

Minutes of Meeting December 3rd, 2009

Approved January 14th, 2010

Final

Committee Attendees: Austin, Hanna-Harwell, Lew, Liggett (Chair), Loeher, Mamer, Pires, Smallberg, Snyder, Steen, Walker. Guests: Guy Adams and Neil Yamaguchi

1. Quick topics
 - a. CCLE is looking for faculty to test the UCLA Gradebook integration with Moodle during Winter Quarter. If you be willing to give feedback on the new UCLA Gradebook for Moodle please contact Michelle. Time commitment is expected to be roughly two hours.
 - b. Overview of current electronic book technology: Kindle DX device, Kindle for PC, CourseSmart for PC, Kindle and CourseSmart applications for the iPhone.
2. Update from Guy Adams & Neil Yamaguchi from ASUCLA's textbook Division regarding textbook pricing and e-textbooks.

ASUCLA and its Board of Directors recognized the need to lower textbook prices and has continued to do so since 2006 resulting in over \$600,000 in lowered prices. When they met with the FCET last year, ASUCLA was just launching a strategy of pricing similar to Amazon. What they found was that Amazon's prices fluctuate widely (varying by the hour and the day) and that the company was very guarded about the algorithms they use to set pricing on a book. As a result, ASUCLA couldn't accurately match Amazon's pricing since prices for students need to be set for the term. This year ASUCLA has instead started a price matching program to address the difficulty of tracking Amazon's prices and a textbook reward program where students get an additional 1% at Buyback in exchange for their purchases being tracked.

In a survey of major college bookstores they found that only about 30% of bookstores do some e-book sales. ASUCLA currently is able to offer e-books from 2 aggregators (follett e-books and MBS e-books), and is negotiating with CourseSmart (which represents 14 publishers including: Mcgraw Hill, Wiley & Sons, Pearson and Sage) to offer a point of sale option for their titles. This past Fall, 67 titles were offered in e-book format yet only 33 units (e-books) were actually sold. When faculty submit requisitions for books, the book store will automatically see if the title is available electronically and notify the professor if it is. If the professor agrees to allow the book store to offer the electronic edition as well as a print edition, then the student can buy it in one of two ways: 1) they are given a card to go to a website to purchase it themselves, or 2) at the textbook store their receipt contains an access code that allows them to get to the content. In general, electronic pricing is about 20% less than for the physical book. Method of delivery varies, in some cases content is downloaded directly to the user's computer, in others, it is accessed via the internet and is available only for a set number of days (e.g., 180 days).

Copyright and Digital Rights Management seem to be the biggest hurdles for publishers. Publishers are trying to keep technology like screen scrapers from allowing students to pirate electronic books. Nevertheless, when surveyed, half of publishers thought that by 2018 electronic versions of books would outpace paper. Publishers are very frightened about the future of their industry. As companies like Amazon and Walmart increasingly get into price wars over electronic books they are establishing in the minds of consumers that a new release book is worth only \$9.99, when in reality the companies are taking a loss on those titles in an effort to boost the electronic book market.

The ASUCLA store has seen a real erosion of its sales over the last 5 years, from price competition from the likes of Amazon, as well as a trend for students to try to do without purchasing a book. The store finds itself transitioning its role from one that traditionally was just a bookseller to becoming a source that knows what is available and how and facilitating that for faculty and students (e.g., integrating into the campus CMS). They are planning on meeting during Winter to specifically address these issues and hope to come back in spring to give us another update.

3. Online Courses and Instruction – Larry Loehner

The subject of Online Instruction is being discussed in multiple committees on campus. At the UC wide level there are at least two initiatives that we know of around online instruction which unfortunately don't seem to be aware of each other. One is from the UC-wide academic senate which had a special committee issue a report on online instruction. In it, some of the recommendations seemed to be holding online instruction to a higher standard than we do regular instruction (e.g., that participating faculty in online instruction must obtain training, or be approved for teaching courses with significant online content). The other initiative out of Dan Greenstein's office at UCOP seems to be generating a lot of excitement, but there is no money to fund the projects being soliciting.

There seems to be no sense of priority or strategy for UC's approach to online instruction. Issues such as who can take the courses, how will online courses affect faculty workload, what happens when a course is offered a second time using recorded materials from the first, will UCLA be willing to accept their students taking core courses from another campus' online offerings? Right now, it seems these issues are being underestimated and not being addressed systematically.

It was clear to the committee that there were multiple levels of issues to resolve: policy, pedagogy and technical. Is the goal to generate new revenue or to cut costs or to expand the educational offerings? Some departments and divisions reported feeling pressured to think of ways to make money, to be more like University Extension. At the same time, we hear many tales of online programs going bankrupt (e.g., University of Illinois). There was interest in

thinking through these issues, identifying some of the major fixed costs and helping to articulate some practices for making viable, focused offerings. The committee agreed it might be useful to ask Chris Lynch the director of HSSEAS Online Masters in Engineering to come share with the committee their experience growing their new program over the last 3 years.

Next Meeting: Thursday January 14th 3:30-5:00pm in Powell 186