

## Academic Outreach Spring 2005 Notes

Thursday and Friday April 28 and 29  
[OhioLink 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor](#)

In attendance was **Current AO Members:** Tom Sink, **Chair**, Andaz Ahmad, Dr. Edward J Busher, Dr. Melody Clark Dr. Alan Escovitz, Melanie L. Hoffman, Mary Jane Palmer, Dr. Karen I. Rhoda, Peter Ross, Dr. Thomas Skill

**New AO Members:** Mary Beth Aust-Keefer, Indra Canagaratna, Marilyn S. Jones, Dr. Mel May, and Gloria Powell

**Ex Officio:** Dr. Kate Carey, Gail Peters, Nancy L. Ragias and Dr. George E. Steele

**Invited guests:** Dr. Tom Shostak and Tom Erney

Dr. Timothy Mott and Marilyn S. Jones sent regrets that they could not attend.

### **Thursday April 28**

1. Tom Sink opened the meeting and introduced himself and asked all to do the same.

Tom sink announced the results the Academic Outreach new Chair election. Melody Clark was unanimously elected by the committee to serve a two year term as chair starting with the autumn 2005 meeting. All members congratulated Melody in her selection.

George reviewed the meeting's theme: Focusing on strategies to for OLN to reach Ohioans and how to measure outcomes of those strategies. He also outlined the goal to be accomplished by day two: AO will identify key activities OLN should pursue to reach and involve more Ohioans in learning with the methods of measuring this effort.

Kate discussed why she is asking AO to engage in these we are activities, so as to assist OLN in development of its strategic plan for e-learning in Ohio by having AO assist in identifying: Who are we to serve; with what projects; and to what end?

2. George provided a brief summary of a number of vendors who have approached OLN to discuss the possibility of OLN coordinating a state-wide buy. George also raised the issue of whether content for institutions from outside of

Ohio should be included in OhioLearns! The general reaction of the committee was that OLN should continue to share with the campuses requests for different types of content and they would try to meet the need.

George also showed the group the emagister.com Web site – ([www.emagister.com](http://www.emagister.com)). This group harvests course data from around the world and organizes it for the Spanish speaking world. This group is located in Spain. OLN is working with them to ensure the information they present is accurate.

**Action Item:** George will include questions related to these issues in a survey to be mailed to members of AO within two weeks.

3. The committee broke into three groups and addressed the following issues

- **A: Content Creation:** How to assist with content creation? Should we buy content that is unavailable? How do we encourage collaboration? Should we include out-of state content in OhioLearns!?
- **B: Return on Investment:** What to measure and how to measure?
- **C: Marketing:** Upon which Ohioans should we focus? What marketing strategies should we pursue?

**Action Item:** Each group reported their brainstorming efforts. Results of each group's brainstorming activities are attached at the end of these notes.

**Friday, April 30<sup>th</sup>**

4. Cable Green, Director of Technology discussed OLN efforts with collaborative buys for course management systems for Ohio institutions.

**Action Item:** Any member of the AO committee who wishes to learn more about the collaborative buys for course management systems should contact Cable at [cgreen@oln.org](mailto:cgreen@oln.org) or 614 995-3240 .

5. Cable demonstrated the use of Learning Times, a collaborative meeting space software tool. George stated that he would like to use this tool more often with AO members and hoped that he could have 1-2 sub-committees use it this summer.

**Action Item:** George will solicit one or two AO sub-committees this summer to conduct their work through Learning Times, rather than drive to meetings.

6. The committee discussed Kate's request to assist in the development of OLN's strategic plan by having AO assist in identifying: Who are we to serve? With what projects? And to what end? Resolution on these items was not reached during the time allotted.

**Action Items:** Sub-committees will be formed to work on these issues this summer. George will ask the members of AO which of the sub-committees they would like to serve. Each sub-committee will make recommendations that address identified topics and suggest ways of measuring success. The sub-committees names and purpose is listed below.

