

Technology Planning Committee

November 7, 2007 - Draft Notes

<http://www.d.umn.edu/cehsp/technology/>

Present: Jim Antilla, Amanda Evans, Kathy Heltzer, Carol Kivi, Bud McClure, Jackie Millslagle, Helen Mongan-Rallis, Karen Plass

Absent: Char Harkins, Jolene Hyppa Martin, Morris Levy, Tom Peacock, John Taylor

In our plan, Item B2 deals with policies for classroom technology. We could have many models: Jackie's document from several years ago, Quality Matters, San Diego Community College District's Online Learning Pathways webinar and information (Assuring that the Online Course is ready for prime time; Andrea Henne, talking about readiness), etc. Maybe we could come up with policies, or at least guidelines.

Hibbing Community College faced a similar challenge, starting by trial and error, and eventually working with their Curriculum Committee. It's more complex at UMD because we are unionized.

It will be received much better if it's a set of recommended guidelines. Plus, there are no guidelines of quality for teaching face to face. If we try to institute a policy about quality for teaching online, this will be an issue.

The San Diego system is based on the use of guidelines, and they have almost total compliance. The checklist is seen as a helpful tool by faculty who are preparing to teach online.

We could develop guidelines and put out a call for people to pilot them. We could potentially use Quality Matters and the San Diego Community College District approach.

Models:

- Independent study, self-paced, with an online delivery. Even in that, you could be assessed strictly through tests, and/or tests that are graded by the instructors or TAs — so it's branched. You all go through it at the same time, so you might have some interaction.
- Online synchronous: ITV - but UMConnect is improving.

Jackie:

- We could bring the elements described in the UM system to this group. For guidelines in the college, the course guide will be implemented on this campus. Faculty will be able to define everything about their course in the course guide: syllabus information, but also what kind of tests and readings they do.
- This could let a student who knows their own learning style choose their preferred section in a course with many sections.

Helen:

- We don't want to have students be surprised, so this would be good.
- In face-to-face courses, we have lots of freedom, but it seems that we can't say we are going to go online one day of the week.
- In blended classes, it would help students to know that 1/3 of their class (for example) would be online.

Jackie: We hope people will use the course guide voluntarily, and that they will keep it up to date.

Jim: It was simpler at Hibbing, because it was much more entirely online. Eventually, we used the Minnesota transfer curriculum to guide decisions about what courses should go online.

Discussion:

- Quality Matters is dense and comprehensive, is comprised of standards and has a rubric.
- We want it to be in an easy format.
- We could come back with two models - Quality Matters and the San Diego Online Learning Pathways.
- The department's have a role, too: the DH approves curriculum changes.

Helen:

- [Regarding DH approval] If it's online, ~50 percent or something online, and is replacing seat time — BUT the amount of time we spend teaching online is evolving. This isn't as much a curriculum change as a change in the way I teach. I wouldn't call it a curriculum change if I changed from lectures to group work.
- "Partially Internet delivered" is peculiar language. If I teach in a classroom, is it "table delivered"? This over-emphasizes the technology.
- If it's totally Internet delivered, then they could take the course from the Cities.

Discussion:

- It's easier to ask forgiveness than get permission. If you just do it, it's OK. If you ask about doing it, there are forms, you need to justify it, etc.
- The grad school doesn't support this at all; it's "don't ask/don't tell."

Jim: We are in a transition, and our curriculum forms still ask these things the way we used to talk about them - i.e., clock time spent in a room with an instructor. Part of the clock hour thing on this campus is the space issue.

Jackie: Should the program director be involved in discussions about how much is being done online?

Discussion:

- This is academic freedom; one person's section of class may be all lecture, and another person's section can be all cooperative learning. As long as the teaching meets the standards and learning outcomes, it's OK.

- This is about program control; programs should control the quality of outcomes.
- We must be very careful. Often it's adjunct faculty who are using new technologies and who may be unfamiliar to the old guard. It's important to see this as an academic freedom issue.
- We want to encourage innovation at the university. Administrators should encourage faculty to try new things.
- There isn't much incentive to take a risk.
- For a time, people didn't necessarily know what was being done. They are more aware of it now.

Jackie: I want to make sure that instructors sit down and talk to somebody about what they are doing. I want to see online instruction. The frustration is that we don't have systems in place to support it. We have more programs that could go online, but the rest of the campus isn't ready to deal with the students.

Jim: Administration isn't listening yet with the applicant entry process.

Discussion:

- Online vs. face-to-face is an increasingly gray area.
- "Distance education is about convenience" (from the Distance Education conference in Madison).
- Convenience can become "Matchbox U." This makes people think that it's not about quality. It is about quality. Quality matters.
- The Higher Learning Commission is coming in March. Our mission statement includes the term "residential students."

Jackie will discuss with Paul and maybe the DH group the program approval vs. academic freedom issue, to get their guidance regarding the curriculum process.

Jim: At Hibbing, you had to go to curriculum committee if you made more than 20 percent substantive changes. It wasn't about how it was delivered.

Linda Rolf won't make any changes in a course unless it has approval from a Dean's office. She has a Minor Course Change Proposal form — one change is "delivery mode," which includes "partially Internet delivered" and "Internet delivered."

Discussion:

- Face-to-face courses evolve far beyond the curriculum documentation in the system. If we require more hoops for online, it's discrimination.
- Do we need different categories (100 percent online vs. partially online), so it's not about tools?
- Internet is not "delivery." Students are accessing a variety of things through the Internet.
- It helps students to know that the class won't meet face-to-face on all days scheduled for the semester. It helps for room assignments, too.

- Faculty need to know that students will have enough time to do this assignment (i.e., we meet Monday and Wednesday - on Friday you should hold this time open; we need to reserve the time, but not the room).
- We need the enterprise team to do some coding regarding the categories.

Jim: Are there any other things about the plan? There are lots of recommendations.

Jackie was not involved in developing the plan, but believes it's not technology's role to develop a strategic plan.

Jim: We need a strategic plan. We want to be sure the work we did isn't lost.

Jackie: I hope that the college technology plan will include information about needed hardware, labs, etc.

Jim: It would be good to include the budget into our planning as well. We would like to have this information at least incorporated into strategic planning.

Jim:

- We need meeting soon regarding guidelines for teacher preparedness.
- The plan is on the college technology page, at:
<http://www.d.umn.edu/cehsp/technology/>
See: Technology Committees > Technology Planning Committee (Faculty Committee) > Technology Plan (draft, May 25, 2007)

Karen Plass, Recorder