

UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON
FACULTY COUNCIL ON EDUCATIONAL OUTREACH

The Faculty Council on Educational Outreach met at 9:00 a.m. on Thursday, **January 8, 2003**. Chair Steve Buck presided.

Approval of the minutes

The minutes of the December 5, 2002 FCEO meeting were approved as written.

Update on the status of UW Educational Outreach (UWEO) – Steve Buck and David Szatmary

Buck expressed the council's sorrow over the fire that overtook the UWEO facility. He told Szatmary that if there is anything the council can do to help, he should not hesitate to ask.

Szatmary added, "By and large, we saved all our electronic data, and our E-mail was up in 48 hours. We are fine from a business point of view. And we have relocated to the Roosevelt Commons at 4311 Roosevelt Way N.E. Some people have relocated to downtown Seattle. We are looking to buy a building near the University in the long run."

Szatmary said, "We have weathered the storm. We're currently at 60-70% capacity with our computers. The first floor of the facility was pretty much shot. And the second floor was decimated. We pulled everything we could from the first floor after a couple of days. We pulled two-thirds of the materials from the second floor."

Article in E-Bay on Columbia University's failed experiment in Distance Learning

Szatmary said that Columbia University's experiment in the "Fathom" Distance Learning portal failed utterly. It never achieved a "generic name recognition." Columbia put only about two million dollars into the project.

"It's too bad," said Szatmary. "Columbia was the wrong institution to launch this program. Unlike several west coast institutions each of which has long experience in Distance Learning, Columbia was completely naïve in this area, and suffered accordingly. These private institutions couldn't figure out their audience. A business model never materialized."

With respect to UWEO's being a partner in the Fathom experiment, Szatmary said, "We've lost some enrollments, but we didn't have many via this route."

Buck asked, "Who's left in the field?" Szatmary said, "Phoenix, but it's important to remember, this was not a 'portal.' Phoenix's online courses are doing well; they have 25-30,000 online students overall."

FCEO agenda for the remainder of the 2002-03 academic year

Buck said the comments he received from council members influenced what he decided to talk about today. He would like FCEO members to think about agenda items for the rest of this year, but to also think about "the long-term mission of the council."

"It is clear that FCEO has had an almost exclusive focus on undergraduate Distance Learning education," said Buck. "That obviously is an important area to address, but I would like the council to address *your* interests in your various departments and units. My suggestion is that we each think about issues in the domain of interest to us. We can come up with short summaries of what's going on in our domains. Where will *your* programs go in the future?"

Buck stressed that “outreach programs have opportunities for growth even more than traditional programs. We should identify areas where we can make a difference; where we can provide particular communities with advice; where we can offer assistance with particular programs.”

“My focus,” said Buck, “has been on the traditional undergraduate population: students who take correspondence and evening and summer outreach courses. We’ll need contributions from FCEO members: your areas of interest.” As an example, Buck said he could talk about how the contraction of the UW Evening Degree program will open up opportunities for academic units to offer self-sustaining courses to both matriculated and non-matriculated students. He told the council, “I’d like to set a plan of action today, then start addressing these areas at our next meeting.”

Norm Johnston brings up non-traditional students, and the ACCESS program, which has had considerable success over a long period, and is still going strong,” said Buck. Deardorff said he is quite familiar with ACCESS, and further attests to its excellence. Buck suggested that Johnston and Deardorff could look into the current status of ACCESS and give a report to the council at a subsequent meeting.

Johnston said he has a keen interest in non-traditional students, people who are retired or who, for any number of reasons, “aren’t interested, necessarily, in a degree, but just want to learn in certain areas.”

Buck said, “That’s what I want us to talk about. It would be useful for us to make an explicit statement about what we see as our mission.” Szatmary said an important question would be: “Who and how should the University serve its various constituencies given the University’s budget crunch?”

Goldsmith said, “Post-baccalaureate student groups are being limited, and some such programs have been eliminated.” Buck said, “We would do ourselves good in the long run by showing interest in these student populations.” Wells said, “Students do not have to be matriculated to take, say, behavioral science courses. And many students lack grounding in this area. Engineering needs to be a big player because technology plays a pivotal role in this instructional process. As a positive example, Nursing has done a good job of developing a model in this interdisciplinary field. Health science students generally, and pre-science students, would be prime targets for these courses. The courses would appeal to students not yet in professional programs.”

