

**The University of Washington**  
**Faculty Council on Educational Technology**

The Faculty Council on Educational Technology met Wednesday, April 30, 2003, at 2:30 p.m., in 36 Gerberding. Chair Kimberlee Gillis-Bridges convened the meeting at 2:35 p.m.

**PRESENT:** *Professors* Gillis-Bridges, Kitts, Rojas  
*Ex officio* Albrecht

**ABSENT:** *Professors* Aldea, DeYoung, Goldberg, Leggott, Mizokawa, Prakash, Roth, Sinanan, Zivot  
*Ex officio* Jordan, Lewis, Hurley, Szatmary.

**Synopsis**

1. Approve agenda
2. Approve minutes
3. Discuss Bob Albrecht's idea of a report to the Faculty Senate.

There being no quorum, approval of the February minutes was postponed.

**Proposed report to the Faculty Senate – Discussion**

At the last FCET meeting, Robert Albrecht proposed that FCET report to the Faculty Senate on Educational Technology Issues – such a report could include information on Catalyst, on the technology surveys, and on other issues connected with the use of technology in pedagogy, and would include demonstrations of the technology itself instead of passing out a paper report. FCET members agreed to take up the topic at this meeting to discuss why this is important and what FCET might present to the Senate.

Gillis-Bridges opened the discussion by reporting that she attended the Arts & Sciences meeting on budget cuts, and also the Undergraduate Advisory Council. Information from these two sources points to the possibility that there could be across-the-board budget cuts of 5% for the next biennium, in addition to the budget cuts the University sustained in the '01-'03 biennium. How will this affect classroom support services, especially educational technology and distance learning? What should FCET's response be? She suggested that FCET push to retain computer labs and checkout laptops as well as computer support staff. Students should have what they need to do their work, especially upgraded computers and computer programs – some UW computer lab equipment is definitely not state-of-the-art.

Albrecht said that most faculty don't really know what Educational Technology is – he sees three things that should be included in a report to the Faculty Senate, two of them budget-related:

- Inform faculty about the educational technology that is available.
- Explore the tradeoffs of tuition increases – do profs, TAs, and students expect better technology if tuition increases?
- Make the case that the UW can save money by investing in good educational technology.

Eddie Rojas doubted that there would be much new investment during times of budget cuts, but agreed that the level of service should be maintained. Since technology is an accelerating wave, Albrecht said, not to be riding the crest of that wave is to be falling behind.

Gillis-Bridges pointed out that UW budgets are being compared to those of peer institutions, and this is also the language of the accountability goals undertaken for the legislature. Shouldn't FCET compare educational technology the same way? Maybe the report should compare the UW with its peers technologically and see where we fall.

Student surveys tell us that students want more use of technology in their classes – how do we go about fulfilling those needs? If students don't learn the technology, how can they compete with graduates of institutions that do teach and integrate technology more effectively? Students already pay a technology fee – shouldn't this fee give them access to learning and using educational technologies?

Both Kitts and Albrecht see tools such as Excel and PowerPoint as technologies that students should already know, or should learn on their own, as a requisite for certain classes. In their view, learning these tools should not be part of the classroom experience for University courses. Professors can refer students to online tutorials and supplement these with syllabi that indicate the level of expertise required for the specific course.

Gillis-Bridges proposed that FCET's informational report to the Faculty Senate include the following, with respect to educational technologies:

- What educational technologies faculty members expect students to know, to learn, and to use
- What students expect of educational technologies at the UW
- What educational technologies are available for use, and how they benefit faculty and students
- What the resources are for faculty members who need to learn the available technologies

How can FCET make a compelling case that faculty should care about learning and using educational technologies, Gillis-Bridges asked, when doing so has no bearing on the traditional "teaching, research, and service" model on which faculty fortunes rise or fall? She would like FCET to be able to give good reasons for everyone to be on that "accelerating wave" of educational technology.

Rojas said there should be one central place where faculty could go to get advice on the resources available, and on what resources are appropriate for what educational goals. Gillis-Bridges agreed, noting that it's true that some technologies are better than others, depending on the situation. She subscribes to the idea of having a "technology czar," who knows the technology and can advise faculty on what works best for the pedagogical task at hand.

Kitts commented that faculty members might be open to the idea that these technologies are labor-saving devices, especially in a budget environment where faculty will likely be teaching more students per class. The Catalyst tool is an especially good example of how this can be done. Kitts illustrated the use of appropriate technology by relating that he requires students to use newsgroups, rather than individual emails, for student questions. He can answer a query or clarify an assignment once, for many individuals, rather than emailing the same response over and over again.

Rojas said that the eSubmit tool helps him keep track of the 80 papers that are due in his classes – the system automatically records the date and time that papers and assignments are submitted, before he sends them to his TA. Rojas also uses a software package that compares all the papers

to detect plagiarism. He routinely posts PDF files on the class Website that can be downloaded as handouts.

Gillis-Bridges related three more ways that she is using educational technology:

- Teaching a hypertext post-modern novel on CD-Rom.
- Making an information repository that includes critical articles on the novel being studied as well as student work in extending the critics' arguments to passages in the novel that the critic has not cited.
- Taking notes on group presentations in class and turning them into PowerPoint presentations to reflect insights and discoveries back to the class.

After further discussion, it was decided to develop a 10-12 minute presentation on educational technology and its uses to present to the full Faculty Senate. Goals would be to

- Inform, but not overwhelm, the Faculty Senate
- Demonstrate the technology
- Provide a handout

The presentation's purpose would be to "sell" educational technology to all UW faculty, by talking about some of the benefits of educational technology:

- Economies of scale
- Time savings
- Collaboration
- Managing paper load
- Tailoring class instruction time to meet class needs
- Providing students with multiple modes to engage the subject outside of class time

Future educational technology projects might include

- Developing new educational tools
- Developing something like the Institute for Teaching Excellence, but for educational technology
- Studying ways that educational technology might develop at the UW

Gillis-Bridges will contact Sandra Silberstein to find out when FCET might make a presentation to the Faculty Senate, and will email FCET members to let them know the result.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:05 p.m. *Minutes by Linda Fullerton, Recorder.*