University Of Washington
Faculty Council on Teaching and Learning
8:30 a.m. – 10:00 a.m., November 10, 2011
26 Gerberding

Meeting Synopsis:

1) Call to Order
2) Approval of Minutes from meeting on October 6, 2011
3) Western Governor's University description
4) Classroom Support Issues
5) Catalyst Update and Issues
6) Adjournment

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1) Call to Order

Council Chair Jan Carline called the meeting to order at 8:36 a.m.

2) Approval of minutes

Minutes from the October 6,′ 2011 meeting were approved.

3) Western Governor's University (WGU) description

David Masuda provided a brief history of WGU. Utah Governor Mike Levitt and Colorado Governor Roy Romer helped drive forward WGU, focusing respectively on distance learning technologies and competency-based learning. After being founded in 1997, WGU started offering associates degrees, expanding later to bachelor degrees and master degrees, focusing in four major areas: education, business, information technologies and health professions (i.e. nursing). Masuda discussed claims asserting success of within this model made by peer-reviewed research written by WGU staff. There is a growing disparity between for-profit and non-profit universities in terms of loan default rates. WGU reached 25,000 students and $100 million in revenue last year, and with the opening of WGU Indiana, funded by the Gates Foundation and Lumina, there was no cost to the state for opening the campus.

Since the passing of State House Bill 1822, WGU has become a non-profit organization, and eligible for financial aid in Washington State, is expanding potentially to California and Texas. Masuda discussed WGU's competency-based progress versus seat time, and gave an overview of the strategy: 1) pre-assessment, 2) conversation with mentor, 3) gap analysis (what student already knows), 4) assess student based on Bloom test levels, designing performance tasks that students can participate in. "Faculty" at WGU consist of course mentors who develop courses, student mentors who are assigned to each students, and evaluators are anonymous. Currently, WGU has 700 full-time and 100 part-time program faculty members. There is an average student age of 36, enrollment growth of 30% a year, and it takes an average of 2.5 years for students to graduate. Ultimately, with the flat-fee rate, a bachelor's degree can be completed for about $20,000.

There were differing opinions regarding the success of WGU. A positive aspect to their model was referred to within their nursing program due to the speed of being certified, connections within the

industry (such as Cedar Sinai and Kaiser Permanente), and competency exams. It was noted that the University of Washington has a lack of distance learning, and additionally does not provide transition from a Registered Nurse to Bachelor of Science in Nursing. Negative aspects were presented as the initial business model had almost gone bankrupt, WGU has been cited as the highest loan default rate, and that such a platform allows for governors to break from supporting other higher education institutions. David Szatmary, Vice Provost for Educational Outreach, was concerned that WGU can receive State Need Grant funds, detracting from students heading to state institutions. Szatmary also briefly commented on the boom of for-profit higher education reaching 33% of the market share, and the difference between programs which "validate" education (WGU) compared to "delivering" education (i.e. UW, WSU, WWU). Bruce Nelson clarified that "tuition" was misleading, that these are "fees" to validate competency.

Council members were interested in demographics of WGU students, but Masuda did not have this data. Concerns were discussed by council members around what the significance was of the 40,000 educative standards, pertinence of experience when coursework took place 20 years prior, and sustainability of business model. The question arose if demand for such certification comes from employers seeking less expensive forms of employee training, and additionally if such a model provides access to schooling programs that are either is inaccessible or not offered by other institutions. Chair Carline expressed interested in further discussing this subject in the next FCTL meeting.

4) Classroom Support Services issues
Roberta Hopkins, Director of Classroom Support Services (CSS) briefly went over the scope of the program. The program keeps up technology and tools within University of Washington classrooms, but does not include Law School or Health Sciences. There are 325 classrooms supported by CSS, but with vast heterogeneity of technological access across buildings due to facilities being built ranging from 1895 – 2011, and consisting of between 10 – 720 seats. Hopkins provided some statistics on usage: classrooms are used 28.8 hours on average weekly, of the 17,800 seats and 78% of all seats are filled. Since 1994, Hopkins had been challenged to provide technology in classrooms; strategy was to first focus on technology in largest halls to impact largest number of students, over time CSS has to smaller classrooms; medium sized tend to be the least equipped. Currently, 25% of rooms have carts with technological capabilities, rather than infrastructure. Funding has been difficult and despite having a dedicated budget for the first time of $100,000 to support technology in classrooms, there is need for an additional $373,000 to continue to provide this support. Hopkins noted three objectives to perform with this funding: 1) Keep classrooms going, 2) Increase rooms that have equipment and replacement of stolen equipment; 3) Standardize new technologies, such as new outputs for computers.

Hopkins provided an overview of the CSS maintenance schedule. Every Sunday student employees check every single room, verifying that equipment is present and functioning in upper campus classrooms on Sundays. Additionally, these employees confirm chair counts, and look to ensure that rooms are in good condition. Rooms with greater than 95 seats are checked twice a week. Also have quarterly in depth checks on these elements; projectors with capacity to connect to the Ethernet can report on their internal conditions. Upon discussion of how many "crises" occur during daytime, Hopkins noted that this is the normal operation for CSS, consisting of issues such as furniture being moved around. She noted that her staff has decreased by 5 full-time employees due to budget cuts.

CSS provides proactive classroom training, through one-on-one meetings with faculty in classrooms, to address any questions or capability concerns. This is not advertised, but anyone is welcome to be trained. Hopkins stated that a goal is to establish a standardized interface, so professors can move

seamlessly between rooms. Hopkins hopes that the administration has seen the value behind maintenance and enabling instruction to progress on campus. She briefly discussed new 'nontraditional' classroom spaces, "learning spaces" in Odegaard to be available by fall quarter 2013. John Sahr emphasized the difficulty in having champions behind classroom maintenance. Carline believes it would be helpful to gather specific questions or issues to bring discuss with Hopkins in the future.

5) Catalyst updates and issues.

Tom Lewis, Director of Academic & Collaborative Applications at UW IT, handed out preliminary results on a spring survey on teaching and technology. He briefly discussed pilot projects on a separate handout from UW IT Teaching and Learning Oversight Committee. He mentioned that in light of the budget cuts students are bearing the brunt of this load, and these projects attempt to address this. Three specific projects were mentioned: 1) an e-Text pilot, UW IT is looking at a platform to connecting with multiple publishers to save the students money on books. The request for proposals is currently out and there are four or five good vendors, hoping start the first pilot in the spring; 2) Canvas, a new learning management system, which would roll out across campus. Currently, 20 faculty members and 2,500 students are piloting Canvas, and he has received feedback from faculty that Canvas halved the time spent grading and replying, and minimal help was required to learn the system.

Questions arose regarding the transition from Moodle to Canvas, but Lewis noted that it is difficult to make such a transition because the systems are so different, and additionally success has been greater within faculty members starting over on Canvas rather than migrating from another system. Carline requested for a faculty member using Canvas to present for the council, Lewis stated that Haideh Salehi-Esfahani is piloting Canvas and could be asked to present.

6) Adjournment

Chair Carline adjourned the meeting at 9:59 a.m.

Notes by Jay Freistadt, Faculty Council Support Analyst. *jayf@u.washington.edu*

Present: **Faculty:** Carline (Chair), Masuda, Zierler, Nelson
                 Ex-Officio Reps: Smith, Corbett, Hornby
                 Guests: Hopkins, Lewis, Sahr, Szatmary

Absent: **Faculty:** Elkhafaifi, Kyes, Martin-Morris, Salehi-Esfahani, Harrison, Yeh, Wilkes, Olavarria
                 President's Designee: Taylor
                 Ex Officio Reps: