



FACULTY SENATE

Educational and Research Technologies Annual Report
Submitted by Regina Toolin, ERTC Co-Chair

ERTC Charge: The ERTC shall have the responsibility of matters related to the development and implementation of educational and research technologies at the University that guide acquisition of information literacy by students and faculty. It shall review and recommend policies and procedures relating to the planning, introduction, and use of campus-wide technologies, including computers, communications, electronic data handling, and instructional media. The committee shall assume responsibility for informing the administration of educational and research priorities and needs related to information literacy and see that these are considered in all planning. It shall maintain close liaison with the Curricular Affairs Committee, the Financial and Physical Planning Committee, the Student Affairs Committee, and the Research, Scholarship, and Graduate Education Committee. Each of these committees shall appoint one of their elected members to serve as a voting member on the Educational and Research Technologies Committee. The committee shall maintain close liaison with appropriate administrative offices in its areas of responsibility and with the Facilities and Technologies Committee of the Board of Trustees. The Educational Research and Technologies Committee (ERTC) consists of faculty representatives from each of UVM's colleges and meets on the first Monday of each month.

ERTC Committee Members: Jane Petrillo, Lutz Kaelber, Deb Ellis, Hung Do, Helen Read (Co-Chair), Lubin Dinov, Lyman Ross, Marie Wood, Elise Hotaling, Tim Tourville, Regina Toolin (Co-Chair) Nick Bouffard (UG), Scott Vanson (Grad).

During the 2019-20 academic year, the ERTC addressed a number of important issues related to educational and research technologies including: One Drive for Business and Microsoft Teams, Learning Management System (LMS) Evaluation, IT Governance, Online Course Evaluations, Qualtrics Survey Software, Digital Citizenship, General Purpose Classroom Technology and Furniture needs, Remote Exam Administration, and Yellowdig Instructional Software.

In our recent ERTC Meetings in April and May 2020, our attention shifted to the overall impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the UVM community as it transitioned to remote teaching and learning after spring recess. This unprecedented upheaval has resulted in many challenges for faculty, staff and students that needed to be addressed in a short span of time. Some of the issues the ERTC addressed included: Studio/lab/internship/practicum courses and how they are delivered or modified; access to reliable internet services; changes in class meeting patterns as some students live in different time zones; student motivation, interaction and engagement in the remote learning environment; and the increased demands on faculty workload in the remote

learning environment. In the May 4, 2020 ERTC meeting, committee members discussed questions related to the following questions: 1. What appears to be working well for faculty in the transition to remote teaching? 2. What major challenges are faculty encountering in the transition to remote teaching? 3. What kinds of resources do faculty still need to improve their capacity to teach remotely should this be required in the future?

As a follow-up, the Associate Provost's Office, under the direction of Jim Vigoreaux, is developing faculty and student surveys that will be utilized to provide insight for the future should the need for remote learning happen again.

What follows is an account of the major initiatives that the ERTC addressed in AY 2019-20.

1. One Drive for Business and Microsoft Teams. Microsoft Teams is a collaborative communications platform that incorporates a persistent chat, video calls/meetings, and file sharing (including collaborative editing of documents). Microsoft Teams is currently licensed for use by faculty, staff, and students at UVM. Mike Austin presented a demo of how Microsoft Teams can be used on campus. (See: <https://www.uvm.edu/it/kb/article/teams>.) The adoption of TEAMS has been particularly beneficial in adjusting to remote teaching and advising since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic.

2. Learning Management System (LMS) Review Advisory Committee. The LMS committee reported on a process to evaluate the LMS (BB). The committee functions to assess the general satisfaction and use of our current learning management system, Blackboard; to identify and prioritize LMS features and tools, exploring the potential for learner and system analytics; and examine other LMSs, such as Canvas and Bright Space. The LMS RCC reviewed other LMS products (i.e., Canvas, BrightSpace, Bb Ultra), and explored how other UVM enterprise-level applications, such as Microsoft Teams, can support the LMS. In collaboration with our stakeholder groups, and based on the data collected from the survey and focus groups, they will make a recommendation to either continue to the next phase (Request for Proposals) or end the review and remain with Blackboard.

3. CIO Updates - Simeon Ananou. Classroom technology services is now part of ETS. An IT Governance structure was initiated. ERTC members were invited to serve in a variety of capacities for various IT Governance committees. Windows 7 and Server 2008 will no longer be supported by Microsoft. Machines should not be running on these unsupported platforms as they present a risk to the University.

4. Online Course Evaluation. Thomas Chittenden reported that the integrated course evaluation platform came online this Fall and provided an update on the data from the first semester use. There was a 62% average participation rate. Response rates were increased within units already using online evaluations. Some units that had been using paper evaluations experienced a decrease in participation rates. It is expected that participation rates will continue to increase as the platform becomes more universally utilized.

5. Qualtrics Presentation. Matthew Price reported that different groups at UVM pay for the Qualtrics survey software independently. He suggested that it might be a benefit to the university to purchase a university wide license. Lime Survey is the current UVM supported survey tool. It

has been used on campus for about 10 years and is a free service. The ERTC agreed that having reliable university endorsed survey software is essential to research and teaching. Next steps entail creating and administering a survey to get a wider sense of UVM's surveying needs. Matthew Price will continue to update the ERTC as the process moves forward.

6. General Purpose Classroom Furniture - Cristine Rowley. Cristine has recently been assigned the task of general purpose classroom furniture. Her goal is to meet with faculty to better understand their needs and how to best outfit classrooms. An issue was raised pertaining to the lack of classrooms with tables. Due to capacity issues classrooms often come with tablet arm chairs as they allow for more capacity. It would also be helpful for rooms with tables to have more power outlets. Larger tablet arm chairs may also work depending on size of tablet. Discussion ensued on ways that classroom space be more dynamic. As changes occur and the classroom space evolves the ERTC would like to continue to be in the process. Cristine will continue to be a regular guest and update the committee on any new information.

7. Remote Learning Exams. Helen Read, J. Dickinson and Wendy Bernback met to discuss how exams will be administered during remote learning. UVM is making Screencast-O-Matic screencasting software available for all faculty on a 6-month license. This software allows users to make a video capture ("screencast") of the activity on a computer screen with audio narration. Instructions on how to use the software, and how to upload and share videos with students using UVM Streaming are available. UVM has a site-wide license for two Respondus products that deter cheating on exams that are administered online. The use of other proctoring software that passes a fee to the student is discouraged. Where possible, faculty should consider alternatives to long, high-stakes exams.

8. Yellowdig - Jenny Wilkinson presented on Yellowdig, a software platform enabling learners to communicate digitally, share articles, stories, photographs, and videos during the formal learning process. The committee was enthusiastic about the prospects of Yellowdig. Alex Messinger is researching the cost and will report back to the committee. The university currently has some licenses and will continue to use them in certain areas.