Buck asked council members to “think about key people who could develop this further, or who could visit the council.” It was noted that the biggest player in the whole process is the library system.

Goldsmith expressed an interest “in the relationship between educational technology and educational outreach. It seems very important.” Buck said the Faculty Council on Educational Technology now has a chair, Kimberlee Gillis-Bridges from English. Buck is interested in cooperating with that council, and in having a joint meeting with FCET, or perhaps in having some FCET members visit FCEO.

Szatmary said that Ron Johnson, Vice President of Computing and Communications, would be a key person to invite to an FCEO meeting. Johnson is nationally renowned for his innovative work in the field of instructional technology. Szatmary also said that Louis Fox, Vice Provost of the Office of Educational Partnerships and Learning Technologies, would be a vital player in this field to ask to a council meeting. Finally, Szatmary said that UWired and Catalyst are important programs in this field, as is MyUW. Deardorff said the Libraries has a very strong working relationship with Catalyst. He also said, “regarding the legal part of this,” it is important to know what venue is used to inform faculty of new copyright laws, this being a highly evolving and complex area of instructional technology and intellectual property.

Berger said, “Quality control is the chief issue to me. I’m using Catalyst now in a Distance Learning course I’m teaching. A major question is: How do we balance the assessment of traditional and non-

traditional students? And how, in the sense of quality control, do we balance synchronous and asynchronous Distance Learning courses? How can I take the baseline – the student on campus – and extend that to other, remote, audiences? And how can we show to an outside person that the educational outcome of Distance Learning is comparable to that of the baseline situation on campus?”

Szatmary said to the council as a whole, “Any perspective from faculty is valuable to us [in UWEO].” He added, “We’re developing self-sustaining online programs for new UW students with Arts and Sciences, and any input from the council would be helpful in that process.”

Johnston said, “I’m curious about the dimensions of the ACCESS program. Who’s sustaining the program? I’ll look into it and let the council know what I find out. Can we afford to encourage ACCESS programs?” Buck said, “There are alumni who want intellectual stimulation; we know that much.”

With respect to seeking financial support for such programs, Szatmary said, “We have a new political agenda in UWEO, and in the University as a whole: Go to the people, and not to the legislature.” This is also the agenda of Jack Faris, Vice President for University Relations, who, said Szatmary, would be another excellent choice for an FCEO guest speaker. Faris is working with Interim President Lee Huntsman on several new programs whose targets are community-based rather than directed toward Olympia. As Szatmary pointed out, the state legislature has proved to be a disappointing source of funding for new programs at the University.

Buck said evening classes would be a good possibility for the development of new self-sustaining programs. “Many faculty are already doing it,” he noted. He said his own department, Psychology, is trying to add evening extension classes, and is currently speaking with UWEO about that possibility. “It may be a good time to intensify that program.”

Regarding course approval, Szatmary said, “Tim Washburn’s University Curriculum Committee has revamped the form for Distance Learning course approval.” Buck said, “It’s better now: The [revamped] form will push people to really answer the questions.”

Goldsmith said, concerning self-sustaining programs, “What expenses are involved [in renting rooms, equipment, etc.]?” Szatmary said, “There are two main expenses: infrastructure (administration) and instructional costs (lab equipment and supplies, and technology).”

FCEO long-term mission and goals

Buck said, “For *this* group, I’d like you to think of issues along these lines: encouragement of alternatives to traditional undergraduate instruction; quality control; dissemination of ‘best practices’; the council rendering assistance to departments wanting to set up new programs; counseling other councils and committees when asked or when we learn of issues they are addressing that we could help them with.”

Buck asked the council to consider the question: How would you phrase the mission of FCEO? He asked council members to E-mail their responses to that question. He said, “Such a mission statement – not meant to be set in stone – will be useful both to us and to the outside world: to departments, colleges, UWEO, and other bodies.”

Next meeting

The next FCEO meeting is set for Wednesday, February 5, 2003, at 9:00 a.m., in 36 Gerberding Hall. Brian Taylor, Recorder

PRESENT: *Professors* Buck (Chair), Berger, Goldsmith and Wells;
ex-officio members Dearnorff, Johnston and Szatmary.

ABSENT: *Professors* DeYoung, Jenkins, Kim and Warnick; *ex-officio member* Warbington.