

## Online Education Initiative Steering Committee Meeting

Friday June 27, 2014

CCC Confer

**Attendees:** John Makevich, Gregory Beyrer, Tom Burke, Henry Burnett, John Freitas, John Ittelson, Pat James, Brian Keliher, George Lorenzo, Steve Klein, Carol Lashman, Richard Matthews, Joe Moreau, Joe Perret, Ray Sanchez, Fred Sherman, Dave Stephens, Fabiola Torres, Arnita Porter, Meridith Randall, Terry Gleason, Debbie Sheldon, LeBaron Woodyard, Jim Huether, Vince Rodriguez (for Lori Adrian), JoAnna Quejada, Marc Beam, Barry Gribbons, John Sills, and Amy Carbonaro.

### **Opening Remarks and Meeting Overview:**

John Makevich opened the meeting at 9:30 am and wished everyone a good morning. He noted that this is the first of two consecutive online meetings. The next face-to-face meeting will be on August 1<sup>st</sup>.

The primary purpose of the online meetings is to report out and provide updates. Since it is harder to have lengthy discussions and debates in an online forum, topics that lend themselves to longer discussions will be moved to the August meeting.

### **Executive Director:**

Pat highlighted that her philosophy has always been to pay attention to what is best for students. She believes that every question in a person's career as a professional educator should come back to that point. Pat feels that the members of this project and steering committee have the same agenda; to do amazing things for students with this project. To accomplish that goal everyone needs to work collegially to find what is best for students. The goal of building this high quality learning environment is extensive, complex, and unique. The other projects have elements that have been done before, but this one is something that has never been attempted before. Pat would like members to courteously approach her personally or by email when she makes mistakes so that she can try her best to take care of correcting it. There are many elements involved in the project and sometimes communications don't flow smoothly, but she would like to be a conduit to provide information from anyone who wants to give feedback to the steering committee.

In the last few weeks, the project team had to make a decision to postpone offering courses in the Online Education environment until the spring semester. Originally the plan was to offer courses in the fall, because they felt that there was pressure from the legislature, and that it might not provide the next allotment of money to the project unless progress was shown. The team became aware through conversation that the project seems to be making sufficient progress, and does not need to go too quickly and be too rushed. As a result, there was only a couple of days to let everyone know about the decision to step back for fall and instead plan for offering courses in the spring. She apologized for the quirky way that communication occurred and for the concerns that caused due to how notifications were made about things that were happening in the next days after that decision.

### **Minutes:**

John Makevich asked for any corrections, changes or amendments to the minutes for the meetings on May 15, 2014 and June 6, 2014, which were posted in Basecamp. Brian had a question regarding the minutes for June 6, 2014. He remembered that there was a heated discussion about whether or not local students would be allowed to enroll in a portal class. He didn't remember any action taking place, but he noticed that in the minutes there was a statement that "LeBaron agreed that the colleges would need to be made aware of it, but that the requirement is intended to make sure that there is room for the home student," after a discussion of 90-10 as a possible ratio for cohort versus local students. Was an agreement reached, and if

so was it for 90-10 percent ratio? Pat said that she did not recall any agreement being made, but that she did remember a discussion about various possibilities, and also about how to alert colleges to the concern about leaving room for their own students. She is aware that the issue of how colleges feel about offering a course for the online population which their home students might not be able to enroll in, has not been resolved. It is not a comfortable question' LeBaron is working on it. The committee will need to consider what the colleges want and need. John Makevich suggested removing the word "requirement" and changing the wording slightly to more accurately reflect that no agreement was made. "He also clarified that the cohort could be limited to 90% in the cohort and 10% for the home campus and that would be intended to make sure that there is room for the home campus students." LeBaron confirmed that as a key member in that discussion, he did not think that a decision had been made, he was trying to be flexible on providing options of what that range could be and letting the committee know what had historically been looked upon as a positive number that they could be comfortable with. Since that meeting he has had further conversations regarding what would be a good balance. It still needs to be decided.

John Makevich moved that the minutes of May 15<sup>th</sup> and June 6<sup>th</sup> be approved with the change to the minutes of June 6<sup>th</sup>. Fabiola seconded the motion, and the motion passed 15-0.

