

Minutes of Meeting April 7th, 2010

Approved May 5th, 2010

Final

Committee Attendees: Austin, Boyd, Jansma, Lew, Liggett (Chair), Loehrer, Smallberg, Snyder, Walker.
Guest: Rob Rodgers, Joanne Valli-Marill

1. Quick topics
 - a. Notes from February meeting approved with no revisions
 - b. Video Furnace video reserves to restart spring quarter pending final approval of request form.

2. Bruincast/E-Section Survey results

Background

In Winter 2010, Chemistry 14D experienced an over enrollment of over 120 students. In an effort to accommodate students, the professor and the College created the option for an 'e-section' where 60 additional students were enrolled in the course and given a traditional lab section, but agreed to attend lecture via recorded webcast/Bruincast. At the February meeting, the FCET was asked to review the concept of e-sections and draft some guidelines to inform this practice. Surveys were done both on the Chemistry 14D course and for Anthropology 7, a popular, large lecture format, Bruincast course. Dr. Joanne Valli-Marill head of OI's Assessment and Evaluation presented the results of the survey to the committee:

The survey data represents primarily satisfaction data. Prof. Hardinger felt that the sample of students in the e-sections were not self-selected since to create the sections he moved sequentially down the waiting list and offered the opportunity to each student on the list. None of the students turned down the opportunity.

Open-ended questions

When asked "what would you suggest to a professor who wanted to Bruincast", students felt that it was very important that the webcast get posted online quickly and that there were no technical issues. They didn't comment on teaching styles needing changing, but did want more focus on the whiteboard.

When asked "what would you suggest to other students", student responses were: Attend class, don't fall behind, be proactive meeting with faculty and other students engage in group and face

to face discussion.

When these same questions were posed to e-section students they were much more concerned with the technology. Keep in mind that these are pre-med courses and often are very competitive. Students didn't think even a days delay was fair or acceptable. Again, the comments were "Don't fall behind, make use of face to face". They also commented that they enjoyed the e-section and would do it again. Bear in mind that part of the students' reported positive experience was influenced by having a small face to face lab session with the professor.

From the professor's prospective, he reported a considerable amount of extra work acting as TA (because no qualified TA could be found the professor acted as the TA for the added section). Even without that extra work, he still felt there was an increase in his office hour traffic and emails.

Looking at the grade distribution chart, it is very even. There was no statistical difference between the grades of those in the e-section and the regular lecture.

Prof. Hardinger has used BruinCast in the past and he felt it typically led to a bimodal grade distribution. He described the effect as giving the poor students a tool that hurt them more and the better students a tool that made them even better. He also commented that he felt e-sections should be a privilege earned.

Close-ended Questions

Five demographic questions were asked. The most interesting seemed to be grade level and type of requirement the course fulfilled. All of the students reported that their desire to enroll in Chem 14D was as a major requirement and the vast majority (83% of the regular lecture and 95% of the e-section students) were sophomores.

Question 7: "How likely are you to come to class when it offers BruinCast?" The results for this question indicated that e-sections students reported being more comfortable with not coming to lecture.

Question 8: "How likely would you be to enroll in an over-enrolled course if your only option for viewing lecture was via BruinCast or a similar online format?" With this survey question, 63% of the e-section participants had no qualms with the format versus 33% of the live lecture participants.

In Questions 10 through 13 which were only asked of the e-section participants, students reported satisfaction with the format and 70% said they would do it again.

FCET members questioned if the high satisfaction was driven by need, students desperate for the class were happy to have anything. Joanne replied that “We don't really know, it could also be because the professor taught the e-section participants labs. What we do know is in the qualitative responses students seem to really like Bruincast”.

Switching to the survey of Anthropology 7, the first 9 questions were the same and the students' responses were similar to the traditional Chemistry lecture participants in terms of their comfort level with the online lecture format (Questions 7, 8 & 9).

FCET members asked about the availability of statistics on Bruincast. For example, raw hits of how many times they were viewed in their entirety or the average amount of time spent. Rob Rodgers replied that Bruincast can count hits but their current model doesn't support capturing more than that.

Students participating in the survey found the label “e-section” very confusing, e-lecture or i-lecture were suggested as alternatives.

Bruincast general survey questions

Looking at the general Bruincast survey you can see that originally it was thought that students might use the webcasts as a tool to help with small group reviews but that has turned out not to be a popular reason. Instead, students report a preference for using them to review alone or to watch the lecture at a more convenient time.

The FCET also commented that session duration statistics on Bruincast, for example the number of minutes spent by each viewer, would be an interesting check against the self-reported data on how often students use Bruincast.

Members also felt it would be useful to consider asking how students use it. It was suggested that diaries might be a possibility.

In 2007, Joanne conducted interviews of faculty using Bruincast. Many expressed a fear that students wouldn't show up to lecture. Some professors used pop quizzes to encourage attendance others felt it was up to the students whether or not to come to lecture. Faculty reported needing students in class primarily because they required the energy of an audience.

Next Meeting: Thursday May 5 th 3:30-5:00pm in Powell 186
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