Committee on Academic Technology  
1 April 2016  
1:30 PM to 3:00 PM  
414 Cudahy Hall

Attending: Maggie Cinto, Mike Class SJ, Scott D’Urso, Jenn Fishman, Kathy Lang, Patrick Loftis, Shaun Longstreet, Dan Myers, Kevin Rich, Heidi Schweizer, Christopher Stockdale, David Strifling, Janice Welburn, Tom Wirtz, Amber Young-Brice.

Excused: Mark Johnson, Richard Marklin, Jon Pray, John Su

Not Present: Adam Kouhel

Recorder: Jenn Fishman

Reflection/Prayer: Pat Loftis

Approval of Minutes:
- 26 February 2016 meeting minutes
- Approved with corrections.

New Business
Nota bene: Since Provost Dan Myers was in attendance, we focused exclusively on digital learning initiatives, leaving other new business (e.g., D2L Steering Committee) and continuing business (e.g., C.A.T. mission/vision statement, advocate memo for updated facilities, AY201617 planning document, Faculty Tech Day) for subsequent meetings.

Dan Myers opened discussion by observing Marquette has a great brand but could be doing more with regard to e-learning, including digital programs, hybridized classrooms, partnerships with content vendors, programming for prospective students on one hand and alumni on the other, and so on. His questions: What should be next? How do we coordinate efforts? What new resources (of any kind) do we need to create (at the very least) self-sustaining if not profit-making activities and opportunities? His goal: To gather ideas and information for a task force that will be constituted soon and charged with helping us think at a university-level about how to strategically build, coordinate, and maintain new e-learning efforts; how to “incentivize” faculty and others to contribute; how to “push forward” to complement (rather than supplant) residential education.

Heidi Schweizer offered an overview of online courses mediated by CTL over the past 20 years. (See www.mu.edu/online-campus and Heidi’s presentation slides).

Responding to Dan, who asked what else faculty would like to see with regard to e-learning, we offered the following suggestions:
- Fractional courses that cover subjects and/or information that would help students bridge between coursework and internships or post-graduate careers.
  - Jenn: Web-building skills, sophisticated use of social media (in workplace contexts);
  - Pat: Modules to help students learn about citation (in response to Integrity Code infractions);
- Kevin: Courses that would help students in programs like accounting earn required units of credit;
- Heidi and Shaun: Summer school courses and J-term possibilities
- Jenn raised the possibility of AJCU collaborations:
  - Heidi described a three-year FIPSE-sponsored collaboration centered in Education that included MU, St. Joes, and Chicago Loyola. Participating students enrolled at their own schools.
  - Chris offered an upcoming example from Physics that includes a half dozen colleges and universities. Students will attend classes synchronously via video with on-campus proctors for exams.
  - Dan noted this model is frequently used elsewhere for instruction in less-taught languages.

Discussion centered on undergraduate included the following observations and questions:
- Heidi noted that in the past Marquette has lacked support from upper-administration for e-learning initiatives.
- Shaun wondered where we will get viable programs (i.e., who will develop them)?
- Scott asked about IP related to MU online course creation, and Heidi explained the IP agreement faculty currently sign when they develop courses.
- Course development:
  - Heidi explained the cost of developing a course ($10,000), which covers payment of the instructor ($3000) and an instructional designer as well as use of the IMC, Heidi's time, and so on.
  - Chris underscored the importance of keeping in mind the amount of time it takes to develop a course, and Dan concurred that teaching a MOOC was exhausting.
  - Heidi glossed findings from a 10-year-old study of faculty involved with e-learning (n=80 surveyed; n=10 interviewed). The general perception: designing an online course helped them better design all other courses and strengthened their pedagogy.
  - Scott underscored the value of working with—and learning from—CTL as part of course development.
  - Shaun underscored the way working with CTL to develop online courses benefits students by ensuring online courses are consistent (internally, across courses) and FERPA as well as ADA compliant. He contrasts CTL-based courses with others faculty have developed and taught on their own, an issue that departments are responsible for monitoring since CTL's role is strictly formative.
  - Shaun commented on the rigor involved in online course design, where there are many eyes on a course as it is evolving;
  - Jenn identified community as key, noting online teaching seems to give people who otherwise lack it a pedagogy community.
  - Chris suggested instructors teaching in the Core might benefit from a concerted effort to engage digital resources both for instructional purposes and for sharing information among faculty.
- E-learning for students studying abroad:
  - Scott described benefits of asynchronous classes, which can run on 24-hour clocks and accommodate students in different time zones;
  - Kevin noted students who want to study abroad but must take particular required courses might be helped by online learning options;
- **Jenn** observed possible disadvantages of sending students abroad but tethering them to the US and Marquette through high-stakes online learning obligations;
  - **Student perceptions of online learning:**
    - **Chris** noted online learning can motivate students;
    - **Scott** observed online learning enables students to make the most of their time in some situations;
    - **Jenn** noted some students perceive online learning as less rigorous than face-to-face courses, an easy way to fill requirements in subjects of limited interest;
    - **Heidi** described CTL strategies to circumvent that way of thinking;
  - **Mike** asks about online learning and *cura personalis*, wondering what we (can) do online beyond academic courses in conjunction with university ministry, student affairs, and so on.
    - **Shaun** mentioned past online programming in conjunction with the now defunct First-Year Read;
    - **Jenn** wondered if online programming could usefully connect current students and alums in particular fields.

