

EASTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY
Commission on the Future of Instructional Delivery

January 14, 2005
3:00-5:00
G11, Boone Hall

Attendees: D. Barton, J. Beaghan, J. DeCamp, D. deLaski-Smith, H. Eiss, R. Fulkert, E. Hoffman, A. Hogan, K. Kustron, B. Lahidji, B. Leopard, P. Leighton, D. Loppnow, R. Lucas, D. Malone, C. McAnuff, D. Mielke, L. Nybell, J. Palladino, D. Pearson, L. Rocklage, W. Shell, J. Tracy, T. Venner, K. Victor-Burke,

Absent: S. Menzel, S. Nelson, D. Silverman, C. Willis

Guest(s): J. Bruenger, J. Cebina, D. Gaymer, A. Holmes, D. Lawrence, M. Marz

The meeting was convened at 3:00 p.m.

Agenda Items:

- I. Review of Minutes:
 - a. December 3, 2005
- II. Additional Agenda Items:
 - a. None
- III. Meeting Schedules
 - a. Commission on the Future of Instructional Delivery meetings fall 2004 - review of meeting dates.
 - October 20, 2004; 6:00-8:00; University House (dinner)
 - November 19, 2004; 3:00-5:00; G11 Boone
 - December 3, 2004; 3:00-5:00; G11 Boone
 - b. Commission on the Future of Instructional Delivery meetings winter 2005 - review of meeting dates.
 - January 14, 2005; 3:00-5:00 (note change from original date of January 7)
 - **February 4, 2005; 3:00-5:00**
 - **March 11, 2005; 3:00-5:00**
 - **April 1, 2005; 3:00-5:00**
 - **May 6, 2005; 3:00-5:00**
- IV. Review of Materials Distributed:
 - a. Agenda Topics
 - b. Excerpt from EMU Strategic Planning Committee Environmental Scan Update, June 30, 2004.
 - c. Article: *Paying attention to the people work when planning educational programs for adults*

- d. Presentation handouts from ICT
- V. Topics of Discussion:
- a. The following points were brought up during the discussion “E-Learning @ EMU:”
 - D Loppnow introduced this presentation, citing a desire voiced at the last meeting to have the topics it addresses explored.
 - The presentation began with a description and history of ICT. The Faculty Development Center was cited as an important resource. The most recent issue to come to light is that of copyright, which is becoming increasingly important to consider. Please refer to presentation handouts for more detail.
 - The Commission had discussed needing a consistent definition of the word “on-line.” It is a blanket term often used to mean one of several different kinds of course configurations. This is how the three different types of course delivery formats are defined:
 - 100% on-line
 - Hybrid: some on-line, some face-to-face. There are not official policies that have been created to handle this. Departments have control over this and are not consistent in how they treat it.
 - Web-enhanced: 100% face-to-face, using the Internet in some form.
 - A related major issue is that only the 100% on-line generate credit hours through Continuing Education, because these are the only courses which could not be offered if they were not on-line.
 - The next part of the presentation discussed WebCT. This is the first full academic year where it has been in use, after some time running pilot courses. 64 courses currently run using WebCT, and of these 60 are on-line, the rest web-enhanced.
 - The presentation included live demonstrations of the interface and some of the tools for giving quizzes, and posting a syllabus and other content. Additional features include being able to make discussion threads gradable, aided by a sorting feature. Students are learning a lot of built-in technology skills by participating in an on-line course.
 - There is extensive support for faculty for on-line course development, including an initial workshop with one-on-one support afterwards. ICT works with faculty on converting files for posting, and helps in any way they can. There is access to help desk support 24/7, so people in different time zones or nighttime schedules can get help.
 - WebCT is a strategic partner with ICT, who are trying to integrate it with Banner as far as grades and registration are concerned. To address the issue of course content, there is tight control of access
 - With reference to eCompanion, it was described as a tool used by instructors to augment instruction, and does not reduce contact hours.
 - Features include a dropbox for posting documents that is separate from email and scans for viruses, tied in to the grade book. There is a synchronous communication tool, so chat happens in real time. A walk-through of an eCompanion course was presented, and various features were demonstrated.
 - As far as support goes, workshops are run every semester, and a faculty member leaves the workshop with a complete course shell. There are also workshops for students who need help learning how to use the system. The Instructor is considered the content expert; the help desk is technical support.
 - Different sorts of help are available from the EMU eCompanion help desk web site, including FAQ, plugins, and even live help through IM chatting in real time. There is on-site support at all times during business hours.

