

Minutes of Meeting May 14th, 2013

Approved XXXX

Draft

Committee Attendees: Barber, Christou, Cuff, Landaw, Lew, Loehner, Lynch, Mamer (Chair), Pires, Rugg, Snyder, Vestal
 Guests: Guy Adams, Bob Cox, Frank Wada

1. Quick Items

- a. The CCLE requested feedback regarding student access to course website materials after the course is finished. The committee generally felt access to materials after the quarter are best left to the instructor’s discretion. They were supportive of the practice of reminding students at the end of the quarter to collect any materials they may want. They felt it would be useful if upon uploading a document or creating an activity an instructor could choose to mark an item as being ‘permanently accessible’.

2. Update from Guy Adams, ASUCLA Bookstore on clickers and course readers.

There are currently four clickers in use on campus that are available through the Bookstore. The most recent sales data for the last 3 quarters is beginning to show a convergence around the iClicker brand.

Number of courses	Model	New units sold	Used units sold	Price
16	iclicker	719	126	\$39
14	i>clicker+	453	5	\$39
45	i>clicker2	2600	100	\$45

The next closest competitor is the clicker from Turning Point which was used by 6 courses over the last 3 quarters, a total of 729 units at a price of \$42. This particular brand can be sold back to ASUCLA but is not offered as a used item through the Bookstore due to a more fragile design and a resulting higher failure rate.

Members of the committee suggested that it may be time to propose some sort of uniform adoption for the campus for the sake of student cost and simplicity. It was noted that USAC was discussing the possibility of a clicker lending library to ease the burden on students currently needing to purchase multiple competing campus clicker models.

It was suggested that we find out from those using brands other than i>clicker how difficult a hurdle switching clicker brands would present. It was also suggested that rather than mandating a particular brand, that current adoption data be given to faculty inquiring about clickers and that the FCET and ITPB endorse converging on the leading brand.

The conversation then turned to course materials. The Bookstore started noting a decline in textbook sales about 10 years ago as students found more channels to purchase textbooks from. About six years ago, the Bookstore began to see a decline in the number of book requisitions from faculty. It is thought that this was a result of faculty shifting away from textbooks in favor of providing materials in different formats and to the increased sensitivity to the cost of textbooks borne by students. At the same time the Bookstore noted an increase in course reader creation requests. The Bookstore was also noticing that while students were relatively disinterested in electronic textbooks they were voicing strong interest in electronic versions of course readers.

This Fall the Bookstore partnered with several third parties to offer the option of electronic versions of course readers. The e-versions offer the same pagination as the printed version at a cost of about 20% less. Additionally they have features like search and highlighting and can even include links to external websites and multimedia. Currently, the majority of the e-readers are being offered for the Anderson School of Management. The advantage to faculty is that the Bookstore takes on the role of obtaining copyright clearance and sourcing the materials and automatically coordinates with the UCLA Library so that articles already licensed by the University are included without incurring an additional fee. ASUCLA is currently considering creating their own e-reader platform rather than partnering with third party vendors so that students would have a single platform for their campus e-readers and it could become a personal library of course materials from their undergraduate career.

3. For Discussion:

Governor Brown has set the challenge for UC to improve our 4-year graduate rate and to serve more students – and to do so using technology. The approach currently favored by the governor and the state legislature is to produce fully online courses; however in the near term the least costly way to make progress on these goals is likely to be some form of hybrid courses.

Suppose that we wish to make digital lecture sections available for our courses with large wait lists. We have already done this on a limited basis and publish podcasts of lectures of over 100 courses online so the basic capability exists. Suppose as a base line that the TA resources were available (for extra sections) and that students in the digital lecture sections will receive all non-lecture components (lab, discussion sessions, office hours, etc.) in person.

The above premise was posed to the committee and below is an account of the subsequent conversation:

What would it take for the opening of a digital lecture section to be regularized so it can be implemented with short notice? Students need to be able to count on it in order to help with their scheduling. They need to anticipate that they can get into a digital section of a course for example if it reaches a certain waitlist threshold.

