Call to Order

The regular meeting of the Online Learning Council Executive Steering Committee was called to order on 20 April 2018 at 10:00 AM in the Provost’s Conference Room by Dr. Susan Aldridge.

PRESENT: Susan Aldridge (Chair), Karyn Holt (OLC Faculty Fellows Chair), Patrick M. Jones (Coordinator), Timothy Kurzweg, Bill Mooney, Evelyn Thimba

ABSENT: M. Brian Blake, Laura Gitlin, Ludo Scheffer (Faculty Senate Chair), Nancy Songer

GUEST: Paul Thomas Clements, Co-Chair OLC TAGG Committee

I. REPORTS

Susan Aldridge welcomed Bill Mooney, Drexel Chief Information Officer, to membership on the committee.

- OLC Teaching Across Geography Group (TAGG) Committee
  - Paul Thomas Clements provided an overview of the OLC TAGG Committee and its work (see attached).
    - The committee discussed concerns over challenges that full-time faculty members who are geographically distant have regarding participation in faculty governance. This is particularly a problem if they cannot serve on committees as a requirement for promotion and tenure. The committee encouraged the TAGG to meet with Dr. Erin Horvat to discuss their work.

- OLC Faculty Fellows
  - Karyn Holt presented the following three recommendations from the OLC Faculty Fellows:
    - We recommend the Essentials for Online Teaching, an asynchronous ten hour/wk for five weeks campus wide course be the entry level training for teaching online.
    - We recommend Drexel use the Quality Matters National Rubric to assess quality in online and blended/hybrid courses at Drexel.
    - We recommend the addition of one Faculty Annual Award and One Faculty/Staff Team Annual Award for Online Teaching/Course Design Excellence
Planning Committee for Online Quality and Compliance
  o Susan Aldridge updated the committee on the formation of the Planning Committee for Online Quality and Compliance and spoke to the importance of quality assurance of online courses in order to best serve students, comply with laws, and avoid litigation.

II. TOPICS

  • OLC Subcommittee Reports
    o Dr. Susan Aldridge encouraged the committee members to review the written reports from the OLC Subcommittees.

III. OTHER BUSINESS

  • Update on Blackboard
    o Bill Mooney updated the committee on Blackboard. He reported that Blackboard Support Services are doing fine. Blackboard in the cloud; everything going fine – some improvements include “assignment confirmation” for the students and a time stamp when it was submitted. There have been many improvements to BB Learn and the Mobile tool. It has a better presence on the phone, better features. Attendance is perhaps in the next release; it will be captured digitally. Three people will be attending BB World to learn about BB Ultra and what it would take to transition to it.

IV. OLC ACTIVITIES

  Patrick Jones reminded the committee members of the following upcoming OLC activities:

  • Town Hall III – May 3, 2018
DREXEL UNIVERSITY
Online Learning Council

Teaching Across Geography Group
(TAGG)
Initiated/First Meeting in December 2015

Co-Chairs:
Dr. Kathleen Provinzano (SOE)
Dr. Paul Thomas Clements (CNHP)
Mission Statement

First Order of Business
Mission Statement

TAGG believes that all faculty working at Drexel University, both inside and outside Philadelphia, should receive the same degree of support for their teaching, research, and service endeavors as their on-campus colleagues.

Support, however, looks different in that it comes in the form of access and inclusion.
Mission Statement

In order to effectively engage in teaching, research, and service obligations, geographically remote faculty must be provided with the opportunity to participate in university and college meetings, events, and functions.
Mission Statement

Vital to access and inclusion are the processes of communication, coordination, and culture.

Thus, as an action-oriented body, TAGG is committed to advancing a raised consciousness across the University for faculty working from a distance and views its primary role as one that serves as a venue for all faculty to discuss both substantive and policy-focused changes that need to occur to make our work possible.
Goals AY 2015-2016

“Deliverables”

• Mission Statement/ White Paper (January 2016)
• Shared Practices Document (March 2016)
• Video Vignettes (June 2016)

*TAGG List-Serve
Goals AY 2016-2017

“Deliverables”

- Dissemination of Vignettes
- Enhance and/or Increase online access to University Wide events
  - ScholarSip
  - Faculty Senate
  - Law School
  - Center for Food and Hospitality Mgmt. (CNHP)
- Formulation of 4th Vignette (hybrid meetings)
 Goals AY 2017-2018

“Deliverables”

• Dr. Connie Lyttle (SOE) becomes Co-Chair
• Dr. Rita Adeniran - Corresponding Secretary
• Expanded shared practices document
• Creation of Padlet
• Increased awareness/diversity of representation from the various schools/colleges.
• Re-examination of the Mission Statement
  • Expanding beyond ”online faculty” but increasing accessibility for faculty who want to attend/participate “online”
Challenges

- Further expansion of awareness/inclusion for all University-wide activities.
- Further regular online access for committee meetings and other faculty responsibilities.
...should receive the same degree of support for their teaching, research, and service endeavors as their on-campus colleagues.

Example:

Issue related to Committee work for online faculty and implications for promotion.
We recommend the Essentials for Online Teaching, an asynchronous ten hour/wk for five weeks campus wide course be the entry level training for teaching online.

We recommend Drexel use the Quality Matters National Rubric to assess quality in online and blended/hybrid courses at Drexel.

We recommend the addition of one Faculty Annual Award and One Faculty/Staff Team Annual Award for Online Teaching/Course Design Excellence
Recommended Shared Practices Guidelines for Online Access

The Drexel University Online Learning Council *Teaching Across Geography Group* (TAGG) believe that faculty who teach or access departmental and university activities online, should receive the same degree of support as those attending face-to-face. Approaches to support access and inclusion requires a culture of implicit access and inclusion as well as an awareness of nuances relative to the processes of communication, coordination, and culture. In an effort to promote effective online interface and seamless experiences, the following Shared Practices are being recommended:

- All faculty activities should be offered both face-to-face and online when possible.
  - There are numerous platforms for access currently utilized at Drexel, including Zoom, Collaborate and Skype.
- A designated Tech Support contact, preceding and during the activity, should be available to confirm and monitor connectivity.
- Open the virtual meeting room early. Permitting access 15 minutes before any meeting or gathering start time is ideal. It is imperative to send out the online access invitation information at the same time the meeting is announced for those who will attend face-to-face. This accommodates attendees who may not be familiar with the technology and allows time to troubleshoot any technological difficulties with the Tech Support contact.
- Ensure that attendees are able to have access to bi-directional communication (i.e., they are able to hear and are able to activate their microphone when needing to communicate)
- Request that all remote attendees mute their microphone unless they are actively speaking. Universal mute is *6 and unmute is *6 again.
- Ask for feedback on the meeting process and how the technology is working. This allows for adjustments to be made and keeps participants engaged.
- Ask participants to identify themselves (in both settings) before speaking and asking a question. This is especially important when the meeting includes participants who have not previously met.
- When active discussion is occurring in the face-to-face location, and an online attendee would like to engage, having the attendee simply say “comment” into their microphone will indicate that they wish to add to the conversation.
- Questions in the face-to-face setting should either be spoken directly into the transmitting microphone or should be repeated by the moderator.
- When an opportunity is provided for questions, be certain to provide an opportunity to the “virtual floor” as well.
- When working in a combined meeting, it is very important to continually think about the remote users’ perspective as the attendees are not always able to see nods of the head around the table and also can't hear low-volume conversations. During a pause in the proceedings, for example, describe what is happening, so remote users understand the silence. However, conversely, be mindful that attendees sitting next to the primary microphone often have both their high level and low level conversations heard by online attendee.
Telecommuting began decades ago as a mechanism for companies to gain access to a more diverse and talented pool of employees, which would subsequently increase productivity and reduce long-term costs. Though slow to start, most accounts stipulate the phenomenon is growing, primarily because of advances in technology. It is estimated that the number of remote workers in the United States grew by nearly 80% between 2005 and 2012 (Graber, 2015). Technology plays an essential role in the progression of this movement but well-thought planning and attention to process are fundamental if an institution is to be successful.

Drexel is a first-tier university with growing online enrollments. Recognizing that over 7,000 Drexel students are enrolled fully online and over 20,000 students enroll in at least one online course annually, there is a need for innovative and creative practices when hiring and supporting faculty who are not based in the greater Philadelphia region. Formed in 2015, the Teaching Across Geography Group (TAGG) is a recommending body housed under the Online Learning Council (OLC) for the purposes of identifying and discussing the resources in place and the challenges faced by Drexel faculty working in a geographical location remote from Philadelphia. TAGG is a faculty body that reports directly to the OLC and interfaces with the faculty Senate.

TAGG believes that all faculty working at Drexel University, both inside and outside Philadelphia, should receive the same degree of support for their teaching, research, and service endeavors as their on-campus colleagues. Support, however, looks different in that it comes in the form of access and inclusion. In order to effectively engage in teaching, research, and service obligations, geographically remote faculty must be provided with the opportunity to participate in university and college meetings, events, and functions. Vital to access and inclusion are the processes of communication, coordination, and culture. Thus, as an action-oriented body, TAGG is committed to advancing a raised consciousness across the University for faculty working from a distance and views its primary role as one that serves as a venue for all faculty to discuss both substantive and policy-focused changes that need to occur to make our work possible.

Reference:
Online Learning Council Fellows
Karyn Holt, Chair

The OLC Faculty Fellows 2017-18 have worked this Winter thinking and developing ideas to support the Drexel Teaching and Learning Center. Additionally, Fellows have provided presentations throughout Drexel on Universal Design for learning, and the use for instructional design support for new courses. Two APPQMR Workshops have been scheduled, one for the spring and another for the Summer terms while another Essentials for Online Teaching is currently underway. After much discussion, the Online Fellows unanimously recommend full support to the current ten hours per week for five weeks Essentials for Online Learning Course as the entry level course for faculty who will teach online at Drexel. Plans are underway for an evaluative survey to determine the impact this training has had on our faculty who have completed the course and their students. March Town Hall brought new technologies demonstrated to those in attendance. Faculty Senate is now open to two-way conversation online so that all faculty can participate fully.

Accessibility
Constance Lyttle and Janet Sloand, Co-Chairs

Winter Quarter 2018 has been an exciting and invigorating time for the OLC-Accessibility Committee. We continue to work toward our goal of creating a clearinghouse for accessible resources that is university wide. We have worked on three main areas this quarter:

**Clearinghouse Development:** The committee has been actively engaged in discussions regarding the best and most efficient way to serve as the clearinghouse for all initiatives, courses and related work related to accessibility across the University. We are planning on a two-pronged approach:

- Developing a calendar/listserv or process that will be used to promote upcoming events across Drexel University
- Enhancing the Professional Development page on the INSPIRE website where we can post archive webinars and resources so that all faculty and staff can easily access the needed content.

**Definition of Accessibility:** The committee is in the process of developing a definition of accessibility so that all faculty and staff have a common understanding of accessibility. The committee reviewed a number of current definitions from organizations and laws and are using these as a framework to a Drexel University definition. We plan to have a final definition by the next quarter.

**Committee Education:** We continue to have committee members conduct presentations to help us understand the accessibility supports available at Drexel.
• Marlin Killen shared the model that COAS is using to build accessibility into their courses. The COAS has used Ph.D. students as TAs to help build capacity regarding accessibility within the COAS faculty. She reported that they have observed a shift in culture regarding accessibility and as a whole the COAS is more proactive in promoting accessibility.

In addition to the activities, we have been interacting with the OLC-Professional Development Committee to ensure that a question related to accessibility is included in their planned focus group sessions so that we can gain insight into faculty and staff’s current understanding of accessibility.

Emerging Technologies
Thomas DeChiaro and Michael Galloway, Co-Chairs

For the 2017-2018 academic year (AY), the Emerging Technologies Committee (ETC) has scheduled and hosted, and will continue to schedule and host, demonstrations and events from 3rd party vendors of instructional technology or Blackboard Learn LTI plugins for possible purchase in fiscal year (FY) 2019. We had 3 demos already in the fall 2017 quarter, and in the WI 18 and SP 18 quarters. We will have several more in April and May 2018. The currently scheduled future demos are from the UPick5 OLC Town Hall in 2018. Tom DeChiaro and other committee members have and will continue to gather ideas and contacts for these demos and events. We also have gathered a number of tools that the ETC will evaluate for inviting vendors or others to give demos. We have connected to ITG and the Drexel Library to share resources, ideas, and help spread the word about existing technologies already on-campus, and upcoming technologies that ITG and the Drexel Library will offer. We have created a Bb Learn “sandbox” shell and used it to communicate, gather ideas, organize tool ideas for possible future demonstration, generated a list of existing Drexel instructional technologies, and started to generate criteria and categories for evaluating and organizing these tools, as well as articles and scholarly/professional resources on evaluating instructional technologies.

Professional Development
Melissa Kaufman and Donald McEachron, Co-Chairs

We are working with the Office of Assessment to create focus groups to gather information from faculty around teaching tools for technology-enhanced, online, and hybrid learning. These focus groups will be held during spring term and will help the OLC to determine what tools and approaches are already working and how new tools or professional development opportunities for faculty may create more active learning environments for our students. The feedback we receive from the focus groups will inform a larger university-wide survey, and then an action plan will be created. We are coordinating with the new Center for Teaching and Learning to ensure our work aligns with their goals.

Student Support and Engagement
Kimberly David-Chung and Lamont Wilson, Co-Chairs

During this quarter, the Student Support and Engagement committee reviewed the Test Drive conversion data, along with the quantitative and qualitative data gathered via the polls. Initial discussions have begun related to the development of a tool designed to onboard students who had not been exposed to the Test Drive or Orientation. The backlog of content to be developed for the virtual event tools and classrooms continues to grow and be prioritized. Finally, discussions are occurring to identify the key projects to be undertaken in the next fiscal cycle.
TAGG (Teaching Across Geography Group)
Paul Thomas Clements and Constance Lyttle, Co-Chairs

The TAGG committee continues to meet monthly and has actively worked toward completion of the four established deliverables for the AY 2017-2018. These specifically include (1) establishment of a Padlet® (an electronic bulletin board) which has been completed and will launch during the Spring quarter. This will provide a clearinghouse of updated/current overview of resources and online offerings for faculty, (2) the creation of an additional Video Vignette (focused on how the virtual participant can decrease distractors to make meetings more conducive to face to face participants by bringing awareness of the distractions caused by the virtual participant) is steadily progressing and is targeted to be completed toward the end of the Spring quarter or early in the Summer quarter (3) the expansion of the original Shared Practices document (with expanded recommendations of strategies to enhance conducting meetings online) was completed and adopted at the April meeting; strategies for dissemination are being explored, and 4) continuing to strive toward increasing diversity of representation from other colleges who attend monthly meetings is being planned via speaking with Erin Horvat and also scheduling as an agenda item for an upcoming Faculty Senate meeting.

In April, Dr. Susan Aldridge joined the meeting where TAGG members shared their successes with facilitating access to University-wide meetings and educational events that are traditionally campus-based (i.e. Scholar Sip, Faculty Senate, lecture series, etc.), and that members will strive to do so (with a goal that event planners will, as appropriate, automatically include access for online attendance). Connie Lytle, Co-Chair of TAGG, is going to reach out to Dr. Erin Horvat to be a guest at the June 2018 meeting to discuss/explore strategies relative to this issue.
For additional workshops, more information, and to register visit drexel.edu/INSPIRE
Drexel University's Global Classroom Program

Dana D'Angelo, Adam Zahn

Since 2013, Drexel University's Global Classroom program has provided a collaborative online international learning (COIL) experience for over 1,500 Drexel students and students from our international partners through over 55 courses. This session will cover the history of how the Global Classroom program was developed by the senior international office, the goals and impact of COIL at Drexel for both students and faculty, and use of international, innovation, and interpretation to develop global communities and bridge students from different cultural backgrounds. A case study from Drexel business faculty will be discussed as an example of COIL course development, synthesis, and expansion. Staff and faculty will discuss how they developed partner relationships, engaged their students in project-based learning through COIL, and will provide evidence of success and expansion. Finally, the panelists will explain how they leveraged these COIL courses into research of teaching and practice.

Immersive Media (VR) Content Creation for Distributed Online Learning

Nick Jushchyshyn

Access to Immersive VR content is now trivial for online distance learners, thanks to the proliferation of widely available, low cost VR viewers. Coupled with built-in support for immersive formats adopted by existing internet distribution channels, access to immersive VR content is now routine. With existing tools already in use at Drexel University’s Digital Media Department, capture and distribution of real-world lectures, events, demonstrations and learning spaces as immersive content for use by distance learners is also a routine process.

This presentation will provide an overview of current immersive VR content creation workflows, as well as inexpensive playback technologies with “on-your-doorstep-tomorrow” availability for online faculty and students.

From "Required" to Dynamic: Innovative Strategies to Transform Discussion Boards

Kristen Betts

Discussion boards are a cornerstone activity in most online and hybrid courses and typically require students to “Read, Post, and Reply” to their peers and/or the instructor. This Pecha Kucha presentation will provide strategies that can easily be integrated into current or planned online and hybrid courses to transform the discussion board experience for students and faculty. The presentation will connect discussion boards to principles of learning as well as constructivism, social constructivism, and transformative learning. Strategies, technologies, and artifacts will be shared to highlight and demonstrate ways in which discussion boards can be used to support active learning, mastery, and real-world transfer.

About the presenters

Nick Jushchyshyn is Program Director for Animation, Visual Effects & Immersive Media in the Westphal College of Media Arts and Design. His research focuses on the development and application of production pipelines for VR/AR and other immersive media formats in areas including education, cultural heritage, medicine and more.

Dana D’Angelo is a Clinical Professor. She has also served as a LeBow College of Business Center for Teaching Excellence Fellow, as well as Associate Director in the Office of Faculty Affairs.

Adam Zahn is Associate Director of Global Engagement in the Office of International Programs where he works with faculty to develop and strengthen their international research goals, manages the Global Classroom program, and oversees the Global Engagement Scholar program for undergraduate students.

Dr. Kristen Betts is a Clinical Professor at Drexel University. She has over 20 years of experience in higher education serving in key leadership positions within private, public, and for-profit institutions.