Joint Committee on Online and Distance Learning
November 8, 2017
1:30-3:00
Chafee 241

Agenda

Present: Christy Ashley, Diane Goldsmith, Debbie Mongeau, Anne Seitsinger, Mike Motta, Ben Leveillee, Aria Mia Loberti, Kathleen Torrens, Thomas Boving, Vince Petronio, Valerie Ryan

SAKAI Update - Ben Leveillee

- Business as usual: upgrades and up times
- Highest priority issue to resolve: Sakai outages
  - Move LDAP (redundant instance) offsite
  - More transparency about reporting outages - Sakai status page records history of any outages (large outages)
- Future planning - point version upgrade ready for Fall 2018, incremental upgrades
  - Work with Roger Williams - on same version
  - First public release for Sakai 12 will be Spring 2018 - smaller schools may be earlier adopters to fix bugs
- Better way to use the Sakai listserv
  - Can we make it more useful?
  - Should we send out tips once a month?
    - With a place to archive and search for old tips
    - User considerations - what is the best target?
      - People on the Roger Williams listserv have opted in to receive the Sakai tips
      - Frequently asked questions (FAQ) Sakai page already exists
      - Reach out to people proactively
    - Faculty may delete these emails - could it be implemented as an announcement on Sakai?
      - People want information about Sakai while they are on Sakai
      - Would it be bad to have this information on the log in page since people might not see it in their rush to log in
        - Could have a pop-up when logging into Sakai - it wouldn’t be annoying if it only happened once a month
        - Pop-ups can be implemented in Sakai 11
    - Ask a larger group of Sakai users about their preferences, email or pop-up notifications?
“Tips and tricks” page in Sakai - can implement as external page in Sakai

Tips for Faculty - would this be useful and how
- Linda Beith at Roger Williams sends out a monthly email with tips for teaching with technology (Sakai)

Onboarding to SAKAI for new faculty - Mike Motta
- The process: signed offer letter, employee access form, HR, automatically granted faculty access in e-campus
  - Problem: late hire or enrollment services not notified of change from “staff” to new hire teaching the course
  - There is no documentation of this specific process
    - Faculty search process checklist on HR is all that could be found
    - Developing a checklist with enrollment services and HR about this process involving e-campus and Sakai access for new faculty
      - Sakai is updated, as long as e-campus is updated
      - Add information to checklist about late hires in particular
    - Department chairs need to know about this information
      - Could share as part of the “Information and Resources for Chairs” section on Office of the Provost site
  - Workarounds for late hires - someone (chair) can create a project site or course site and add the late hire to it directly
    - Some adjuncts get hired a week before classes start
    - It’s easier to create Sakai project sites, add new faculty, etc. than changing HR’s policies
  - Late hire onboarding has been an issue for years, as has delayed start dates (tentative teaching appointments)
- Mike will follow-up with this issue

Online Pedagogy - Kathleen Torrens
- Review of the new format - robust, high-intensity course; best practices of online pedagogy through beginning to build a course
  - Lots of good resources in the design portion of the course
  - Reaffirms the need to put a lot of effort into making a course fully online
- How do we get more people to take the OP course?
  - Timing - when do people want to move their course to online/improve their online course?
    - Have been doing October, February, and June sessions
Blended Initiative - Kathleen Torrens

- With help from the Provost’s office we will be running a 4 week workshop in February for faculty who are committed to blending their courses 50% so as to be able to share classroom space. We will be accepting up to 20 people
- Joanna and Kathleen are building it now

Online Programs - Diane

- What’s on the horizon? Are there people in departments looking to develop programs?
  - Geosciences is talking about an online professional degree program; getting inquiries about their certificate program - people want to complete it off-site
    - Online Ed can help - training for faculty, templates for courses
  - Provost Office does revenue share for online programs
  - The fully online programs are making money
  - Regular semester model and accelerated model available for online programs

Follow up on disability issues - Ben

- Outreach efforts continue
  - Drop-in accessibility sessions where faculty can stop in and work on course accessibility
    - Underutilized, need to promote it in some way so more people know about this service
  - Webex online presentation about Sakai accessibility in October, polished version will be available in Spring 2018
- Forum about accessibility Ben and Kathleen attended - Aria organized/presented
  - Marketing online learning for accessibility - make it more appealing to students who may not have great accessibility to classrooms
  - Working with disability services directly
  - Issues remain with captioning - we have limited resources for captioning videos, particularly very long videos, such as a full-length movie
    - Need instructors to have knowledge that video content must be captioned
      - Some sort of announcement or message on Sakai letting instructors know that they need to caption their videos
    - If they know, how can they do that? ATL has capability to get 10 minutes of video captioned, Sakai group has some resources as well
  - How much video content do online courses have? How much of that content is captioned already?
    - Get data on this to make an argument for more captioning resources
- It’s not just captioning, also audio needs to be available for those who cannot see
• Note takers available through disability services - could these resources be used for video captioning or audio recording?
• Recorded supplementary lectures put online by faculty is an issue as it is just audio and not accessible to other students
• Moving away from pinpointing the issues of the individual student (whether or not they are blind, deaf, etc.) and moving toward a more centered, holistic approach would be better, otherwise excuses could be made
• Student complaints often about using outside sources (not Sakai) that are not accessible and that they have to learn a whole different interface