

# Online Education Initiative Steering Committee Meeting

Friday October 17, 2014  
CCC Confer

**Attendees:** Amy Carbonaro, Anita Crawley, Arnita Porter, Barbara Illowsky, Barry Gibbons, Brian Keliher, Carol Lashman, Chris Graillat, Clinton Slaughter, Cynthia Alexander, Dan Crump, Dave Degroot, Dave Stephens, Debbie Sheldon, Fabiola Torres, Fred Sherman, Gary Bird, Gregory Beyrer, Ileri Valenzuela, Jayme Johnson, Jerred Scheive, Jessica Millikan, Jim Huether, Joe Perret, John Freitas, John Makevich, John Sills, Jory Hadsell, Joseph Moreau, Kelly Fowler, Larry Lambert, LeBaron Woodyard, Lorena Dorn, Maria Gonzalez, Michelle Pilati, Pat James, Ray Sanchez, Richard Mathews, Sandoval Chagoya, Steve Klein, Terry Gleason, Tom Burke and Vince Rodriguez.

## **Opening and Introductions:**

Vice chair John Freitas called the meeting to order at 10:37 am and welcomed everyone. He also apologized for typos in the agenda that resulted in some difficulties for members in logging into Confer today for the meeting.

Chair Fabiola Torres expressed the support and excitement that she heard recently from members of the legislature about where OEI is going and what it will be providing for students in the state of California. It will help to provide important opportunities for educational access for our struggling students.

## **Minutes:**

The minutes were posted on Basecamp for members to review and there were no corrections or additions. Larry Lambert moved to approve the minutes and Arnita Porter seconded the motion. The minutes for the meetings of August 15<sup>th</sup> and September 5<sup>th</sup> were approved 16-0 by the committee.

## **Action**

## **Executive Director Report:**

Pat James explained that the timeline has changed a bit, but because of the non-linear aspects of the project, the team believes that it will not cause issues. There will be more opportunity to do some work with the CCMS draft RFP and Steve Klein will report on that later in the meeting.

## **Information/Discussion**

The reviewer training was well received by 28 people representing 27 different colleges. The reviewers became involved with the standards, looked at them in depth, and decided how to interpret them, so that they were all on the same page. Additionally, many reviewers came away from the process recognizing ways in which they could improve their own online courses. These standards will raise the quality of online courses across the system. Arnita noted that from her perspective as a reviewer, the training was wonderful and a great experience. She is a Quality Matters course reviewer and found the @ONE training remarkably different from QM due to the in-person component, which brought up a lot of information, questions, and answers that she hadn't experienced with online training alone. Cynthia Alexander agreed that the process provided an opportunity to talk over the fantastic standards developed by the professional development group and she also noted that experimenting with Barbara Illowsky's class was really helpful as well. The result of this process will be top-of-the-line courses with clear outcomes, clear directions on where to go, and good instructor-student feedback.

Pat and a few others went to EDUCAUSE recently and found it to be very interesting. Industry leaders and experts advised the project team to use the power of the system to put weight behind what needs to be done that will benefit the colleges and students of California.

Pat is also working on the MOU that the pilot colleges will be signing. Foothill-DeAnza is looking at the language now; then it will come to the steering committee. The wording is focused on

asking the colleges if they are willing to participate in the activities outlined for the pilot. She did add a paragraph emphasizing that the course review process is intended to prioritize courses on the basis of the ones that are top priority needs, as well as which are most ready for use with students (accessible, etc.). Faculty should not be evaluated on the results of the course review. The review is between the faculty member and the reviewer and in no way will be used for performance evaluation, nor should it negatively affect the faculty member's reputation or ability to teach courses on their campuses.

### **Announcements from Management Team:**

#### Statewide Project Manager

Steve Klein provided an update on the CCMS RFP process. The process has been moving well with a large and involved group in the CCMS Committee. There are 45 faculty members including both the CCMS work group and 30 faculty members from the full launch pilot colleges working to complete and release the RFP on October 27<sup>th</sup>. It looks like it will be possible to meet that goal, which is important because there are many different pieces and processes that must be coordinated.

Supporting delivery of services to schools and students is important, and with that in mind there were some adjustments made to the timeline. The new timeline allows for opening up some sandbox development earlier in the process. This will help people to feel familiar with the selection, as well as provide some opportunities to develop professional development materials around the selected CCMS. The entire new timeline from the development of the RFP to the selection of the CCMS will be posted in the Basecamp Steering Committee group so that members can refer to it if they have any questions.

