Education and Technology Committee

Minutes for November 14, 2016

Chair Steve Bounds called the meeting to order at 4:00 pm. The meeting was held in the School of Teacher Education and Leadership Room 216.

Committee members in attendance:
Steve Bounds, Gina Hogue, Henry Torres, Hai Jiang, Yeonsang Hwang, Jollean Sinclaire, Anna Tietz, Julian Jackson

Committee members not in attendance:
Julie Grady

Guests:
Tiffany Mosley, Margaret Watson

Minutes of November 1 meeting approved
Steve Bounds moved to approve the minutes of February 5, 2016; Yeonsang Hwang seconded the motion. The motion to approve was unanimous.

Old Business

Blackboard

The committee identified three reasons to evaluate alternative LMS:

1. The Blackboard contract expires June 30, 2018
2. In consideration of our role as good fiscal agents on behalf of the university, the committee seeks to evaluate alternative LMS that may provide better functionality and good quality at a cost that is lower than the current cost of Blackboard.
3. The committee seeks to evaluate alternative LMS that may provide improved usability (i.e., easier to train, easier to use).

The committee discussed collaborating with the A-State Faculty Center to conduct a survey to identify how faculty and students are utilizing Blackboard. Tiffany Mosley, Faculty Center Training and Support Coordinator, will provide the committee with a draft survey that was developed in collaboration with Emporia State University. The committee discussed the need for the LMS to support teaching during periods of inclement weather and LMS options to support mobile learning.

Based on input from Henry Torres regarding the need for the university to consider better technology and emerging technology, and the desire to act as good fiscal agents on behalf of the university, we plan to evaluate three LMS: Blackboard, Canvas, and Brightspace. The current cost of Blackboard is in excess of $200,000 per year and it is thought that the university may save as much as $50,000 to $100,000 per year by adopting the Canvas LMS.

The committee discussed our current inability to analyze the usage of Blackboard given that we did not purchase the analysis module that costs $48,000 per year. It was noted that Canvas provides a free analysis tool.

Yeonsang Hwang asked Henry to analyze logins to identify those faculty who use Blackboard. The committee discussed targeting online faculty for the utilization survey and/or asking department chairs to identify and assign faculty to complete the survey.

The committee plans to meet again within the next two weeks.

The committee adjourned at 5:05 pm.