

MINUTES
Distance Learning Advisory Committee Meeting
October 3, 2001

The Distance Learning Advisory Committee (DLAC) met October 3, 2001, 10:00 a.m. (ET) at the Council on Postsecondary Education in Frankfort, Kentucky. Gordon Davies presided.

ROLL CALL

The following members were present: Gary Cox, Gordon Davies, Ronald Eaglin, Mike Clark (representing Virginia Fox), Mike Marsden (representing Joanne Glasser), Michael McCall, Viola Miller, James Nelson, Daniel Rabuzzi, Richard Kirchmeyer (representing Gary Ransdell), George Reid, Cassandra Bagley (representing Allen Rose), John Shumaker, Joan Taylor, Lee Todd, Aldona Valicenti, James Votruba, Linda Pittenger (representing Gene Wilhoit).

Also present: Ron Legon, Dan Girlowski, Miko Pattie, Randolph Hollingsworth, Norma Northern, Myk Garn, Sue Patrick, Bill Swinford, Charlene Davis, Gene Ranvier, Sue Moore, David Ballard, Dan Connell, Ron Moore, Bob Wiggins, Gary Pratt, Nancy Lang and Dan Harrison.

*APPROVAL OF
MINUTES*

The minutes of the March 7, 2001 meeting were approved as distributed.

Gordon Davies began the meeting by noting that it had been about a year since the DLAC had met to discuss policy issues. There were no action items at the last meeting, held March 7, 2001. Gordon introduced Daniel Rabuzzi as the acting CEO of the Kentucky Virtual University (since the June departure of Mary Beth Susman) and the Vice President for Economic Initiatives at the Council on Postsecondary Education.

Daniel Rabuzzi gave an update on the Kentucky Virtual University and the Kentucky Virtual Library. The strategy of the KYVU has evolved since the last meeting. The focus will be on adult education, teacher preparation, and professional development for state and local government workers, while continuing to work closely with Kentucky's universities and colleges. Mr. Rabuzzi introduced guest speakers Ron Legon, provost of the University of Baltimore, and his colleague Dan Girlowski, interim dean of the University of Baltimore's Merrick School of Business, who made a presentation later in the meeting about University of Baltimore's Web MBA, now offered through the KYVU. The University of Baltimore is the KYVU's first full-scale out-of-state academic partner.

Mr. Rabuzzi discussed KYVU statistics. The KYVU began operations in the fall semester 1999, with around 300 students and 9 programs. Today, the KYVU has 5,452 students and 29 programs. Of the students enrolled, 80-90 percent are from campuses within our system. The KYVU needs to reach out to students who aren't enrolled at campuses, such as working adults and placebound individuals. Half of the students are older than the 18-22 range and over two-thirds are female.

The Virtual Library has an average of 600,000 searches per month. These are searches on the databases, not just web hits. The Virtual Library databases cost about \$1.8 million a year for the statewide license that we share with the university, K-12 and municipal libraries. There is a tremendous cost savings to the state to have the databases available through the Virtual Library.

The KYVU has 24 staff members, plus 3 staff members funded by Adult Education and Literacy. The operating budget is \$6.4 million, which includes \$800,000 for the databases and \$2.3 million for statewide infrastructure and the KET satellite. The two major sources of outside funding are Adult Education and Literacy and the Educational Professional Standards Board. The KYVU is venturing into non-traditional markets and is asked by many people to help deliver programs online.

Mr. Rabuzzi stressed that the KYVU would like to widen its market but continue to work closely with the universities. The vast majority of the KYVU students are coming through Kentucky Community and Technical College System. We are working very closely with the KCTCS, and the Virtual Library has become the main library for KCTCS students.

Mr. Rabuzzi discussed putting the comprehensive universities' programs of distinction online, the first being Eastern Kentucky University's Masters Degree in Loss Prevention (a unit within their Justice and Safety program of distinction).

