

MINUTES
Distance Learning Advisory Committee Meeting
December 6, 2000

The Distance Learning Advisory Committee (DLAC) met December 6, 2000, 9:30 a.m. (ET), at the Council on Postsecondary Education in Frankfort, Kentucky. Gordon Davies presided.

ROLL CALL

The following members were present: Gary S. Cox, Gordon Davies, Ronald Eaglin, Bill Wilson (representing Virginia Fox), Robert Kustra, Michael McCall, Charlene Davis (representing James Nelson), Roger Burge (representing James Ramsey), Aldona Valicenti, James Votruba, Linda Pittenger (representing Gene Wilhoit), and Juanita Fleming (representing Charles Wethington).

*APPROVAL OF
MINUTES*

There being no corrections, the minutes of the February 28, 2000 meeting were approved as distributed.

*ACTION ITEM
KEY INDICATORS*

Dr. Susman explained the five key indicators of progress for KYVU as part of the CPE's program to measure progress toward reform. Dr. Susman said the best way for KYVU to measure what it does or how well it does is to ask whether or not it is providing access to students.

KYVU began with 237 students in the fall of 1999 and currently there are 2,372 students enrolled. The DLAC is being asked to project the number of online students for the key indicators report based on its best sense of how many courses and programs the institutions will mount by 2002. Dr. Susman suggested a projection of 4,000 enrollments by 2002 and explained that this is a conservative estimate.

Mr. Votruba asked whether the on-campus versus off-campus number is reflected in the AA degree. He said he hoped that the growth be primarily students not currently enrolled. Dr. Susman said the fact that the AA is a full degree online encourages students to begin higher education because students who are unable to get to a campus have to see the ability to complete a degree. For Fall 1999, the most common online student is age 18-22 with the second most common being 23-30. More than one half of students enrolled online are 23 and older. Mr. Cox suggested that another goal be the number of new students not already enrolled.

Ms. Valicenti said if the age category and the potential citizens in that age category could be projected, and a marketing campaign directed toward that age group or an employer base, then the opportunity would be there to grow that market segment very quickly.

Ms. Pittenger said the Kentucky Virtual High School is often approached by people under the age of 23 who have left high school lacking a credit or two but who want their diploma. She said it would be very interesting to include this segment of the population in the marketing campaign. She said if they earn that last credit or two, they could continue into higher education. Mr. Kustra said students who need advance placement classes should also be included in the objectives.

Dr. Susman explained that KYVU will offer non-credit classes at no cost to KYVU. These non-credit classes, which include 911 dispatcher training and IT certifications, are accessible to adults. Non-credits are not counted in the on-campus numbers. She explained that there is potential for colleges to offer academic credit for these certifications as an incentive to bring in students to further their education.

Mr. Davies listed the objectives as follows: 1) total students, 2) new students, 3) adult students over age 23, and 4) students under age 23.

MOTION: Ms. Fleming made a motion that the projected enrollment by 2002 be 4,000. Mr. Votruba seconded the motion.

Dr. Susman called for clarification on the motion. She explained that projection of 4,000 represents the for-credit side and would be reported out by age and by new student. Dr. Davies asked that the CPE work with KYVU to determine what proportion of the 4,000 should be new students and what proportion should be older students.

Mr. Votruba spoke about the importance of life-long learners and how only measuring degree seekers is old world thinking. He said students enrolled in certificate programs and programs that enhance employer competitiveness are just as important as new enrollments and there needs to be a way to count them.

Ms. Valicenti said the economic development numbers will reflect that the number of students enrolled in lifelong learning will be just as important as degree enrollments. Discussion followed.

Mr. Davies said there needs to be a way to begin capturing this lost data. Ms. Sue Moore said the crudest measure available is what the universities report to SACS, which is the total number of students served by the non-credit units. She said many of the universities are keeping the information manually instead of electronically and it will take a major effort to capture this data.

VOTE: The motion was adopted unanimously by voice vote.

Mr. Eaglin asked about new technologies that are on the horizon. Dr. Susman explained that KET is becoming digital. She said if we are going to start investing into the future, courses should be placed in the digital venue. However, there are not enough end-users at this time. Mr. Bill Wilson said that KET will go digital between 2003-2006.

Ms. Valicenti said that digital television has been mandated by the federal government to be completed by 2006. She said there has been uneven investment from state to state. Kentucky has taken a very sensible approach by setting goals. Digital television has the ability to deliver data which cannot be done with devices we have today.

Mr. Eaglin suggested that a smaller committee focus on changing technology and how to prepare for new technologies on the horizon. Dr. Susman cautioned that KYVU be careful to not build something that cannot adapt to the next environment. Mr. Votruba requested that the issue of digital and wireless technology be an agenda item at a future DLAC meeting.

