre wants to negotiate and have flexibility. The DE Committee, as the voice of online education, needs to keep pushing for increased budget and staff.

4. Other Business

Dale reported that the Committee has a number of things to begin working on. He will put Program Review on the next agenda. Philip suggested adding a Flex report on SLOs. Jeff suggested the Committee consider creating DE program level outcomes.

Meeting adjourned at 3:42 p.m.

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