#### **Pilot Consortium Update:**

Joe Moreau thanked each of the workgroups that have been working on this for the last couple of months. Great progress is being made on coming together on a document that helps the pilot colleges understand how they are going to work together. Now as a result of pushing back from fall to spring 2015 for the first courses, there is time to work on some of the final details.

Meridith noted that CIOs are concerned about penalizing students at the campuses of the teaching colleges and whether or not there would be a percentage set aside. There was a CIO Board Meeting in July, so there will be some feedback on that issue by August.

Is there an interest in allowing additional colleges to apply now that the start date has been changed? Pat explained that there would be no change in the application process, pilot colleges will be selected from those that have already applied.

There is not yet a due date set for the final selection of pilot colleges, but Pat is keeping in contact with the colleges that have applied.

Tom was glad to see the selection and implementation of pilot colleges will get a little more time to vet out.

#### **Selection of Permanent Positions:**

Joe Moreau expressed his delight at having Pat James join the team as the Executive Director. The process of hiring the Chief Academic Officer, Chief Student Services Officer and Director of Strategic Planning and Operations is moving pretty swiftly. There are very good pools of candidates and a good search committee. The interview schedule has been laid out for the Chief Academic Officer and the Chief Student Services Officer and they will be contacting finalists for interviews shortly. The dates for interviews for Director of Strategic Planning and Operations should be finalized by early next week. He expects that the interview process will be concluded by the end of July or the first couple of days in August with those new team members coming on board sometime in August or by Labor Day. There have been high quality candidates that are interested in coming to work on this project and he expects to have some announcements in July.

#### **Status Reports from Workgroups:**

##### **Professional Development:**

Dan noted that there hasn't been anything new since the last meeting, and Pat mentioned that the standards have been posted in Basecamp since the last Steering Committee meeting on June 15, 2014. She asked if members had looked at them and they could be approved today so

that they could be sent to the colleges that applied to the pilot. Debbie hasn't had time to look at them in detail yet, and asked Pat to wait on that vote. Dan will also send a message to Greg about putting the list of courses up on Basecamp, as well.

#### Student Services:

Ray mentioned that the workgroup is continuing to work on their three priority areas: workshop for online readiness, online tutoring and test proctoring. They are continuing to work on the modules for online readiness. There is a little more breathing room now in terms of online tutoring, now that the first courses have been pushed back into the spring. The workgroup will be meeting with LeBaron to review the results of a survey that was sent out which included items regarding tutoring, and they will use those results to inform their work in developing the requirements for the RFP.

Debbie asked about the timeline for the online readiness modules and integrating with the student portal on services that will be offered. Dan explained that Anita is a meeting regarding the Student Portal today, and that the group is working feverishly on what they prioritized as the most important topics prior to term, during term and then toward the later part of the term. They are also looking at what other topics to include in the readiness workshop, and how it will integrate with the portal. The bulk of the modules should be completed by September; once there is approval from the subgroups, the full steering committee can look at those as well.

Dan asked whether all of the services that OEI is developing are going to be available to all students, or will they be limited to students in the OEI offered courses? Pat explained that during the pilot, they will be offered just to the pilots; although the intention is to later offer them to all colleges to the extent that it is feasible. The readiness workshop modules that are being developed will be under a Creative Commons license and will therefore be available to everyone. Similarly, the rubric for course design will be available to everyone. She hopes that it will be possible to open up certification to everyone as the project moves forward, but that might not be possible until the pilot is over. On the other hand, Smarter Measure purchased for the project won't be available outside of the pilot colleges. Joe noted that there might not be a blanket answer to what will be available broadly statewide and what is for the pilot. There is a requirement from the state to publish things that are developed through grant funding under Creative Commons, and it will be desirable to release some of those sooner rather than later. However, some of the incentive for colleges to participate is the availability of centrally funded resources, so some of those might end up being contingent upon participation. Those individual items will probably need to be decided on a case by case basis.

What is the length of the pilot? Pat and Joe M. noted that it hasn't been completely defined, but that it is probably around 2 years. It is shorter than the length of the grant. The CCMS needs to be in place and that will take a little bit of time. Pat agreed that it would be nice to have dates for everything, but that isn't possible yet, the committee will need to be flexible and reasonable, and the pilot colleges will probably be involved in determining some of those things. John Freitas asked if the length of the pilot will be defined in terms of certain benchmarks, and Pat noted that it will depend upon the success at implementing different components of the project. This is a huge and unique undertaking, and we will need to remain reasonable and flexible.

