

The University of Washington Faculty Council on Educational Technology

The Faculty Council on Educational Technology met Friday, February 28, 2003, at 12:30 p.m., in 36 Gerberding. Chair Kimberlee Gillis-Bridges convened the meeting at 12:35 a.m.

PRESENT: *Professors* Gillis-Bridges, Kitts, Rojas, Sinanan
Ex officio Albrecht, Jordan, Lewis, Hurley

ABSENT: *Professors* Aldea, DeYoung, Goldberg, Leggott, Mizokawa, Prakash, Roth,
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Ex officio Szatmary.

Synopsis

1. Approve agenda
2. Approve minutes
3. Catalyst Tools: Introduction and Demo (Lewis)
4. Proposed Faculty Council Reorganization (discussion)

Catalyst Tools: Introduction and Demo

Gillis-Bridges introduced Tom Lewis, who presented information on the Catalyst Web tools, remarking that 4000 incoming UW freshmen used the Catalyst Web Portfolio this past Fall Quarter. It behooves FCET to know what the technology is and how it works.

Lewis supplied FCET members with a packet of information and a laptop-based tour of Catalyst, an educational initiative designed to support innovation in teaching and learning through the use of technology. Catalyst was developed at the Center for Teaching, Learning, and Technology, and provides help to those who want to use learning technologies. The Center is located in OUGL, with a branch in South Campus known as U-Wired Health Sciences. Services are free to all campus educators. Lewis said that Catalyst is nationally recognized, and is run not by computer scientists but by experienced teachers who understand the needs and wants of faculty, and the demands of integrating new technologies into student learning settings. Lewis added that the development of Catalyst involved a broad spectrum of people from the Computing and Communications infrastructure.

The Catalyst staff uses learning and feedback to be of maximum value to students and faculty. Over the past 3.5 years, nine thousand people have signed up as non-student owners of Web tools. Currently, five thousand seven hundred faculty, staff, and teaching assistants are active users.

Catalyst teaching guides can be used to:

- Encourage responsibility for learning
- Involve students in research
- Organize and manage your course
- Promote student collaboration
- Encourage discussion
- Address diverse learning styles
- Facilitate student & course evaluation
- Support active learning
- Enhance presentations
- Teach and learn at a distance
- Choose technologies for your distance learning course

Catalyst usage is high in the School of Medicine, Arts and Sciences, and Education, Lewis said. The Med School is integrating use of the Portfolio tool throughout the school, in their business

processes with the students. Physics makes good use of the Quiz software. Usage in other departments is low - the School of Dentistry, for example. A lot of this depends upon how proactive the dean of the particular school is.

Catalyst is part of the Educational Partnerships Office, which also includes groups that work on Student Access and Computing as well as Internet II applications. The EPO has recently formalized a close connection with Computing and Communications. Gillis-Bridges asked "What happens to the educational aspect of Catalyst if the group it belongs to is primarily focused on the technology?" Lewis responded that Catalyst still maintains a strong connection with the Program for Educational Transformation through Technology (PETT), so the pedagogy is still being looked at instead of just the technology. Catalyst also assumes that faculty members are the pedagogical experts, Lewis added. They have offered workshops on pedagogy, but attendance has been low.

Gillis-Bridges said that Catalyst can be an important tool in emphasizing the importance of teaching at a Research I university such as the UW. Albrecht commented that Catalyst could enjoy wide use as a tool for grad students and their projects if it is research-oriented – for example, uses should include the ability for students to trade research results and data on a project. Lewis said that Catalyst is now used for a wide variety of research activities, and is moving more in that direction, including a redesign of the MY UW Website. Albrecht observed that he has tended to see Catalyst more as a course tool than as a research tool – if it has expanded capabilities, it would be good for this to be publicized.

James Kitts raised a question about the people who initially signed on to use Catalyst and are not now using it – attrition explains some, but not all, of those who did not continue with the program. Would it be possible to invite some of these people to be part of focus groups to improve the Catalyst experience? Lewis said part of this has been addressed via the Faculty Technology Survey, and that focus groups are in the works. The Catalyst group is eager to know about the experiences of those who no longer use Catalyst.

Gillis-Bridges also cited the Student Technology Survey, in which 80% of students wanted to learn the technology in context of learning their coursework. This contrasts directly with 80% of faculty, who say they do not want to teach technology as part of their classes.

Lewis told council members that the Catalyst group has been working on the Portfolio tool and has revised the Student site based on feedback from the 3,800 students who used it in Fall Quarter. They will then revise the Faculty site, since faculty say it is too complicated in its present form. The group is also working on a third version of WebQ, which is now the survey software but will soon accommodate quizzes, including branching questions and other features. Capability for streaming audio and video, offered on demand to a selected audience, is also in the works.

Proposed Faculty Council Reorganization

Gillis-Bridges supplied FCET members with copies of the proposed reorganization of Faculty Councils now being studied by the Special Committee on Faculty Council Organization (SCOFKO).

SCOFKO is looking at reorganizing Faculty Councils into University Councils, with equal representation and equal vote for faculty and administrators. The idea is to bring everyone to the table in order to get things done more efficiently and more effectively, Gillis-Bridges said. Under the proposal, subcommittees would be appointed to do the work of the large "umbrella" councils.

In the model being proposed, FCET would combine with such diverse organizations as the Computing and Communications Office, Faculty Council on Libraries, Campus Committee on Computing Policy (CCCP), and the Library Fines Appeals Committee into the University Council on Libraries, Information Technology and Educational Technology. Gillis-Bridges asked for the Council's response to this plan.

After general discussion, council members concluded that – should the proposal actually be adopted - the council should be included in the University Council on Undergraduate Education, and not on the University Council on Libraries, Information Technology and Educational Technology as presently mandated. FCET has less to do with technology per se than it does with using technology as a tool for teaching. The issues of the council are, and ought to be, more educationally driven.

FCET members also noted that the University Council on Undergraduate Education as described in the Rose Report is already so large as to be unwieldy. The broader the mandate a Council has, the less it can get done. If the Councils can't function, all power and decision-making will pass to the administration by default.

Would there need to be separate quorums for faculty and administrators, in order to preserve equal representation? Since subcommittees typically do not keep minutes, how would historical records be preserved if most work of the new councils is done in subcommittees?

It might be better to form technology groups in three realms, each with different needs for infrastructure:

- Technology for Teaching and Learning
- Technology for Learning at a Distance
- Technology for Research

Council members favored a joint meeting with the Faculty Council on Educational Outreach to see where the two councils overlap and where they work on separate issues. There may also be some overlap with FCIQ (Instructional Quality) as well.

Council members are encouraged to study the reorganization issue further and contact Gillis-Bridges with more comments.

Other Agenda Items

Gillis-Bridges would like FCET to spend some time studying the Faculty and Student Technology Surveys and analyze the data from those two surveys.

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.

The Council will discuss these two agenda items at the next FCET meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:02 p.m. *Minutes by Linda Fullerton, Recorder.*