

Minutes of Meeting December 2nd , 2010

Approved March 8 2011

Final

Committee Attendees: Austin, Hardinger, Jansma, Lew, Loehrer, Lynch, Mamer (Chair), Pires, Reiff, Snyder  
Guests: Guy Adams, Neil Yamaguchi, John Sandbrook, Rose Rocchio, Rob Rodgers

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1. Minutes from 10/26/10 meeting approved for posting
2. ASUCLA presentation & discussion on digital course reader pilot

Guy Adams, Neil Yamaguchi and John Sandbrook are part of a small management team at ASUCLA looking at the future of textbooks and the distribution of course materials. Textbook sales are declining and ASUCLA net income from course materials is used to subsidize the student union. They are planning on piloting two products in spring as a learning experience for them and to get feedback from both faculty and students on some new approaches.

When they were looking at ways of how course materials are disseminated they broke it into 3 areas: Textbooks, Course readers (with copyright clearance) and class handouts. In terms of electronic textbooks, ASUCLA has been offering these since 2008. As publishers slowly convert to digital, ASUCLA is able to offer titles. Electronic textbooks are still all over the place with different pricing and policies and point of sales. ASUCLA has observed very little adoption of e-textbooks. Of the 150 courses that submitted textbook requisitions where ASUCLA could identify an e-book vendor, only 140 copies of e-books were purchased through ASUCLA. It was noted by the committee that some faculty send their students directly to the e-book publisher. What ASUCLA wanted to talk about today was in the area of readers and course handouts there are two solutions they are looking at.

BLIO is a new venture that just came out in September. It is a joint venture headed by the National Federation of the Blind and Ray Kurtzweil a well-known inventor and futurist. The committee was shown software that students would download that would allow them to also download and purchase ASUCLA readers. The course readers were rendered as color e-book versions of the familiar printed ASUCLA readers. The pricing has not been worked out yet, ASUCLA's goal is that it would be less than the printed version. Once purchased, the course reader would remain accessible on the student's computer. There were features such as a 'read aloud' mode and note taking. However there was not currently the ability to annotate the page and it was not yet mac compatible (although BLIO recognizes the need for compatibility and will soon release mac compatible versions). The process for faculty would be the same. They would still identify items for a reader and give it to ASUCLA to assemble and clear copyright on. Students would be given the option of buying a traditional or electronic course reader.

Members of the committee cautioned that students would not purchase the reader unless they perceived the material was of value. Prof. Hardinger commented that he had much of his material for free on the web, but upon surveying his students he discovered that they preferred having a bound version and indicated they would pay for a quality bound version. He uses Hayden-McNeil for this purpose. Members noted that some course readers rely heavily on

material that needs copyright clearance, but for others the material could be posted via the course website where a student could choose whether or not to print it in a just-in-time manner. The committee has observed times when students will ask for something to just be posted for “free” on the website but since they still have not moved to a paperless system, they print it to take notes on it and in the end it would have been less expensive if they had purchased a bound course reader rather than self-printing. The committee also remarked that often what is made available is already licensed by the campus via jstor and other online journals. They stressed that these library e-reserves need to be coordinated through any online course reader so that students don’t end up paying unnecessary license fees. Faculty commented that it would be useful to be able to have some idea of how expensive it is to clear copyright on particular items to help them make decisions about what materials to include to make a more economical reader. Unfortunately copyright clearing is still a manual process. While ASUCLA maintains an internal database of guidelines (e.g., a particular copyright holder charges \$0.10 a page or \$2 a whole article) there is no central database available that houses this sort of pricing information.

Another pilot product is by Canadian company Symtext which has created a product called Liquid Textbook . Unlike BLIO this is browser based and would have time limited access. It is oriented more towards a combination of copyrighted reader material and class handouts. From the faculty perspective the process is that faculty give ASUCLA a list of materials, ASUCLA clears copyright where needed and sets it up in a Symtext format. It allows for group annotation and the ability to search across all course documents. There is a faculty administrative side to this product, where faculty can have more fine control over access and timing of access. This is more of a solution for faculty who want to have parts of a textbook.

During the discussion, the committee mentioned products like CourseHero and the issue that many people don’t care about copyright and only want things to be done for free. The student price point is very low. For ASUCLA, they are on the retail side and will follow copyright. They use the analogy of iTunes to Napster. In the end, these technologies will be transitional and the quasi-legal things will get sorted out. You cannot get copyrighted items without Digital Rights management (DRM) and copy-protection so there will be a need for applications like Symtext and Blio. It seemed that right now ASUCLA should focus on bringing these to particular disciplines that deal heavily in copyrighted materials (e.g., Harvard Business School case studies) as opposed to disciplines using already licensed online journals or locally written materials.

### 3. UC Online Instructional Pilot Program

The committee was updated on the conference call that Jim Davis had with John Mamer and Michelle Lew just prior to the Call for Letters of Interest went out. Jim agreed with much of the relayed concerns of the committee. The overall impression seems to be that UCLA is not high on ladder regarding the decision making aspects of this project. On November 4<sup>th</sup>, the EVC’s message was sent to the campus. Faculty are directed to send their LOI directly to UCOP by December 13<sup>th</sup>. There was still concern about the purpose of this UC research project. That the purpose seems to have evolved since we first heard of this initiative a year ago, to the point that we are no longer certain what it is. More transparency seems needed and a clear statement of what we are trying to accomplish and how we intend to evaluate that prior to choosing proposals.

The committee discussed briefly some ways in which it may want to be involved in this process as it continues and agreed to discuss this again at a future meeting. Should it act as some sort of clearinghouse, should it help identify exemplars, should it identify resources or experts in evaluation and instruction?

4. UCLA iTunesU and Mobile Framework

Rose Rocchio received several volunteers from the committee to participate in a faculty focus group around future mobile applications (e.g., mobile course announcement tool)

When UCLA first began its installation of iTunesU it wanted to offer a private only version. Unfortunately Berkeley had already entered an agreement with Apple that was public only and it has taken until 2010 to have that agreement amended at the UC level so that we could have both public and private iTunesU. Rose's group is currently redoing the administrative side of iTunesU so that it will have Shibboleth and Registrar integration so that only students enrolled in the course would be able to access the podcasts. They are working with integrating Podcast-Producer so that faculty will have a choice of having their Bruincast automatically go to iTunesU as well. They are also looking into the ability of having TAs be able to capture podcasts via a mobile app and have it automatically posted to iTunesU (e.g., small discussion sessions).