- AO Taskforce **Marketing** plan for targeted initiatives
  - Identify and list potential relationships between the audience we (e-learning in Ohio – that is, OLN on behalf of its members) serve and the current product we have.
  - List audiences we are not reaching and ways of determining if there is product we can help institutions develop based on OLN's mission.
  
- AO Taskforce **Web site and Student services review:** Focus group of students to examine the catalog and student services
  - To review proposed OLN external Web site redesign, lead by Cable Green, and make recommendations.
  - Review Faculty Exchange site and make recommendations regarding the submission processes for both those interested in positing an application and institutions posting of open positions.
  - Other state students services that could be integrated into OLN's efforts for Ohioans
  
- AO Taskforce for **OLN HEI** report on DL
  - To make recommendations to OLN and HEI on the presentation of information in the 2005 E-Learning report, this will be based on last year's efforts.
  - To recommend ways of promoting the information reported.
  
- An AOTaskforce will review the extent in which activity is taking place on campuses to **“modualize” academic credit courses** to create non-credit courses. This committee will also seek representation from OLN's PD committee, since Sheryl Hansen reports that this activity is occurring.
  - To report back to larger committee on efforts some institutions are engaged in to “modualize” courses.

## **7. Business Meeting: AO OLN Project Updates**

- Best Practices and Course Check, Sheryl Hansen, Director of OLN's Professional Development review Course Check with the committee. Mary Jane Palmer discussed how this tool was adapted at LCCC for faculty development. Mary Jane will send the Word document she created that adapted the Course Check Web site.

**Action Item:** Sheryl will post Mary Jane's Word document

- DL Administrator's list serve: Tom Erney and Karen Rhoda introduced the new distance learning directors' list serve. The List-serv will be moderated and restricted to the Ohio DL community.

**Action Item:** All members of AO will be invited to participate in the list serve. Members will be able to sign-up through the survey that will be mailed in two weeks.

- George mentioned that the OLN Adjunct Faculty Exchange was now available. Currently it had 106 candidates in it and no job posting. Mary Beth pointed out that most hiring occurs in mid- to late summer for adjunct faculty and recommended that we send out notices again at that time to alert the campuses to post positions.

**Action Item:** George will send out a note to Distance Learning Directors, Catalog Coordinators, and HR contacts this summer, reminding them of the service and requesting positions be posted in it.

**8.** The meeting ended with the recognition of the retiring AO committee members. These included:

- Pete Ross
- Alan Escovitz
- Ed Busher
- Tim Mott

George and Kate thanked this group for its wisdom and dedicated service to OLN through the years. Special recognition for Tom Sink was also given, as he was stepping down as Chair at the end of the meeting. Kate and George deeply appreciated the conscientious leadership Tom has provided to the committee over the past two year. Tom will graciously remain on the committee through next year, assisting Melody Clark, the new Chair with her responsibilities.

## Report of the Breakout Groups

### **Content Group reported:**

How to assist with content creation?

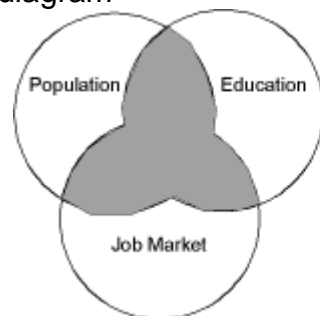
- Big stick – OLN need to help campuses with leadership in this area: What should be created
- Need data to lead direction of content direct
- Need help what are the needs
- Policy issues: open access course, set time, HEI regulations – OLN to Lobby
- How do we develop content that works
- More faculty involvement to promote content enhancement and
- Share Best Practices
- Need grants for collaboration and modules – make it a tighter focus

### **Return on Investment reported**

What to measure and how to measure?

There are many variables involved in this topic which make measuring ROI very difficult. The essential measures occur in the vague overlapping categories of People, Education, and Jobs. However, there are many variations within each of these groups. For instance, People service data includes employed vs unemployed, age groups of population, demographics, career interest vs current position, etc. The Education components include credit vs noncredit courses, academic/institutional barriers, degree vs certificate programs, influences of for-profit and out-of-state content providers, etc. Job needs include needs for training, retraining, career supply and demand, and the perception of the value of educational attainment vis-à-vis the current employment market (unskilled, high-paying jobs vs credentialed, low-paying jobs)

See following diagram



**Return on Investment  
Measures?**

## Marketing Reported:

Which Ohioans should we focus on?

