

University of Washington
Faculty Council on Teaching and Learning
Thursday, March 3, 2011
10:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
Gerberding 142

Meeting Synopsis

1. Approval of Minutes from February 3 meeting
 2. Discussion on best practices in use of technology to support learning
 3. Brief follow-up to discussion of last meeting on methods to improve student learning experience
 4. Adjournment
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Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 10:32 a.m.

1. Approval of minutes from February 3, 2011 meeting

The minutes were approved as written.

2. Best practices in use of technology to support learning

The council held a discussion on best practices in the use of technology to support learning. The discussion was based in part on three articles distributed prior to the meeting: *Instructional Design Variations in Internet-Based Learning for Health Professions Education: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis* (David Cook, et al.), *AMEE Guide 32: e-Learning in medical education, Part 1: Learning, teaching and assessment* (Rachel Ellaway and Ken Masters), and *Implementing the Seven Principles: Technology as Lever* (Arthur Chickering and Stephen Ehrmann).

Carline posed three questions to guide the discussion:

- Are there better or worse technologies in support of learning?
- What are best practices in use of technology to support learning?
- What strategy should be used in faculty development for the use of technology in support of learning?

Campion led the group in looking at the questions one by one in order to make recommendations about what kinds of development should be provided to faculty at the university.

On the first question, Campion said that the literature is all over the map, but the Cook article is the most comprehensive review he's seen. The main message there was identifying certain types of technologies that had the greatest effect. For learning outcomes, technologies built around interactivity, practice exercises, repetition, and feedback were most useful. For student satisfaction, it was interactivity, online discussion, and audio.

In the ensuing discussion, points made included:

- It's important to learn ways to use technology that go beyond the exact tool, and instead focus more on the activities around the tool, because there are transferable skills even as technology changes.

- Attention should be put toward transitions in technology, as faculty time is not well used when tools frequently change.
- The discussion is really about larger classes and how to make pedagogically sound classes as TAs disappear, using technology that supports that goal but doesn't require tremendous amounts of front-loaded learning.
- There are concerns about the quality of each student's ability to connect when considering online tools for use.
- It's almost impossible to extract from generalized studies anything very specific. On the ground, people find very specific technologies that work in their special case. Given the results of these studies, it's probably not worth trying to point to a limited number of technologies that should work – as one best practice will resonate with some, it will be irrelevant to others. The important thing is to give faculty information on personal experience that works.
- The most confident statement in the articles seems to be a connection between time on task and outcomes. There is something to a student-faculty ratio, and it needs to be stated that as class sizes increase and TAs shrink, there will be reduced quality of education, and everything can't be accommodated with new technology.
- FCTL should work with the Teaching Academy and other groups to encourage an exchange of ideas, and develop policy statements that are blunt about the system moving toward decreased quality.
- One particular technology is not the answer. It's how it's used and how it supports interactivity and time on task. This goes along with the idea that technology won't necessarily support learning in larger classes.

On the second question of what are the best practices to promote, the following suggestions were made:

- Using and promoting Educause [<http://www.educause.edu/>] resources , particularly their “7 things you should know about” series for technology
- Framing a discussion with campus around the Seven Principles article. The principles are that good practice encourages contacts between students and faculty, develops reciprocity and cooperation among students, uses active learning techniques, gives prompt feedback, emphasizes time on task, communicates high expectations, and respects diverse talents and ways of learning.
- Technology available in many classrooms is not fully utilized, and time is wasted trying to learn how to use the technology or waiting for somebody to help.
- On the other hand, sometimes a room is assigned that has none of these technologies, but students have the expectation that they're available. It's not clear why the “old ways” don't work and why things are always in transition.
- Podcasting makes sense if the primary teaching methodology is a lecture. If it's not the best way of teaching a subject and interactivity is not a necessity for adequate learning, podcasting is not necessary.

- Providing resources ahead of time can change how classroom time is used.
- There are practical issues of proprietary information being posted on the web or podcast snippets being taken out of context.
- The “spotlight effect”, changing to technology, makes you evaluate how you do things.
- For a bottom-up approach to using technology, it seems that there needs to be somebody who’s an expert in using relevant technology in departments or at the college level.
- The best approach seems to be to share a variety of strategies to people. A mechanism for that is the Teaching Academy, which can set up exchanges of information at a level low enough that it’s mostly relevant for everybody. These exchanges could focus on “this is what I did” rather than “this is the technology.”
- There will be challenges in terms of disparate resources across the university – staffing resources, TAs, technology, bandwidth, and systems used.

On the third question of strategy to use for faculty development for the use of technology in support of learning, the group discussed recommendations to the Teaching Academy in terms of focusing on learning principles, and trying to build faculty development around those principles with learning applied. Suggestions included discussing successful examples, involving TAs in that process, supporting easily accessible tools across campus, and putting together an online faculty forum for these types of issues.

3. Brief follow-up to discussion of last meeting on methods to improve student learning experience

Martin-Morris said that lots of good ideas came up last time, and she feels passionate that students will improve performance and scholarly commitment if they are engaged in their learning. She wants to work toward models that might be implemented on a larger scale, beyond the individual classroom, and form a subcommittee for further conversations. Council members were asked to form a subcommittee for further conversations.

4. Adjournment

The meeting ended at 11:52 p.m.

Minutes by Craig Bosman
Faculty Council Support Analyst
cbosman@uw.edu

Present: Faculty: Carline (Chair), Martin-Morris, Masuda, Merati, Nelson, Olavarria, Wilkes

Ex-Officio Reps: Bradley, Awan, Hornby

Guests: Champion, Kalikoff, Robert Corbett

Absent: Faculty: Elkhafaifi, Kyes, Harrison, Salehi-Esfahani, Yeh, Zierler

Ex-Officio Reps: Calissi-Corral

President’s Designee: Taylor