Educational & Research Technologies Committee
Minutes
427a Waterman
October 19, 2016

Present: David Brandt, Hung Do, David Feurzeig, Marc Law, Helen Read, Cathy Paris,
                Lyman Ross, Mark Starrett, Regina Toolin, Tim Tourville, Christina Wassel

Absent: Elise Hotaling, Omar Oyarzabal, Brian Voight

Guests: David, Brandt, J. Dickinson, Justin Henry, Andrew Horvat, Julia Russell, Mara
                Saule, Wendy Verrei-Berenback, Keith Williams

Chair David Feurzeig called the meeting to order at 8:32 am in the Faculty Senate 427a
Waterman.

1. Minutes. The minutes of the September 13, 2016 were approved as written.

2. Blackboard/LMS update. See the report attached.

3. Approved UVM Computer Acquisition Policy. The Provost crafted and the university adopted a
computer acquisition policy in response to the ERTC recommendations.

Policy on Faculty Computers
Approved June 23, 2016
Office of the Provost and Senior Vice President

Minimum requirements
- Unit has a statement of their computer policy in their website
- Full time faculty are provided one computer at hire:
  - Full time (0.75 FTE or greater appointments for 9, 10, or 12 months) faculty holding
    the title of instructor, lecturer, assistant, associate, or full professor (including
    extension faculty, clinical faculty outside COM, and Library faculty)
  - Note: eligibility differs from faculty represented by UA Full time faculty bargaining
    unit.

- Computers are purchased with unit funds and not with PDF
- Computers are replaced or upgraded every five years
- Dean's office maintains inventory and alerts faculty when their computers are eligible for replacement
- Configuration matches most basic configuration offered by UVM Techstore
  - http://uvmbookstore.uvm.edu/site_depot.asp

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4. Expanded Section Descriptions (ESD's)

Faculty Senate ERTC DRAFT Proposal version 2
Background
For years, the SGA has been asking for better advance information on courses. The 2014 CBA states that "in order to allow students to make more informed choices on course selection, faculty members are expected to develop and post Expanded Section Descriptions…no less than two (2) weeks prior to the start of the advising period." The CBA also requires faculty "to make syllabi available to students for courses no later than the first day of classes." To implement the requirements of the CBA, the Registrar created a field in Banner for faculty to post ESD's. This implementation was a makeshift hack and has significant limitations. The Registrar reports that in recent semesters, only ¼ to 1/3 of courses post an ESD in Banner. The SGA continues to express dissatisfaction with student access to timely information on course content, format, materials, and scheduling pattern. The Higher Education Opportunities Act of 2008 requires that much of this information be posted at the time the course schedule is published "to the maximum extent practicable". Here is a link with good information and full text of the law: http://als.csuprojects.org/heoa.

Proposal
To address students', need for timely information, the faculty's need for a user-friendly and efficient interface, and UVM's need to comply with federal law, we propose a multi-part solution. Nothing in this proposal shall be construed to limit instructors' prerogative to make course changes in keeping with pedagogical goals, academic freedom, or unforeseen circumstances.

1.The Registrar shall provide a Banner-based location for Expanded Section Descriptions that includes the following features:
- a. **A checklist** with text fields that cover key areas of course information, including schedule pattern (i.e. when/how often is the course usually offered), required materials, methods of assessment, timing and nature of major projects, papers, and exams. (See draft checklist below.)

- b. **Text formatting capability**, including HTML hyperlinks so ESD's can link to a course website, textbook site, etc.

     c.   **Ability to host PDF** files (such as a PDF syllabus).

     d.   **Capability of multiple sections being populated** by a single course coordinator.

     e.   **Ability for instructor to automatically re-populate all fields from an existing ESD** from a previous semester.[1]

2. The Registrar shall establish a Banner-based location for faculty to upload syllabi for the current semester. Faculty will be expected to upload their syllabi by the first day of class. Syllabi will include information on required materials, methods of assessment, timing and nature of major projects, papers, and exams. Faculty who feel that their detailed syllabi include protected intellectual property may choose to upload an abbreviated syllabus equivalent, so long as it includes all the foregoing information.