Mr. Rabuzzi stated that the KYVU's "greatest added" value is student services (tutoring and advising, for example). We need to discuss further what the KYVU can do for the institutions and we need ideas about making services better. Some initiatives are already in place, including offering the online tutorial services, Smarthinking, and The Write Place.

President Votruba discussed Smarthinking and the 24/7 access they provide and feels that this is an invaluable service. Having this service for traditional as well as non-traditional students is very important.

Gordon Davies brought up the idea of KYVU, together with the KCTCS and possibly other universities, applying for a FIPSE grant to analyze the impact of online tutorial services.

Viola Miller discussed her interest in meeting needs of the working poor. She feels that we need to move to the next level to put education and access together. Tutorial and mentoring assistance is very important to this group of adult learners.

Gordon Davies noted that the KYVU is trying to deliver instruction products to the adult learning centers.

Viola Miller stated her willingness to engage in dialogue to remove barriers to participation in adult education. If those factors can be addressed, then the next step is to provide education to the working poor.

President Todd mentioned an online service called “homework 911” geared toward high school students.

Linda Pittenger mentioned that the Kentucky Department of Education is not using tutorial services and would like to find opportunities to use these services.

Mike Marsden asked about the student persistence data being collected by the KYVU.

Myk Garn has information about the completion rate of students but not specifically about the persistence data.

Viola Miller mentioned stopout versus dropout rates and the need to analyze patterns of degree completion.

Mr. Rabuzzi discussed the leading areas of focus for the KYVU: adult education, teacher preparation, certification and in-service training, and training for government employees. Even though the KYVU is reaching out to new kinds of learners, the KYVU is not moving away from university partners. The KYVU wishes to continue working closely with the universities to create new services and products for new learners.

Mr. Rabuzzi mentioned areas of help from institutions, specifically testing online in a proctored environment for the Educational Professional Standards Board. Institutions have not been fully cooperating with the policy that was made. He urged institutions to help provide proctored environments for the online EPSB testing. The KYVU also is concerned about capacity issues and feels the need to work on this issue; several hundred Kentucky students were unable to take the online courses they requested because of the capacity shortfalls at the institutions (primarily being lack of teachers for online courses)

Gary Cox mentioned concerns about priority being given to students enrolled at institutions.

Mr. Rabuzzi mentioned that most of the students that aren't getting in the classes offered by the KYVU are adult learners.

Daniel Rabuzzi welcomed Ron Legon and Dan Girlowski of the University of Baltimore, who will describe the University of Baltimore's web-based MBA program that is now offered through the KYVU.

Ron Legon thanked the committee for inviting them and introducing the University of Baltimore. UB is a public institution within the state of Maryland system with over 5,000 students (equal to 3,000 FTE students). UB was founded as a private institution in the 1920's, but in 1975 the university became part of the public system. UB's main mission

is to serve working adults. The average age of UB's undergraduate and graduate students is 32 years old. The university faces increasing competition within the region from public and private institutions.

Mr. Legon stated that UB's emphasis has always been on student convenience. Sixty percent of the courses offered are offered at night and on the weekends. The online program is structured differently than the on-campus program.

Enrollment in the web-based MBA has grown steadily, with 30 different states and 11 foreign countries represented. An undergraduate business degree will go online in fall and the MPA program in January.

Dan Girlowski discussed the MBA program. It is structured similarly to most MBA programs. Mr. Rabuzzi discussed the partnership between the KYVU and UB, concluding that the two should leverage resources together.

Gordon Davies thanked Ron Legon and Dan Girlowski.

Daniel Rabuzzi discussed funds available for the development of online courses to be offered via the KYVU. There was \$1.5 million in non-recurring funds for course development in the original appropriation, \$900,000 of which remains unused. The KYVU staff proposes that the money be used as a loan fund. The KYVU will issue a Request for Proposals for use of the remaining funds; Kentucky public and private institutions can apply for funds. The deadline will be early November and the money will be awarded around January 1, 2002. [The deadlines were moved to January 4, 2002 and February 1, 2002 after the DLAC meeting.]

ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 11: 30 a.m.

The next meeting will be held December 5, 2001