#### Common CMS Workgroup:

Joe Perret put together a Powerpoint which he loaded onto Basecamp; it includes a timeline with key events on it. The RFI is intended to gather information about what is available in the industry and it is out now. When the RFI is returned the workgroup will start looking at those responses. The RFP is being drafted and waiting for the pilot colleges to be selected so that they can be included in the process. The process of selecting the vendor will be long and involved. LeBaron's survey provided information for a pie chart that shows the distribution of CMSs in the state. The final numbers show that 67% of colleges use either Blackboard or Moodle, the others are smaller distributions. The reason for looking at those numbers was to see how much disruption there would be to colleges.

John Makevich described an activity at the Distance Education Coordinators Retreat last Thursday, which involved de-coupling the specific CMS from the tools and vision of what we want it to do. Participants started with a 2 column list of what they like and what they don't like about their current LMS. It was interesting to see that there were people with long lists of what they don't like and short lists of what they did like and others with short lists of don't like and long of ones that they like but they were using the same CMS! Then they put those sheets away and started a list of what they wanted the system to do. They asked participants to ignore the tools, current features and functionality and instead invent from the ground up what they really wanted. It got people very involved. There wasn't a single point of conclusion, but they were able to collect information on a lot of pros and cons of the current systems that are in use. The vast majority of the people in the room were still using Blackboard but there were a sizable number using Etudes and Canvas, with a small group using Desire2Learn. Steve and Amy have the lists and will be compiling the information from the 75 people that were there and that information will be shared with the workgroup and the Steering Committee.

Pat noticed that an important aha moment was when someone was lamenting what their CMS didn't do, and the person across the table pointed out that it did actually do that. It seemed like the things that people don't like were pretty universal, and the things that they liked were pretty universal as well. The things that people liked don't exist in all the systems, but it is a starting point for thinking about the learning environment that we do want, because we have the ability to make whoever becomes the producer of the CCMS build what we need. Bonnie said this is an opportunity to go outside of what we've seen so far. Someone else noted that there is a dichotomy between the simplicity of the CMS and features; new users are drawn to simplicity and experienced users are drawn to more complex systems. Fabiola noted that in her discussions with others about switching the CMS there seemed to be a common agreement that switching wasn't the main issue as long as faculty can transfer a course. John Makevich noted that there are technical elements in putting a course into a new system that need to be considered and can be complicated.

#### Academic Affairs Workgroup:

Meridith explained that since the last meeting the workgroup has been working on refining the list of courses to prioritize the courses to offer in the spring. At the last meeting they came up with 17, and they are working on getting that down to the top five. Pat will be asking the potential pilot colleges about all 17 in order to not have to keep going back to them with new requests for information. The workgroup is looking at courses that are most useful for ADTs, but they are also looking at courses with no prerequisites, because that will make it easier for the first semester of offerings because in the initial pilot it may not be easy to determine whether or not students have completed prerequisites. The committee felt that rather than trying to put the whole list in priority order, that it would make more sense to sort them into first tier and second tier courses; prioritizing them by benefit to students.

#### Pilot Colleges Subgroup:

There was no specific update beyond what Pat provided earlier in the meeting.

#### Bylaws/Charter Subgroup:

John and Pat reminded the committee that some conversation on the charter could be done now, but that if there are any suggestions that involve a lot of changes, it would be best to push that over to the next face-to-face meeting for better discussion in person.

Arnita explained that they worked on the bylaws, now referred to as the Charter, and reached consensus on what is posted in Basecamp. In the meantime, there have been a couple of changes suggested by Dan, which are posted in Basecamp as well. Arnita is in agreement with most of the changes and has started a draft to include the language, but she is not sure whether the discussion about those changes should be in the workgroup or with the full steering committee. John Makevich praised the work that was done in the workgroup to put together the

charter; then observed that when it was posted there were some more recent amendments. He suggested that the workgroup meet to try to incorporate those amendments; then afterward post it to the full steering committee as a whole, and then try to do one final set of revisions with the workgroup, before the face-to-face meeting, to hopefully wrap in those changes.