It would be great at the end of a 3 quarter pilot to be able to say that 1000 students got educated who wouldn't have otherwise. However some departments have other real bottlenecks. For example, lower division chemistry with their wet labs have other physical capacity issues.

Do we actually know that we have any bottlenecks preventing someone from graduating when they want to? We have lists of courses that fill up – we don't know if more students would take them. We do know that about 150 courses over the past 5 years have been typically full.

We know from the Dean of Students that there has been a rise in students complaining when a class is impacted and they are put on the waitlist. There is also evidence that enrolled students are unable to get a physical seat in impacted courses as those on the waitlist also attend the first week's lectures.

Are we dealing with a limit in qualified teaching assistants for a course, or a limit in physical classroom space, or classrooms of a particular size?

Now that we are admitting more students, those upper division courses offered only once a year may also begin to pose a limit. Enrollment demands are also changing as more out of state students enroll. Perhaps we need to do a future analysis? With new large cohorts as they begin to roll into chosen majors we will get new info.

It is not clear that these changes are statistically predictable. This is likely what economists call a problem of endogeneity. There will be a new equilibrium and our best way to meet that will be with a flexible system, so that with little notice the course can be recorded and expanded.

Ideally we should open up the courses and be adaptable. Sadly some subjects like Chemistry don't have an extra hour to run another lab. They are moving to full Saturdays right now.

Another issue is that students are also getting impacted by pedagogical sequence. Students should be taking many introductory courses in their sophomore year but don't have enrollment priority until they are seniors. They find something that really sparks their interest when they are graduating seniors and for many that is 'too late', or the background and context that would have benefitted them for another course comes late since they are forced to take courses out of sequence.

Could you double enrollment by decoupling lab and lecture and people enrolled?

Should we focus on introductory upper division courses and pre-requisite courses?

We should really talk with departments. Find out from them what prerequisite courses do you have that are impacted and that are slowing students getting into the upper division courses.

As a principle, digital only sections should be in the same quarter as fully face to face sessions so that resources are there and students can still work and study together. We should leverage what we have in-person (our relative advantage) into the digital. Exams will need to be at night.

If everyone begins exam at 6pm there will be more competition with room scheduling. Everyone wants exams in the same week, we will be competing for testing space.

Less than 20% of class space is over 100 seats. For those size classes we are going from 8am to 6pm. Could hybridizing be used to ease the demand for 100+ seat classes?

Another consideration is agreements with UNEX get impacted if we go later into the evening.

Faculty also want every other seat seating plans during exams, further complicating matters.

It almost feels like we've accepted more students than we can educate. Can we throw online at the problem to deal with this? We sold spots we don't have? Is the Admissions office aware of these issues? Shouldn't we demonstrate that students learn as well or better in hybrids and only then open up capacity?

Technology should not be used just to solve the Administration's problems; it should be used for the benefit of the students and faculty. It is cheaper to rent space in Westwood than to take a course online.

There is a shortage of teaching assistants. Some departments guarantee graduate students 5 years of support. Students get fellowships, departments can't plan for it and end up with undergrads as TAs since they are on the hook for it.

We need to change the conversation so that it is not a top down efficiency argument.

We shouldn't just focus on bottleneck courses. Pilot a range of courses where it would succeed.

Our activities are being framed as capacity issues, shouldn't we be thinking about what can you do to improve, and only then what can you do to increase capacity?

What is scope of reasons students don't graduate in 4 years?

In some cases, students who aren't graduating in 4 years are those pursuing minors, double majors, and other things they feel distinguish themselves in the job market. Can you make it more convenient for them to complete these in a timely manner?

35-40% of students did complete the Future Course Planner tool.

For a pilot:

- 1) Choose which classes in consultation with departments and academic counselors
- 2) Start a dialog with students
- 3) Investigate technology and infrastructure feasibility (e.g., money for extra TAs)
- 4) Clarify faculty compensation issue

Choose a course with ample enrollment and open up as hybrid online to see if it works.

Next steps would be to build a proposal and ask administration to fund the incentive (e.g., teaching credit).