Committee on Academic Technology  
November 21, 2014  
1:30PM to 3:00PM Cudahy 414  
Minutes

**Attendance**  
**Present:** Tom Wirtz (chair), Thomas Schick, Kyuil Kim, Christopher Stockdale, Kathy Lang, Maggie Cinto, Lesley Boaz, Jon Pray, Gary Meyer, Bruce Boyden, Mike Class, SJ, Patrick Loftis, Kevin Rich, Mark Johnson  

Recorder: Kevin Rich

**Absent and Excused:** Scott D’Urso, Jenn Fishman, Shaun Longstreet, Heidi Schweizer, Janice Welburn

**Reflection**  
The meeting began with a reflection by Patrick Loftis

**Approval of Minutes**  
The minutes of the 10/24/14 meeting were reviewed and approved.

**New Business**

**Clickers – Christopher Stockdale**  
Christopher Stockdale discussed clickers and how they worked, along with some of their primary features. Christopher finds clickers to be very useful to keep students engaged and working together, especially in classes with 100+ students. Furthermore, their use eliminates the need to take attendance. A key consideration is thinking strategically about how clickers will fit - clickers will be most effective when really integrated into the way course content is delivered.

Kyuil Kim asked a question about capacity, which is always a primary concern. The product involves a wireless access point with 16 available frequencies that can be rotated if necessary. Students have to buy (and register) a clicker, which is an expense on them. When a clicker is used in class, the system does a match to the registration details, but an anonymous mode is also available.

Gary Meyer asked about usage of clickers university-wide. Jon Pray identified that 53 faculty use clickers in some capacity, with 2 or 3 new adopters each semester. An access point is already in some classrooms, and there is a mobile app option (I>clicker go), which may increase appeal.

Christopher Stockdale discussed that Pearson purchased Learning Catalytics, which is more of a “bring your own device” subscription service. The offerings are much more...
comprehensive – they let students do things like graph on a tablet. The technology is quite sophisticated – it can identify where students are sitting, so people can be encouraged to work together. One nice feature is that questions are stored in a master database – which facilitates sharing across universities. Bandwidth is a potential problem when two big classes are going on next to each other. Physics got a really nice demo from Pearson.

Gary Meyer asked about the percentage of students having a portable electronic device. Kathy Lang suggested it is virtually 100% (95% have a smartphone), but it isn’t a concrete requirement, and there are a handful of students for which this would create financial hardship. The group discussed options for these students - can something be loaned out? Gary Meyer asked about price of Learning Catalytics – Christopher Stockdale suggested a license fee of $20 per student per year, which can be reduced to $12 per student if there is an institutional license. I-clicker is $40 for a student’s whole career. The group also discussed the fact that budget are tight – is this something we can afford? Where is the $ going to come from if it is paid for by the institution?

Gary Meyer asked what is the goal of using clickers? The benefits from student engagement and active learning are compelling. The research suggests that students start to “wander” after 15-20 minutes of class time, so this is a nice way to break class time up. The group then highlighted that there are many concerns. One is that there is a lot of change – is it worth it to invest in something that is going to change a lot in near future? What about bandwidth? What about cost to students? Is it fair to make students buy more than one platform? What about underrepresented students who really can’t afford a device? Should we get MUSG involved? Thomas Schick suggested that he could facilitate bringing up the idea of clickers to MUSG, which has weighed in on this and showed preference for a single item. The feeling is that students don’t mind paying for it if it keeps getting used. Tom Wirtz. discussed we should think of this as a learning device as opposed to technology. If this was a book, we wouldn’t be talking about this.

Jon Pray raised the critique of bring-your-own-device (BYOD) is that many faculty don’t want to see a cell phone in use during class. He also inquired about whether providers will allow for a demo “test run”. This is important given concerns about bandwidth – expanding bandwidth university-wide could be really expensive. Pat Loftis preferred BYOD because students already have one. Lesley Boaz likened this to simulation in nursing, and has broken students into groups, which gets rid of some of the device availability issue.

Mark Johnson discussed that the topics in Arts & Sciences are a “hard sell” in that students don’t often major in these subjects. He suggested that using technology tools that make the classroom more engaging may help to entice students to explore these disciplines. Furthermore, clicker-based data could be great for assessment, which is always an important issue. Margaret Cinto suggested that this has to be done “right”.
Kyuil Kim asked what is the purpose of this discussion? Why is this an issue for the University Committee on Academic Technology? Is this a college level issue? Gary suggested we should be looking to gauge interest, compile ideas on different providers, and propose them up (Academic Senate, etc.) so that there is a “standard”.

Next steps: Christopher Stockdale is going to stress test our bandwidth to see if we can do this (access point). Then the plan is to bring in a few vendors to see what they do early in the spring semester, and report to the CAT soon thereafter.

**Letter of Support (Kathy Lang)**
Kathy Lang noted that the budget is for the computer replacement program will likely be funded at $1 million, compared to $1.3 million requested. Given that this is fairly set, she questioned whether it is worth it to submit a letter as this point. The good news is that there is a move secure CRP on the list of “fixed costs”, which would be consistent every year and helpful for planning. The group showed significant interest in working on a letter to be submitted to the budget committee for next year.

The group discussed a few articles on trends in cyclical replacement at corporations. Kathy pointed out that some of the articles are a bit old, and that this transition isn’t exactly happening as we thought, since most of the “demise” is in the consumer world. Questions such as whether faculty could have needs met by a tablet were discussed. Factors such as having Microsoft Office 365 and Onedrive will help.

**Old Business**
Gary Meyer gave an update on next year’s technology day. President Lovell is going to speak, and we are targeting Bryan Alexander for the keynote speaker. The group is targeting a budget of $10,000 to cover speaking fees and other expenses. We are looking to get providers such as D2L and Microsoft to contribute funds.

A subcommittee is going to set up how to promote the event and formally invite speakers middle of December to have stuff set up in mid January. The consensus was to invite Bryan Alexander now and hope the funds will be available.

The next meeting is scheduled for Friday, December 5, and will consist of a visioning exercise.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:55PM.