**Dan** shifted attention from undergraduate to graduate learning, and we offered the following observations and questions:
  - **Pat** observed the possibilities for online learning are wide open for physician assistants (PAs), who have to maintain certification through continuing education, noting the same is true in many other health professions as well as law. On balance, noting the amount of time it takes to develop and administer strong programs, he asked how could faculty be involved in creating a giant online graduate education system without compromising or giving up their other campus responsibilities, including important face-to-face instruction. Even with protected time or buyouts, it's hard to imagine faculty wouldn't be quickly overloaded.
  - **Mike** suggested hiring adjuncts, which might work well for licensure programs and less well for programs more firmly situated under the MU brand;
  - **Jenn** noted the opportunity for inventive and uniquely ethical job creation for colleagues suffering in the current "freeway flier" contingent labor economy;
  - **Scott** noted the way licensure or certificate programs can operate as gateway courses that draw students to other courses.
  - **Dan** noted that face-to-face continuing education happens through the law school across the state but could easily happen online, depending on competition from Madison and other WI schools.
  - **Mike** observed that MU alumni are a ready base of students; **Heidi** observes alumni could also come back as teachers in many areas of professional study; **Pat** notes his program already grooms alums to return as teachers.
  - **Dan** asked about online MAs:
    - **Heidi** reminded that we already have an online MA in Theology, noting our greatest competition is U of Phoenix.
    - **Shaun** noted the MA is currently enrolled at 15, including lawyers and people who wish to be active in their parishes, but it's difficult to identify faculty to teach in the program because they have substantial face-to-face curricular obligations
    - **Heidi** also reminded MU has a Master's in nursing and a doctorate in nursing practice
  - **Dan** asked about interest in more online graduate degrees:
    - **Heidi** noted interest from Engineering, Business, Communication, Nursing, Education (i.e., a summer-time MA), Health Sciences;
Pat suggested a public health degree to foster community-based research;
Maggie confirmed interest in an online MA in Education but lack of current capacity to offer it
Dan asked if a call for proposals would be well received; the room answered in the affirmative.

Dan raised the possibility of establishing an Office of Digital Learning as a mode of boosterism or a way to signal MU's commitment to e-learning:

- Dan asked where an Office of Digital Learning would be located, how it would be staffed.
- Mike argued against creating an Office because that move leads to pigeonholing, as happened to campus ministry; he suggested instead that digital learning be an accountable part of the portfolio of the VPs for Undergraduate Education and Graduate Education.
- Janice agreed, adding that one more campus office might stretch resources, complicate relationships, and replicate services existing units might well be able to provide if given additional resources;
- Pat underscored the importance of communicating clearly the Provost's support for digital learning, whether it's an office or a directive or an initiative;
- Scott added the importance of letting people know there is support for e-learning in various forms (i.e., time, money).

Dan concluded the discussion by sketching a timeframe for next steps, noting within a few months it will be time to establish a committee or initiative with some resources to use and money to spend.

A review of the February 26th CAT minutes was performed, and the minutes were approved as proposed.

Kathy asked that a member of the CAT serve as the faculty representative on the D2L Steering Committee. Scott agreed to attend the first meeting, and Kevin will serve on subsequent meetings.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:01 PM.