Mr. Kustra asked if there is any kind of statewide inventory of the infrastructure by county. Ms. Valicenti said surveys have been conducted of the infrastructure of connectivity of Kentucky and the National Guard has mapped where the least access is in Kentucky. According to a KYVU survey, 52% of Kentuckians have access to the Internet either at work or at home.

Ms. Valicenti said an important issue is the infrastructure that is not being used. For example, most schools are wired but because of administrative reasons are not utilized after school hours.

Dr. Susman said that it is the intention of KYVU to get computers to every student that comes through KYVU. KYVU is partnering with McConnell Technology, a company that offers a literacy course for \$300 and gives the student a refurbished computer. Clark Publishing is also offering free computers for taking a course.

Ms. Valicenti said that 85% of Kentucky employers are considered small business. Small business utilization of the Internet in Kentucky is very low. They are not using computers as a vehicle to train employees or to help their businesses. Mr. Cox suggested that Bill Brundage of the New Innovations Commission join DLAC and discuss this issue in more depth. All concurred.

Dr. Susman suggested that computers also be distributed to small business in the same concept as they are given to students. Along with the computers, employees would receive training.

*AFFORDABLE
DISTANCE
EDUCATION*

Dr. Susman offered the following suggestions about how to make distance education more affordable and explained each: a) attract new students; b) revolving fund for investment; c) the home institution model; d) new faculty roles; e) charge tuition by the credit hour; f) modification of benchmarking process; and g) offer incentives to entrepreneurial departments. Discussion followed concerning intellectual property. Mr. Votruba said he thought the Council is the appropriate body to help frame the question of ownership of intellectual property.

Ms. Valicenti said that the two hottest issues in terms of Internet and usage are the intellectual property and privacy issues. She suggested that the privacy issue be addressed also. Mr. Eaglin referred to the business model and said that if we are building a business model around these types of consortia, he hoped that in order to get faculty turned on and productive that they could share in profits. He said if we do not offer incentives to talented faculty, someone else will. Ms. Pattie said that the Faculty Development Workgroup had asked the council to provide some type of guidelines on intellectual property rights. She said it is not a new issue and has been discussed. She said faculty want to be sure that it is clearly defined before they get involved with online courses.

Dr. Susman explained incentives to entrepreneurial departments. She said when there are entrepreneurial departments, they should share in the immediate rewards. It appears to be a successful way for affording distance education and Internet delivery.

Dr. Susman talked about new faculty roles. She said the traditional faculty role is to create the course, teach the course, assess the course and nurture the student all the way through the course. With this model, one way is to keep adding serial sections and hire another full-time faculty person to teach it. Another model is to have one master faculty over the course as the conscience of the curriculum and hire other faculty or persons to do some of the work of the course. Dr. Susman said that one of the biggest conflicts of interests in higher education is that the teacher who teaches the course is the one who assesses the student. We can now re-think this in the Internet environment and have a different person assess the student

Dr. Susman spoke about charging tuition by the credit hour. She said one of the worse things about 80% of distance learners being on-campus is that they are taking their Internet courses for free. The student who is on-campus receives free tuition for more than 12 credit hours. Universities could charge by the credit hour for on-campus and on-line students and still lower tuition rate because of the increased revenues it would generate. Mr. Ransdell expressed concern and said there are pros and cons. Mr. Eaglin said universities will lose money and explained that it is very complicated. Dr. Susman suggested that this issue be discussed further.

Dr. Susman said that folding fees into tuition costs rationalizes the process for the customer. She said comparing costs between institutions is impossible. Mr. Votruba said folding fees into tuition would benefit everyone but all institutions would have to do it at the same time politically. Mr. Ransdell said his institution made the decision to waive mandatory student fees for military personnel at Fort Knox who take courses because the military pays only their tuition. If the fees were folded in all students would be treated the same. Dr. Susman suggested that there be a discussion among the presidents of the universities to frame the discussion of the issue. Mr. Votruba said that it would not cost the student more, the percentage of reimbursement would be increased and the simplicity would be enhanced. All agreed that this issue would be kept on the table for discussion.

*REVOLVING
FUND FOR
CURRICULUM
DEVELOPMENT*

Dr. Susman said that the CPE and the KYVU set aside part of the technology trust fund of 1.5 million, to support the development of online curriculum. She said the KYVU Business Team, a subcommittee of the DLAC, will advise on how to distribute the funds. The business team received a proposal from KCTCS to mount an AAS in IT with three different emphases. KCTCS has received approximately \$213,000 in revolving funds.

Dr. Susman said there are three proposals in the discussion and revision process. The first is an online writing center lead by the University of Kentucky Writing Center for KYVU students and on-campus students. The second is the Masters of Science degree in Loss Prevention and Safety from Eastern Kentucky University, a national recognized and unique program that has excellent potential for worldwide distribution and license of its intellectual capital. The third is a consortially built and delivered core for Public Health Administration from ECU, UK, UL, and WKU. The combined total is approximately \$650,000 of the \$1.5 million.

ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 12:15 p.m.