Online Advisory Group Agenda

26 October 2016 / 3:00 PM / Nursing 200

I) Approval of Meeting Minutes for October 26, 2016 (Loiacono and Roepnack)

II) Feedback from Group

   In our last meeting, we told you what we thought we should be working on and asked that you go back and talk with your departments about needs for feedback. What do you and your units think we should be working on?

III) Integrations (please see information and our questions for you below)

IV) Innovation vs Standardization (please see information and our questions for you below)

Additional Information

Textbook and third-party integrations into CourseDen

Current integrations

In our last meeting we briefly discussed the advantages and disadvantages of integrating textbook publisher platforms with CourseDen. Students appreciated that they didn't have to log in to various platforms (they could authenticate within CourseDen) and benefit from the learning tools included in the publisher materials. Professors like the integrations because it can benefit students, it can save faculty the time of developing course materials, and publishers may provide materials that most faculty cannot create.

The disadvantages are the additional costs to the students and technical problems, as described below. What we want faculty to know is that there are different levels of integrations and not all publisher materials can be integrated with CourseDen. It is not true, as you might be told by the textbook representatives, that it is simply a matter of flipping a switch.

For example, we do not integrate Pearson materials because of the following problems:

- Several USG schools have expressed dissatisfaction with Pearson integrations. For example, at one USG school with a Pearson custom integration, students had a variety of problems ranging from links not working to activation codes/accounts not working; Pearson support was extremely unhelpful (issues ran from August into late September/early October). Pearson support turned students away and saying they...
couldn't help. Nevertheless, we continue to communicate with Pearson representatives to explore future options.

In order to ensure the best possible experience for both our faculty and students, we need to be careful with these integrations. The University System of Georgia has formed a working group that is looking at this issue and collaborating on best practices, guidelines, processes/checklists for vetting 3rd party integrations more carefully. The working group is actively collaborating and hopes to have at least a draft of suggested guidelines, processes, etc., by the end of the Fall term. Once these guidelines are in place, we can make our own UWG plan and communicate it to everyone during the Spring term.

We currently have some level of integration with McGrawHill and Cengage. If you are interested in a textbook product with one of these publishers, please contact the FDC to find out what is possible before purchasing the product.

Our questions for you:
1. What would be the best way to disseminate information we learned from students about the challenges of online textbook adoptions, whether integrated or not (students weren’t clear on which version of the textbook was required for their class (did they need the activation codes), limited options, do they need to rent it for a whole year or two years when it is a one semester course, etc.).
2. Once we hear from the USG working group, we will work with the OAG to develop a campus plan for textbook and other third party integrations. We will be asking some of the following questions: How should we handle future requests for textbook integrations given these concerns? The USG working committee is developing a form to facilitate this decision making process. What standards (accessibility, integration ratings, publisher support, affordability, training (costs)) need to be met in order for us to accept it?

Innovation vs Standardization
We sometimes receive multiple requests for tools to support learning. For example, there are multiple videoconferencing options. We currently support Collaborate Ultra. We don't have the infrastructure to support all of them.

Our question for you:
1. What are your thoughts on supporting various tools? If you think that faculty should have multiple options, who will be responsible for supporting those tools that we cannot support? How do we balance competing demands and priorities without undermining our efforts to maintain a high level of service to faculty and students?