The RFP development has been informed by a number of different processes, with emphasis on including faculty input into features and requirements, as well as input into the importance and level of desirability of those features. There was also considerable input from a very successful IdeaScale process, with 360 registered users who contributed ideas and comments, more than 3500 votes, and more than 70 top level ideas that were shared. Those various sources of input helped to refine five areas that are particularly important:

- Content and course migration tools and functions
- Ability to integrate with SIS
- Issues around access and ownership of data
- Capability with mobile devices
- Community building features, even across colleges.

There will be a 72 hour review period for the steering committee to view, review, and comment on the final draft of the RFP as it is prepared to be released. The link to access that document will be sent on Sunday. It is in a Google space for review and is therefore connected to your work/campus email for security and confidentiality while still allowing members access.

There are different input points for accommodating student services in the CCMS and requirements related to the integration of third party services by vendors including what experience they have with integrating and developing additional services are elements of the RFP process. Those questions will also come into play when discussing integration with the larger portal and the services being developed in the other initiatives. Integration and interoperability will result in a system where data can be successfully connected across systems and services that share information about students at various places on campus.

Through an informal survey of her online students, Fabiola found that it takes about 2-3 weeks to acclimate to a new CMS and after that they just consider it part of their learning environment. However, what students felt was more important to them than the CMS, was the learning experience; students just wanted a good class!

Joe Perret emphasized the importance of members making use of the 72 hour time period to have a concise look at the RFP and to provide comments and perspective on it. Members who have problems accessing, or questions about, the RFP should contact Steve Klein or Joe Perret.

Brian Keliher appreciates the fact that the CCMS RFP process is much more open than the tutoring RFP process, but still has concerns about the role of the steering committee. What will be happening with the comments that members submit? Specifically, will the subcommittee consider those comments and vote on them? Steve explained that it would depend upon the nature of the feedback and whether it was possible to move forward or to address it in some way. The 72 hour review period will end Wednesday, and Friday the CCMS committee will meet to address issues and determine how to deal with them. The intention is to take forward the suggestions and feedback through the remainder of the timeline. Brian thought that it would be best to have an overall OEI steering committee vote on the RFP, or at least the ratings rubric.

Fabiola and John Freitas moved further discussion of this issue to later in the agenda under the subject "Role of the Steering Committee in the RFP Process."

#### Director of Strategic Planning and Operations

John Makevich provided an update on the work with the eight "full launch" pilot colleges. Those colleges are very enthusiastic with respect to implementation of all of the pilot elements. John has shared the updated timelines with them which involve summer piloting of the tutoring and readiness module components, followed by phasing in additional components as possible, semester after semester, as those components develop.

John has also been working with Jim Huether on assembling timelines and deadlines for the project, and while working on short and long term planning they thought that it would be nice to get a deeper level of steering committee involvement, perhaps through a planning work group. Barry, Larry, and Anita expressed interest in volunteering to help. Fabiola added time for John Makevich to discuss a possible planning group later in the agenda today.

#### Chief Academic Officer

Jory Hadsell explained that each of the colleges in each pilot group was asked to submit five courses for review; then the academic affairs work group would prioritize three of the five courses to go forward to the course reviewers. The work group and Michelle Pilati met last week for the preliminary review not looking at the applications, but instead looking at the mix of courses across the pilot and within each pilot group. They were looking for a good balance of courses, as well as courses that would provide good data for the pilot. For example, in the readiness pilot group, the focus was on courses without prerequisites; while in the tutoring pilot group the focus was on courses that would have a higher tutoring load. They received 75 course applications and now have 53 courses selected to send forward to the professional development work group and @ONE for review. This will provide the reviewers the course shells to work with. Faculty members have been notified if their course went into priority A, the first group for immediate review; or priority B, courses to be reviewed later. The list of courses is not confidential, and Jory plans to send it out when he has the full list, but there are a few colleges that needed a little more time to work through their process with the local senates and faculty member submissions. That list can be shared, but it is important to be sensitive to the fact that although these are high quality courses that are being put forward, some may fall out of the review process. The courses that are sent forward for review will not form the list of final courses to be offered until after they are reviewed.

Across the 53 courses that are moving forward, there are courses from all of the 19 on the master list, except the Psych Research Methods course, which they still don't have. They are hoping it will be in the next batch that is coming in.