- No need to change the primary target market
- Focus on those who have some college but haven't finished, undereducated
  - Low wage workers
  - Moms' clubs – hey! No babysitter necessary!
    - Listservs, support groups
  - Large industry – people who need to upgrade skills, are losing jobs,
- Stronger ties with the campuses
  - Show how we are going to help them, what are we going to do for them and their students?
  - Lots of people involved in OLN don't have direct contact with the students
  - Involve admissions, faculty and staff advisors
  - OACRAO, OHAA, other academic advising organizations
  - Campus libraries
- Each segment has different needs
  - Partially fund each institution to do a survey – in their community what is it that the people are looking for?
  - Surveys to different markets
- Great untapped resource is workforce development – certifications, skill based areas
- Hispanic population – they tend to stay clustered in their communities – enlist Spanish speaking people to reach out to them

What marketing strategies should we pursue?

- Market differently to different areas/regions of state
- Is there another model to look at (state, KY Virtual) as to how they market?
- How can we get to those students who have not completed a degree, or attended the past 3 years? Direct mail?
  - Does HEI have this information? Opinion is that this information can be shared legally
  - Do mass mailing, that looks individualized, "We know you haven't finished, here's a way for you to finish. Here are some economic factors. Learning = earning".
  - Have call center available for these folks
- Focus groups/open house in areas, set up public meeting for folks to attend
  - Coordinate them with ODJFS, libraries, OCCN, OCAN
    - Can promote to clients

- Use online conferencing equipment – each month have a couple colleges participate, have at several locations, same day each month
- How do we change perception that the high pay manufacturing right out of high school no longer exists?
  - May be banging heads against wall to target those folks in this group that lost their jobs
  - Contact HR directors at large plants – be prepared
  - Who are Ohio's largest employers?
  - Target those in lower paying jobs? Check out clerks, etc. Wal Mart employees, Cleveland Clinic – what do you need, how can Ohio Learning Network help you out?
  - In the employed work force, what skills do your current employees need to stay current?
  - Pete will find out who at Ford to contact about their employee education fair.
- How do we change perception that the high pay manufacturing right out of high school no longer exists?
- Transfer hotline, get OLN tied in
  - Marketing and advising go hand-in-hand
  - Transfer assurance guide
  - Have a contest – like a lottery, win free tuition, or a computer, etc.
  - By having each college donate a free course you get college buy-in, work into transfer idea-it's good anywhere, get name recognition out,

[Add appropriate bullet points to following items]

AO Task Force – workforce group that brings in business and industry folks to be the group,

- What jobs are there going to be available for graduates?
- How do we reach employees, workers
- With budget turn-down most companies don't do in-house training – develop certifications, training programs

Fear of campus

- Am I older than everyone else?
- What color is everyone?
- Are there others like me?
- Market anonymity

Success Stories

- Go to DL Coordinators
- Have them search the DB for success stories

- Tax return – can the legislature provide an incentive to complete their degree or have businesses to encourage completion
- Need more name recognition – who is OLN? What do they do?
- Get people at work, through their employers

- Press release tailored to their towns, what is this going to do for your citizens? And possibly try for an editorial?
- High schools
  - Virtual high schools
  - GED, online
  - Next steps
- E 4 ME
  - Market as a service to the campuses
  - Get content available in more platforms – available to campuses with “no strings attached”
  - What are incentives for completing E 4 ME?
  - Fee waivers at campuses – expand this program – waive fees for 1<sup>st</sup> course that they take at that institution?
  - Free laptop – MIT \$100 laptop
  - Target one company – offer E 4 ME for their employees
  - Recruit someone from the local campus who already has relationships
  - Go in together and offer this as a service to their employees