Arnita felt that was what had been done after the last meeting and wanted to know whether there was a limit to the number of iterations that should be done. LeBaron was concerned that what the workgroup reaches consensus on should be posted so that there will be time for additional revisions a couple of days before the next meeting if they are needed. John Makevich and Pat both noted the hard work that has been done by the workgroup and that the process was probably getting close to being finished, however there is recognition that the Steering Committee is a representative body that needs to get feedback from their constituency groups, which sometimes means that further changes are needed. Pat emphasized that the comments in Basecamp are great and they need to be heard and thought about carefully. Often, once a document is finalized, people need time to sit with it and think about it and check with their constituency groups to make sure that all of their concerns have been addressed. There is time for that process and that feedback loop and it is better to take the time that is needed.

**Action Item:**

The Charter Subgroup will make any current revisions and then post the draft in Basecamp for the whole Steering Committee to see. Arnita will let everyone know when the subgroup will be meeting and that will provide a deadline for suggestions and comments. The subgroup will then meet one more time for a check in to see if they can make final revisions before the face-to-face meeting on August 1.

At the face-to-face meeting the Steering Committee will accept it or not, and we will be done, or not. If not, the process will continue iteratively, but members seemed to feel confident that the document is getting close to finished and will probably be able to be wrapped up either at the August meeting, or by the September meeting.

Brian agreed with Pat and noted that he appreciates the hard work the subgroup has been doing. He felt that Dan's posts were basically 100% what the Academic Senate supports and feels strongly about. He also noted that he posted something on Basecamp about adding a note about legislative intent under Purposes and Responsibilities. There is a list of items and he strongly suggest that "to comply with the legislature's intent to alleviate shortages in certain core courses," be added. He felt that the legislative intent was incredibly important and should be discussed and voted upon.

Committee members asked if September was a "drop dead" cutoff, and John Makevich noted that the iterative process is important, as is constituent feedback. He thought there was a good chance it could be voted on and approved in August, but it depends upon how close the curve is to the asymptote at that point. August would be ideal, but if it needs to be brought back in September, that can happen. Pat agreed that she feels the group is close and it is reasonable to aim for approval in August, so that when everyone is back on campus in September, this is already worked out. She explained that it should be done when meetings with pilots start. However, Pat also noted that nothing is set in stone, nor should it be; this is a pilot and things will need to be adjusted as it proceeds. If the committee can get something that is reasonable, it is not the end of the world if it has to be fixed later.

John Freitas, Pat and John Makevich all praised the amazing hard work of the subgroup and all that they are doing for the good of students.

**Discussion of Voting and Action Items:**

Brian expressed his hope that the Steering Committee will have an opportunity to take positions on specific items more often, and to vote on them. Items such as: can students in local campuses enroll, what is the cap on number of students in a section, proctoring, and others. He posted six suggestions on items that he felt should be voted on so that everyone can provide input on them. It is important to him to be able to go back to his constituency and tell them how he voted.

Pat agreed that the questions that he posted were important ones having to do with high quality issues. They are great questions. Class size is a quality issue and one that the Senate needs to weigh in heavily on. She was involved in writing a Senate paper on appropriate use of technology, and some of Brian's issues were in that paper. The percentage of home to cohort students is another important issue that has been discussed but not yet resolved. Ric will take on some of that since it is the work of the Academic Workgroup, other questions will go to the appropriate workgroup. John Makevich noted that Basecamp provides a great permanent record of discussions and suggestions.

Ray suggested that some of these items should be put on a future agenda and John Makevich noted that he proposed sending out requests for agenda items to the chairs of the workgroups. He suggested tackling some of these questions through workgroups initially, then they can channel up for discussion. Pat and John will inventory the suggestions posted on Basecamp and route them to the appropriate workgroups.

John Freitas suggested that the committee set an expectation that voting on issues will happen at face-to-face meetings as much as possible, and that the online meetings will be for discussion and clarification. Pat agreed and further noted that there are procedures that the committee should be following. An item should come up for discussion, and then later come back for action. If that process is followed, action items should be posted on the agenda at least 72 hours before the meeting, and whenever possible they should have come up as information items prior to that meeting. In emergency situations, they will be posted in Basecamp first.

Pat asked if there were any objections to sending out the standards in draft form to the pilot colleges that have applied so that they have some idea of what they are getting into. Committee members agreed and there were no objections.

**Next Meeting:**

The next meeting will be an online meeting on Friday July 18, 2014, followed by a face-to-face meeting in Sacramento on August 1, 2014.

**Adjournment:**

The meeting was adjourned at 11:15am.