John Freitas asked whether any of the courses in the tutoring pilot have Supplemental Instruction (SI) mentors and whether that question was asked on the application. Jory noted that after the

initial version of the application they have recognized the need for some additional questions for later versions, but also emphasized that the prioritization was not based on anything the faculty member submitted in the application, it was based on the need for the 19 courses on the list. However, the conversation about SI started to emerge during the review of courses for the tutoring pilot. Pat mentioned that she has been thinking about SI from the beginning and believes that it will be easier to accomplish than might be thought in online courses. She is sensitive to that need and will be looking at it.

Jory noted that Barbara Illowsky's work in the basic skills area and gearing up that work group will also help to address those needs in the grant.

The online tutoring RFP was published last Friday. Jory acknowledged concerns from some steering committee members about the timeline, specifically feeling that there was not enough opportunity to weigh in on the RFP and the ratings rubric. Online tutoring started off as part of the student services work group, and then was shifted over to academic affairs when the permanent staff was hired. The timeline includes a due date for vendor proposals on November 12th, the evaluation committee will meet on November 19<sup>th</sup>, and a letter of intent to will go to the Foundation board on November 20<sup>th</sup>. The decision will be brought back to the steering committee at the December meeting. The group decided to work with the Foundation on the tutoring RFP because they have a history of working with procurement contracts like this statewide, getting good deals for the community college system with contracts that allow all interested colleges to opt in. Due to Foundation involvement, the timeline had to include their board meeting, and use their rules for RFPs. The hope is to have a contract with the vendor no later than December 15<sup>th</sup>, because the earliest classes start January 12<sup>th</sup>, so there is only the time from mid-December to mid-January to ramp up services for students. Pilot colleges continue to show a lot of enthusiasm about addressing this need, and there is tremendous interest statewide from other colleges in being able to opt in on this contract, to add this service for their students, as well

Debbie Sheldon asked if the possibility of bulk purchases or use of online textbooks had been considered, and how that might feed into the online CMS. Jory noted that the project is aware of online educational resources (OER). Michelle added that an online education council with inter-segmental faculty was created by legislation and that there are probably excellent OER versions for some of the courses that will be offered, which faculty might be encouraged to incorporate into their courses. However, it would not be appropriate to base approval of the courses on those criteria, since it was not listed on the application. Maybe in the future that could be considered, but the OEI is not going to take away academic freedom from the faculty on how they choose to teach their courses. Barbara Illowsky also noted that once the courses are identified and the faculty with them, we might provide information to the faculty on the availability of those OER resources as an option, or supplemental resources, if the faculty member wants to make use of them.

Greg Beyrer asked about how other colleges can participate in the tutoring opt in, and when that would be available. Jory clarified that this coming spring will be the pilot and the desire is to have those resources available as soon as possible for the tutoring pilot courses. The RFP is requesting the opportunity for vendor tutors on up to a 24/7 basis; that may not be fully possible, but we want to see what they have available. For the fall 2015, there are two pieces that are being requested in the vendor proposals: support for a blended model with local tutors using the vendor platform, and the option for colleges to opt-in to purchase additional tutoring services. OEI is funding the tutoring for the pilot courses for OEI; however, there are also pilot colleges that want to buy-in for their non-OEI courses as well. Additionally, the Foundation involvement means that non-pilot colleges will also be able to purchase tutoring services at a reduced rate if they desire.

#### Chief Student Services Officer

Bonnie Peters has now met with seven of the eight readiness pilot colleges, and will be meeting with the other one soon. She asked each of the colleges to put together a small team of

individuals on their campus who will be involved in the implementation of the pilot process. All of the campuses are excited and enthusiastic and similar to the tutoring pilot, many individuals are interested in expanding use beyond the OEI courses.

Currently the team is working on the seven initial modules. They have met with the developer and are expecting them to be ready by the first of December when they will be provided to the colleges for implementation. That module content is being turned into highly interactive media with video and they also hope to have possibly some gaming aspects. Prior to that release, the plan is to make the modules available for about a week to provide an opportunity for feedback regarding what they look like and are trying to convey. After that feedback, the team will connect with the pilot colleges to bring in the Smarter Measure assessment piece with the LMS or CMS on the campus. The majority of the colleges are on Blackboard, with others on Moodle, and Etudes. The developer will work with the administrators to get that integration.

Bonnie is working with the campus individuals who are the point of contact and building relationships with the schools. Those people are taking the information back to the colleges. The teams are made up of online instructors, student services people, counselors, and others who market to students. Readiness will be part of the local CMS, but the campus representatives are also working on finding other places where it could be made available to students.

