Committee on Academic Technology  
Sept. 26, 2014 Meeting  
Meeting Minutes

Recorder: Bruce Boyden

Call to Order at 1:30 pm

Members present: Tom Wirtz (chair), Lesley Boaz, Bruce Boyden, Maggie Cinto, Scott D’Urso, Jenn Fishman, Mark Johnson, Kyuil Kim, Kathy Lang, Patrick Loftis, Shaun Longstreet, Maureen McAvoy (substituting for Mike Class), Gary Meyer, Jon Pray, Kevin Rich, Thomas Schick, Heidi Schweizer, Christopher Stockdale, Janice Welburn.

Members excused: None.

Introductions

The members introduced themselves. Also attending the meeting were two students from Scott D’Urso’s communications consulting class.

Reflection by Maureen McAvoy

Approval of Minutes

The minutes for the April 25, 2014 meeting were considered. On motion of Lesley Boaz, the minutes were amended to reflect that the motion to adjourn at 2:55pm passed unanimously. A typographical error was noted in the penultimate line of the Turnitin/D2L Integration item to correct “Turnit in” to “Turnitin.” As amended the minutes were approved by acclamation.

New Business

Gary Meyer briefly described the history and purpose of the committee. There was a general discussion of the issues the committee should address in the forthcoming year.
**Computer Replacement Program.** Gary Meyer suggested reactivating the issue over getting the CRP fully funded. In response to a question, Kathy Lang noted 23% of faculty have laptops. Jenn Fishman asked if there was any tracking of what faculty request versus what they receive. That initiated a discussion of the different procedures various units have for the CRP; some faculty members are given a list of equipment and the amounts that the college will contribute, others are just given a certain sum. Mark Johnson asked if there was a trend in terms of bringing your own device. Kathy Lang stated that there would be a lot of issues with a widespread BYOD program, from FERPA compliance to making sure that programs received necessary updates.

**Clickers.** Chris Stockdale suggested investigating the issue of whether certain clicker systems work well in a crowded spectrum. In particular, those systems implemented on an iPad or iPhone may not be reliable when the wi-fi environment is congested.

**D2L.** Patrick Loftis noted two “loose strings” with respect to D2L from last year, the D2L-CheckMarq integration and the D2L purge. Jon Pray responded that the integration is not happening and the purge is.

Jon reported that the difficulty with the integration is that the Registrar prefers that all grades be manually entered into Checkmarq to reduce errors, and there is a cost to implement the solution by the D2L vendor. Gary Meyer and Thomas Schick noted that there is still keen student interest in getting faculty to use the D2L gradebook more, which more faculty may be incentivized to do if porting the grades to CheckMarq were easier. Tom Wirtz noted that integration is a possible issue the committee may wish to continue pursuing.

With respect to the D2L “purge,” or course clean-up, Jon Pray reported that it will occur on December 19th. The purge will only occur for courses six years or older. There is a process to export any files that a faculty member wishes to keep, they will be downloaded as a zip file for each course, and they can be extracted and re-uploaded if desired. If materials were used in multiple course offerings, then there are multiple copies of those files on the server, and only the course offerings six years or older will be deleted.

Although the Committee on Faculty Welfare has raised some concerns, Shaun Longstreet noted that there was a period for debate that is now concluded. Jon Pray
stated that he would be happy to discuss the issue with any interested faculty member. Gary Meyer encouraged committee members to raise awareness of the purge with their units.

**D2L Rebranding.** D2L is changing names to “BrightSpace.” There was discussion of the fact that some universities apply their own names to the D2L courseware, such as the University of Wisconsin and Ohio State.

Jon Pray reported that D2L had agreed to fix what they’ve done to the discussion board. Patrick Loftis asked what peoples’ experience with ExamSoft has been, and it was noted that ExamSoft intends to integrate with D2L in Spring 2015. Jon Pray noted that iClickers also offers D2L integration but it does not work well. Jenn Fishman reported that English instructors have been having trouble with the D2L-Turnitin integration. One problem noted by the committee was that Turnitin sometimes reports a revised draft of the student’s work as plagiarizing the student’s own earlier draft. Kathy Lang noted that D2L’s exam software is incompatible with Internet Explorer versions lower than 9, so Internet Explorer must be upgraded for it to work properly.

**Software Services.** Kevin Rich asked about student use of their own devices to run university software required in their programs. Kathy Lang reported that there is a pilot project planned for the spring with the College of Engineering for making graphics-intensive engineering applications available remotely. It requires additional server hardware as well as Citrix. Anyone with discipline-specific software will have a use for this.

**Use of Existing Technology.** Mark Johnson asked if there is any university-wide push to better use the technology resources we already have. The specific issue discussed was the use of the Outlook calendar. Gary Meyer suggested placing this item on the agenda for discussion of whether a motion could be drafted for the Senate. Janice Welburn noted that there may be privacy fears with using the calendar. Jenn Fishman observed that there are also social meanings underlying the use of calendar invites.

**Future of Classroom Technology.** Tom Wirtz noted that he worked with the federal courts on the project that resulted in federal e-filing, and recalled a thought exercise that was done: in the courtroom of the future, what’s in the judge’s briefcase? A
similar question could be asked of faculty members 5 years from now. Kathy Lang stated that the question is, what do you want to be able to do with technology? Tom Wirtz said he would find space on a future agenda to brainstorm this question.

Old Business

**E-Textbook Subcommittee.** Jon Pray reported on the status of the e-textbook subcommittee. There is a Tumblr site with links he has collected at muetextbook.tumblr.com. Next week is EduCause which may reveal other developments. The University of Wisconsin has backed off of the big push it was making a few years ago to convert to e-texts. Janice Welburn noted that electronic books are popular with students using the library. Gary Meyer observed that there are lots of electronic textbook options available at the bookstore. Jenn Fishman stated that she would be interested in how students are using electronic materials in different classes, and in information on textbook publisher ethics with respect to teacher certification. Thomas Schick noted that students have different preferences, but that he might be able to find out more. Kathy Lang reported that data from Follett indicates that electronic textbook use is increasing every year.

Gary Meyer suggested that the e-textbook subcommittee may not need continue, particularly in light of the other topics the committee wishes to pursue which may require subcommittee work.

**Hardware/Software Subcommittee.** Tom Wirtz noted that given that he is chair of the committee, perhaps someone else should take over. Chris Stockdale and Lesley Boaz both volunteered.

Chris Stockdale noted that several classrooms around campus are being renovated. How would it be best to use that space? Faculty should be involved. Kathy Lang stated that next year the plan is to merge the facilities upgrade and the tech upgrade funds. For example, wireless capacity. Perhaps the committee can discuss how to bring in the right people to provide input on how to set up a classroom.

Patrick Loftis suggested following up on the issue of whether software is being paid for that is already licensed, in order to save money.

**Tech Day Update.** Gary Meyer reported that the Tech Day was postponed due to the fact that it was scheduled to occur the same week as the Presidential Inauguration.
But the subcommittee worked out an extensive plan. The morning will include guided tours of three innovative spaces on campus, Engineering, Nursing, and Dentistry. There will be a keynote speaker with national appeal at 12pm to 1pm, followed by TedX-style talks on campus about academic technology. The subcommittee originally planned 6-8 talks but scaled that down to 4. That will be followed by perhaps a panel discussion by the speakers, and then a reception afterwards. Some vendors have offered their support. The hope is to do it next year, and we have booked AMU from 12-5 on September 15, 2015.

Adjournment

The committee adjourned at 2:50pm.