[1] *Many faculty have asked for this to happen by default. This is not feasible because section numbers (BIOL 001C, for example) or CRN's are not identified with a specific instructor from semester to semester.*

3. When the Schedule of Courses (SOC) is published for the upcoming semester, for each course faculty will be expected to do one of the following:

     a.   Fill out all fields in the ESD checklist, as described in 1(a) above.

     b.   Upload to Banner a PDF syllabus for the upcoming semester. If the syllabus addresses the content of the ESD checklist, faculty need not fill out the checklist (though it may still be helpful to students if they do so)

     c.   Link to the syllabus for a previous semester of the same course (at the location described in item 2 above), with an editable pre-populated statement: "Here is a recent past syllabus. The course will be essentially as described in this past syllabus, with exam dates, due dates, and other details subject to change. Required texts may be different this term." In this case, faculty should make every effort to determine final required texts and other materials as early as possible and update the ESD accordingly.

4. The Registrar should include myUVM portal reminders to faculty at key times (e.g. when the SOC is due and approx. 2 weeks before the SOC is published) to encourage faculty to create and post ESD's.

Rationale

The proposal is designed to give students the information they are seeking and are entitled to in a clear and organized fashion, while minimizing busywork for faculty.

Since the Schedule of Courses is now published several months before the start of the semester, it is
not always practical for instructors to have a completed syllabus in time for registration. Also, in today's increasingly fluid publishing market, textbook/edition availability may not be certain at the start of the registration period.

To accommodate these realities while protecting the students' rights and the faculty's time, the proposal gives faculty three options: to upload a completed syllabus at the time of registration, to complete an ESD checklist, or to link to a Banner-hosted past syllabus from a recent semester of the same course, while certifying that the structure of the scheduled course will be fundamentally similar to that described in the past syllabus. When using the last option, faculty have an obligation to specify whether or not required materials (including textbook editions) will be the same as stated in the past syllabus. In all cases, faculty should remember to update their ESD page as soon as practical with information on required materials for the coming semester.

The purpose of the checklist is to make clear to faculty what information students are seeking, and to make it easy for students to find this information. Faculty who prefer not to publish their syllabi can complete the checklist instead. The system should be set up such that the ESD checklist can be easily automatically repopulated from a historical ESD so that faculty do not need to recreate them every time for courses that are substantially unchanged.

The SGA is really excited about this initiative. The number one faculty concern is work load creep, so the committee wants to present it in a way that gives clearer information to students and makes the process easier for faculty.

How would the ERTC go forward to get input from faculty? The Registrar's Office is working on the Degree Works Project and would not have the personnel to work on this project until July. Going forward David will work with the Associates Dean's Council (chair Allan Strong) to find a path to take on collecting the information the committee needs.

The committee could start by reminding and encouraging faculty to submit their extended section descriptions. The ERTC doesn't feel they should require faculty to do these before they fix the system. They could alert the faculty that they know it is in an issue and that they are working on it and if there is any feedback please send it to the ERTC. Also they could add tips that might encourage faculty to do these. Keith Williams will work with the ERTC to construct the message to the faculty.

5. TIF priorities and procedures (Mara Saule) The Student Technology Fee is currently $77. per student it comes from the student comprehensive fee. It generates approximately $770,000

per year. The program started in the spring of 2007 supports classroom technology, expansion of wireless on campus, computer labs and variety of specialized academic and innovations.

Would the ERTC want to see a proposal process that would be tied to some of the TIF funding? The ERTC would like to address this at a future meeting

6. New Business.

    a. Forced Upgrade to PC's on the UVM network, the University requires a twice a monthly mandatory update to all users. This may be something the committee may want to discuss and review at a future meeting.

    b. Thomas Chittenden would like to discuss Scantron issues.

The meeting adjourned at 10:01 am.