Many campuses start registration in November, so the modules will first be attached to the three pilot courses for the spring on each campus and then the data can be studied. Colleges are already asking to use the modules with courses that are not part of the pilot in OEI. That is a discussion to look into, but as a preliminary thought Bonnie doesn't see any reason that the modules could not be used further, although there would be challenges with the assessment piece as the contract is currently structured.

The seven initial modules are:

- Introduction to Online Learning
- Getting Tech Ready
- Organizing for Online Success
- Online Study Skills and Managing Time
- Communication Skills for Online Learning
- Online Reading Strategies
- Getting Started

A summary of each module is posted on Basecamp. Students will take the assessment, and a comprehensive report and summary page will be tied to the modules that can help students become better online learners. These are common challenge areas for students in online classes. The modules will be attached to the three OEI courses for the spring pilot, but the team would also like to have them available as the course is moving along, so that if a student has challenges later, they might choose to use the modules to address those issues.

There are also conversations happening with TTIP South about providing online space for the modules so that people can access them; similar to the OTC portal for the Online Teaching Conference. The goal is to eventually have the readiness content available for everybody. There is also some work that is coming through EPI with respect to the SSSP focus areas and the OEI project team will be collaborating with them at appropriate times on those areas of assessment, orientation, and counseling. Bonnie emphasized that the different grants are working through various components and the timelines are not completely coordinated, but they will all come together eventually. The eight full launch colleges are also working with John Makevich on the agreements regarding those matriculation pieces.

**2013/2014 Evaluation Report:**

Ileri Valenzuela will provide the OEI Evaluation Report for December 2013- June 2014 to the steering committee at the November 7<sup>th</sup> meeting. She will share highlights at the meeting and provide a hard copy of the complete report to members as well.

**General Housekeeping:****Meeting Calendar and Planning**

John Makevich is working on a survey to send out to members regarding preferences for upcoming meeting locations and times. He will work with the chairs to line up that survey, which is not intended to be a vote, but is instead seeking general information.

John Makevich asked the possibility of starting up a planning work group, and whether that should begin immediately with volunteers, or should wait until after the next meeting on November 7<sup>th</sup>. John Freitas thought the discussion should go along with perhaps consolidating or deactivating some work groups. It is also important to determine the scope and responsibilities for the new group. John Makevich will write up a one page summary of the proposed purpose and purview for the new work group and how it would interact with the other groups. He will share that in advance of the next steering committee meeting.

**Written Summary Reports:**

Fabiola and John Freitas are asking that work groups provide a written summary report prior to the face-to-face meetings. This will allow for a more productive use of the time at those meetings for discussion and questions. John Freitas will provide a template for the written reports with a summary and a clear statement of any recommendations being brought forward for action by the steering committee. This will also make it easier for the committee to keep track of goals, to dos, and so on.

**Steering Committee Role in RFP Process and General Governance Issues:**

John Freitas noted that this is an opportunity for the committee to raise the issues that will be discussed more completely at the November 7<sup>th</sup> meeting. There have been some concerns raised on Basecamp regarding the RFP process and the purview of the work groups versus the purview of the steering committee. There is interest in developing clearer roles for the work groups and how they interact with the steering committee as the governance body. There are time pressures and deliverables, but if the committee can work toward aligning the timeline for the deliverables with the meeting calendar it will make it easier for the steering committee to provide input without having to call special meetings.

Brian thought the committee was headed in a good direction with work group reports. He is concerned that currently it seems like the subcommittees have a more powerful role than the steering committee, and he is not comfortable with that. Brian emphasized that it does not have to do with the members of the subcommittees, who he considers to be qualified and well intentioned people, it has to do with the structure. For example, the CCMS RFP is being published on October 27<sup>th</sup>, but the steering committee is meeting in person a week and a half later. He felt that despite the timing challenges it would be more powerful for the steering committee to have the chance to vote on the RFP before it is released.

John Freitas also noted some concerns that the blanket non-disclosure form didn't apply to the tutoring RFP because the Foundation had different requirements for RFPs. It is important to be aware of the different rules when working with different entities; if we are sending out RFPs through agents or partners, we need to know their rules so they can be addressed.

Brian wanted to know whether it would be possible for the full steering committee to have a vote at least on the ratings rubric for the RFP. Pat felt that the process is open and there is good representation on the CCMS committee with good people she trusts to look at the rubric and to bring forward and take into consideration the concerns expressed by the steering committee during the comment period. Brian highlighted that the issue is not trust; he trusts the committee

members, but does not like the unknown about the process. Does the subcommittee vote? Is this setting a precedent going forward, that the subcommittee has control, or does the steering committee have control?