- WebCT is used for web-enhanced instruction. ECompanion is eCollege's version of a web-enhancement tool. Faculty have a choice between the two platforms right now. It was decided that EMU would continue offering this choice until the Commission makes decision about whether to jettison one or not.
- Emu-Online offers 100% on line courses. Some history and background were provided. ECollege brings infrastructure rather than a platform. There is an on-line evaluation process to integrate with the on-campus evaluation process, as well as the course observation process. There are difficulties evaluating on-line courses in departments where the instructor is the only one who is proficient in on-line instruction, and nobody in an evaluatory position understands what is being done.
- Students are taking more credit hours since general education courses started being available on-line.
- Every effort is made to ensure that students are supported in 100% on-line courses. For example, there are free tutorials on how to use the library for a distance. A partnership with a book distributor enhances timely delivery of the correct book, and a partnership with Barnes and Noble permits students to use financial aid to do book buybacks. Though the focus of these services is on-line instruction, it can also serve the needs of on near campus. Advising includes shepherding students through the admissions process, and the program. Work is done with business offices to help them understand the issues that students who can't come to campus may have. There is a tool for following up with students to monitor participation or the lack thereof, and to help build relationships with people who are far away.
- From a faculty services aspect, there is emphasis on the institutionalizing of eLearning, and integrating it with existing university systems. Course evaluations have been updated and questions not relevant to the on-line environment have been removed, and new questions have been solicited from instructors.
 - In the area of intellectual property rights, course content is very well guarded with procedures to permit sharing of information. The AAUP and lecturer contracts recognize developed courses as the intellectual property of the creator. The Sloan pillars are used as guidelines. This approach is integrated throughout the course development process.
 - In the area of course development, facilitators are committed to doing whatever it takes to make on-line course content more satisfying than it is in a face-to-face situation.
 - Departments are starting to request the eLearning checklist to set standards within their departments. Each department should customize within their own units to meet their own content areas.
- In response to a question about whether the number of hybrid courses is increasing, it was pointed out that there is no way to designate a course as a hybrid in the schedule book, so we can't set appropriate expectations for students about the nature of the course they are registering for and therefore development of hybrids has not been encouraged.
- It was remarked that a problem with instruction that relies on technology is that much of the technology in campus buildings is out-of-date or faulty.
- As far as pricing structure goes, we have a site license, and WebCT is a campus license. ECompanion is free, in exchange for eCollege, which is funded by the \$40 per credit hour pass-through fee (which amounts to a convenience fee).
- At the time that on-line programs were launched, there wasn't the capacity for 100% on-line instruction, so enhancements were the focus. A question we need

to think about is, should we be trying to support two platforms? We are buying a platform, and the support for it is through the per-credit fee students pay. We are also buying WebCt through an annual contract. Should we drop one and redirect those funds?

- 24 hour support is an issue. WebCT has contracted for 24/7 support. These issues need to be waded through. ELearning standards are at Faculty Council on hold right now, but these cover all these sorts of decisions.
 - It was asked if any analysis about how much of a time commitment a faculty member is expected to commit to becoming proficient has ever been done? Someone who had experienced eCompanion first-hand was very positive about the training, user-friendliness, and great support.
 - The support is the important thing, the platform less so. People can evolve into it. Faculty are told that they should expect at least one full semester to develop a fully on-line course.
 - One of the difficulties in evaluating platforms is that companies are competing and are trying to stay current with each other – they are “moving targets.” It’s hard to compare them because their strengths are so different. Feature sets mature over time and the market as a whole is maturing.
 - One of EMU’s programs is delivered through a consortium of six universities, the other five of which use WebCT, and have had failures. Students wait until the courses they need are offered through EMU because of the success EMU has had with 100% on-line courses.
 - Thinking about this issue should include guidelines, vision, parameters for the role of the Internet in instruction, whatever type it is (hybrid, etc.), and what sort of support the faculty and students need. Policies and guidelines will need to be developed. There will be an ebb and flow in platforms, so rather than spend a lot of time evaluating them, we should be concerned with the broader issues of technical assistance, etc. The relevant Subcommittees may want to drill into this more deeply.
 - Delay discussion of full programs. Involve lynne’s questions for next time. Jackie and dawn on full programs.
- b. The following points were brought up during the discussion “Subcommittee Updates:”
- The Innovation Subcommittee reported that there is nothing collective in terms of new innovation and strategy. They have decided to conduct a survey of innovative practices members are involved with, particularly as concerns non-traditional learning. They would welcome any other questions that should be included in this survey.
 - Many people are feeling that surveys need to be done. Committees should work together to do surveys.
 - Continuing Education has done extensive surveys for program review, and can distribute them as a good starting point. Also, information about awareness of innovative things happening elsewhere should be sought.
 - The On-campus group has identified issues where they need to interact with other groups, and some data needs. Several other groups are dealing with hybrid courses. Alternative scheduling is also part of several groups’ discussions.
 - There was a request for an inventory of classrooms that are useable for web-enhanced courses. This is something available from the Academic Affairs Facilities group; they have set standards and are working on bringing classrooms

up to spec. The Commission should know the statistics on how many rooms are web-suitable.

- The On-line and Distance Education subcommittee is forming a comparison between the costs of WebCT and eCollege. They want to look at eLearning tools on campus, and would like a copy of the WebCT contract.
- The Organization and Budget Models Subcommittee is preparing to provide models we use to cost out programs.

VI. Home Work

- a. Subcommittees please identify where you need to gather additional information, and send this to D. Loppnow via e-mail.
- b. Identify topics for subcommittee discussion.
- c. Use the group site as a tool for communication (click on the “groups” icon on the my.emich home page)

VII. Adjournment

- a. The meeting was adjourned at 5:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Akosua Slough
Recording Secretary