

Minutes of Meeting January 11th, 2013

Approved May 14, 2013

Final

Committee Attendees: Barber, Christou, Domingo, Hardinger, Landaw, Lew, Loehrer, Lynch, Mamer (Chair), Pires, Rugg, Snyder, Vestal, Waugh, Wendrich
Guests: Marc Levis-Fitzgerald

1. Quick Items

- a. The FCET welcomed USAC representative Nicole Vestal a second-year neuro-science major to the committee.
- b. Committee edited the draft wireless in the classroom statement, which will be forwarded to the ITPB.
- c. iTunesU and BruinCast – request to continue discussion at our next meeting.

2. Update and Discussion on Online Courses at UCLA

- The campus administration and the Senate have been grappling with various policy issues surrounding online education. The distributed document from the Online Education taskforce, chaired by Kathryn Atchison is currently being circulated for comments. The Senate has asked the Committee on Instructional Technology to look at issues surrounding the jurisdiction of approving online classes.
- There is a plan for a faculty conference in the spring to allow for broader discussion of many of the issues surrounding online education. One goal is for a more transparent process for faculty who wish to explore this area.

During the course of the meeting it was clear that some common definition of online courses could be helpful as would an inventory of current online courses and working groups. Michelle Lew will send something to the list to help address this need.

The FCET meeting occurred less than a week before the Regents were meeting on the topic of online education at which Yudof and Dorr would be asked to report on what UC was doing in the online sphere.

The committee engaged in a wide-ranging discussion of online courses. Below are some of the issues and concerns that were surfaced:

- The University needs to be sensitive to the state being tempted to scale back the number of faculty because they think with technology it can be done, but it would hurt the UCLA community.
- With online, lecture content is recorded once and reused multiple times, however things get dated and need to be refreshed, do you stipulate how often?

- We need to put more faith in faculty that they aren't just trying to get out of work, but are undertaking online to improve the experience for students.
- Do you make a requirement for a certain amount to be synchronous? Should there be minimum standards? What percentage means a course is 'flipped' or hybrid?
- We don't want to lose the residential aspect of the University.
- We need to create a vehicle for having these discussions and managing the information and feedback from them.
- It may be helpful to frame our thinking about online and intellectual property as similar to a textbook and publishing it is an improvement on the way we pass along knowledge.
- Online courses vs. book publishing the future battle? Flipped and hybrid classes tend to rely less on textbooks. Articulation agreements will become critical. A lot of schools will be offering similar online courses. Do we foresee catalogs of syndicated courses?
- Do you risk dilution of your brand if anyone can take an online course? The belief amongst students is that online courses are easier to get a good grade in. Are you debasing the coin? Students worked hard to get here and faculty worked hard to get here as well. Neither did so thinking online courses would be a major portion of their experience.

The committee segued into results from the Senior Survey which had asked students some questions about their perspective regarding online courses.

Marc Levis-Fitzgerald's group has been administering the Senior Survey for the past seven years. The survey is taken each spring by graduating seniors. They receive about a 70% response rate from the nearly 5000 respondents. This year they added several technology related questions, four closed-ended and four open-ended. In general, students were satisfied with technology use by faculty on the campus. When asked about fully online courses 60% stated quite strongly that they do not want fully online courses. While some students stated certain circumstances for which they would consider a fully online course (9% said they would for GE courses, electives, lower division, non-major courses) the majority saw no role for fully online courses in their UCLA experience. This sentiment was echoed by our student representative.

The committee continued its discussion which at points also considered the prospect of MOOCs (Massive Open Online Courses)

- Don't just define students as consumers.
- We can see online as a part of undergraduate education, but how much and in what direction?
- When compared to MOOCs and other potential online providers like textbook companies we have a relative advantage in constructing online courses since we teach them and know what concepts students find most difficult.
- For matriculated students perhaps we need more regulation as there is no market unlike with self-supporting programs.

- There should be a compelling external reason to do a fully online course for matriculated students (e.g., physical capacity?)
- A salient feature of a UCLA education is an interaction amongst distinguished faculty, students and peers. It is not clear that this will simply translate to an online environment.
- Don't help them see education as a commodity. These are enhancements not replacements.
- Textbooks did not replace face to face education they augmented it. Hybrid is the best approach. These tools are incredibly valuable but should be used to enhance not replace the in-person instructional model because a good chunk of education is in the *process* of doing it.