With the detail and work involved Joe Perret felt that it would not make sense for the entire steering committee to do all the work. It makes sense for the work groups to do the detail work, however, when that work returns to the full steering committee for a vote, the larger body should not go through the entire process all over again. John Freitas agreed that similar to a budget committee doing work and coming up with a priority list, when their work comes back to the larger body; that group's role is to validate the process, not to go through and micromanage (by reprioritizing the priority list, for example). OEI is working to get caught up, but he would like to see the timeline for future RFPs aligned with the steering committee meeting schedule.

Brian thought that the timeline should perhaps be slowed down so that the RFP would be released after the next steering committee meeting on November 7. That way the steering committee could provide feedback on the ratings rubric and have a final vote on the RFP.

Steve Klein explained that the entire RFP selection process is similar to a hiring process with: the RFP describing the job qualifications; RFP scoring using the rubric to filter the pool of applicants down; and then interviewing the smaller pool of candidates before the final selection is made. The ratings rubric includes the level of desirability of certain features and those that are answered with a yes or no are machine scored. Elements that have vendor responses that involve describing their experience with particular features will be evaluated on a continuum of point values depending upon how well they respond to the question (a relatively incomplete response would receive scores in the first decile, while more thorough responses would get scores in the second decile and the third decile would be for very complete responses). There will be about 40 or so scores, because a large number of scores helps to remove potential bias. Additionally, by district standards, the cost proposal must be equal to or greater than 30%; it will be held at 30%, with all of the other parts of the rubric scoring the different features making up the other 70%. That means that the functional requirements, accessibility requirements, technical and security elements and so on, will all go into the 70%. Therefore, none of the categories will receive more than about 10-15% because there are about 8 different categories that add up to that 70%. The overall scoring process will result in the best 2-4 vendors, which then move into the next round of the RFP selection process, which includes onsite demonstrations and interviews.

Committee members discussed whether or not to make a recommendation to delay the release of the RFP until after the November 7<sup>th</sup> meeting, but Steve suggested that the committee stay with the release date of October 27<sup>th</sup> to avoid delaying the process. He reviewed the points where further input from the steering committee could be made. There are 72 hours of draft RFP review time, beginning on Sunday. The CCMS committee will review the comments and responses before the RFP is released. After the responses come back on the RFP, there will be an initial round of scoring to determine which vendors will move on to face-to-face demonstrations during four days in February. The process also involves cost proposal evaluations, as part of the district requirements. The short list of vendors which are responsive to the requirements and also meet the cost proposals will be submitted to the CCMS committee and also to the Steering Committee. That short list of 2-4 vendors are then notified of the specific details for the demonstrations and use cases, and will be asked to bring three different teams (which are described in general terms in the RFP). Those more specific details are not in the RFP (and therefore could potentially be modified in some ways before that stage). After the interviews and demonstrations are completed, the selection recommendation by the CCMS committee will occur on February 5<sup>th</sup>, with that recommendation coming to the full OEI steering committee on February 6<sup>th</sup>. The timeline is geared toward the OEI steering committee meeting date. Afterward, the recommendation goes to the management team, which will most likely go with the recommendation. The notice of intent to award will go to the vendor on February 9<sup>th</sup> and then the district's business office and contract negotiation process will occur. It is a tight timeline, and

it would be a problem to push back the release date from October 27<sup>th</sup>, so Pat and Steve recommended that not be done.

Ray noted that the process is comprehensive and transparent, and that the full steering committee will have the ability to approve or veto the recommendation, so he supported keeping the process as it is and moving forward with the existing timeline, but having a strong discussion of the process on November 7<sup>th</sup>.

Brian still preferred to have a vote prior to the release of the RFP, but acknowledged that there was not a lot of support for his position so he would not push for a vote on the issue today, but would like to have a big picture discussion on the role of the steering committee and the process moving forward. Pat agreed that discussion should happen to clarify the process for the many RFPs that will still be coming from this project. Topics to include are: potential blanket NDA, clarification on how the work groups report to the steering committee, and guidelines to address the general concerns about operations and policies.

**Next Meeting:**

The next meeting will be on November 7<sup>th</sup> in Sacramento.

**Adjournment:**

Greg Beyrer moved to adjourn, Dave Stephens seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 12:03 pm.