

**Academic Outreach**  
**April 29, 2003 10 a.m. OhioLINK**

Present: Connie DiMascio, Mary Jane Palmer, Jim Pollicita, Tom Shostak, Tim Mott, Sherry McAndrew, Melody Clark, Tom Skill, Tom Sink, Tony Hartman, Tom Erney, Alan Escovitz, Ed Busher

OLN Staff: Kate Carey, George Steele, Susan Brown, Nancy Ragias, Gail Peters, Julie Clemens

Carey led a discussion of **OLN's new mission, goals, and strategies** and highlighted new activities:

- The "Student Services" section of the Web site and mentioned that it is under constant renovation. She explained that OLN hasn't abandoned services to campuses but rather are combining those services with services to students.
- Students can be grouped into two categories: non-enrolled students we want to attract to e-learning and enrolled students who can receive OLN services through campuses.
- Policy and funding is new to OLN goals. Policy and funding committee looking at real vs. believed information and issues like market-value pricing for e-learning courses.
- OLN group visited Kentucky Virtual University in January and discussed importing and exporting degrees. While OLN could not do this, individual campuses could.
- NCHEMS will do a survey of K-16 in terms of providers and policy.
- OLN is surveying IT administrators about technology use and costing.

**Discussion:** Could OLN house a repository of potential adjuncts who are good e-learning instructors? OLN already gets inquiries from people who want to be e-learning instructors. How do we get outside our own college models to look at teaching e-learning courses? How can we help faculty see that student learning, and not just their teaching, can be affected by technology? Could OLN re-direct funding to a research entity to study these issues, rather than to appoint a committee? Do we need involvement from certain administrators close to these issues to inform this research? What forum and participants is the place to start with this conversation? Faculty must be included; their buy-in is critical. Should/could we talk with other states?

What is OLN's role in helping campuses filter through all the information about e-learning? How can OLN support administrators, in addition to faculty, instructional designers, and student-services professionals?

**Action:** Erney will take the lead in forming a small group and framing the issue. Shostak, Busher, DiMascio, Palmer, Pollicita, McAndrew, Carey, and

Steele will join him. Later meetings: Explore the possibility of using Emerging Needs funds for new purposes and create venue to share strategic strategies.

**Discussion:** Shostak and Pollicita led a discussion about their review of **Emerging Needs grants**. The Quality Report should be considered as we look at EN grants. Clemens reported on her ongoing research on EN content in the OhioLearns! catalog. Missing content and user-friendliness are two main issues. Campus-based responsibility for getting courses into catalog was discussed. OLN is looking at campus dilemma of putting into the catalog entire programs vs. individual courses as part of a program cohort.

OLN would like to create a Zoomerang survey for grant PI's; Shostak and Pollicita will review the survey before it goes out. Can we determine if these programs are having an impact on the workforce? We can gather information on the publications and presentations faculty have done on the EN content.

Carey noted that all of the campuses involved in the 2000 program have requested extensions. We've learned that six months to develop content isn't long enough. Mott reminded the group that the program may transition to a loan program.

Quality Report's criteria should be shared with PI's so they can make sure their content is in line.

**Suggestions:** Could/should OLN invite campuses to determine content area, with justification? OLN could develop across-the-board criteria for all proposals. What about grants written for certain types of technology or pedagogical tools, such as PDA's or tablet PC's? Could we require faculty to mentor others within a grant?

What if we convened a group of high-level faculty to advise on grant content and other teaching and learning issues?

Mott led a discussion on moving to a program of **loaning funds for content development**. KY and MA use loan programs and thus have sustainable incomes. Match issues can be problematic. Going to a loan program may eliminate those programs based on hunches, rather than those meeting a real need. It's not reasonable to expect money back before the third year, but it does increase accountability. Payback within five or six years is reasonable.

**Action:** Escovitz, Skill, Steele, Carey, and Mott will study the loan issue once the budget is set – most likely mid- to late summer.

**Discussion:** Steele demonstrated **data submission to HEI** and discussed future implications of the data base integration. The committee should begin to see DL enrollment figures in late autumn for summer courses.

**Discussion:** Ragias gave an overview of recent **marketing** activity. She encouraged AO members and their colleagues to help staff the OLN booth at the State Fair in August. Shostak led a discussion about marketing OLN in terms of competition, market niche, and delivery of product. He identified three areas of **assessment** need: Available degrees and how they relate to Ohio's market needs for certain career fields, marketing needs in various regions, and resources. Different degrees would be targeted to different parts of the state according to need. Institutions could help with this market assessment.

Institutions and the Department of Labor are two resources whose information could help with target marketing. OLN's earlier market studies could be aggregated in order to avoid too much replication of work.

**Action:** The committee agreed that OLN should continue its general marketing efforts but to begin work on the three areas of assessment (degrees, market needs, resources). This information would be presented at the fall AO meeting and would be useful for Emerging Needs discussion. Volunteers to assist Ragias in a consulting role are Shostak, Linda Steele (Governing Board), and Pete Ross (Steele and Ross volunteered to help with marketing earlier).

**Discussion:** Steele gave an update on the **mini e-learning course**. The course, in the Lectora platform, is still being edited.

Steele gave an update on the pilot of the **Smarthinking** tutorial. Current usage numbers are low, although the three campuses on the quarter system haven't had much time to use it. Discussion ensued about faculty buy-in and a comparison study of students who use Smarthinking vs. those who don't.

**Action:** The committee agreed that the pilot should continue.

The meeting concluded at 4 p.m.

**Wednesday, April 30, 2003**

Also present: Ellen Klute, Andaz Ahmad

**Discussion:** Steele discussed “**My Learning Space**,” which is functional server space for students and faculty. It will allow them to store large pieces of data for later retrieval. Surveys of students and faculty indicate that this is a necessary service. Systems and applications haven’t been selected yet, but AO input is welcome. Cost and pricing and policy concerning limits on capacity, authentication, sharing, security, interactivity, and other issues have yet to be established. The next project meeting is May 1. Although some colleges already provide this type of service, but many campuses do not. **Questions to consider:** What do we want to have in 3-5 years? Will the interface work between existing services and My Learning Space? If so, how? How to ensure that illegal activity isn’t stored on the files? Are PSOP students being considered by the committee? Is the committee planning to look at similar systems for the general public?

**Discussion:** Klute gave an update on the **Course Applicability System (CAS)**. The collaborative degree is now more of a cooperative degree between Kent State and Columbus State. Students can now use CAS to see how courses from one campus apply at the other. Klute demonstrated how CAS works. Courses for the online degree are completely at a distance. Using HEI to provide CAS data is being investigated. Discussion ensued about student usage and advisor and high-school counselor training. Another issue discussed was using CAS for high-school students needing remediation, although there is some campus-based evidence that remedial students don’t do well in distance classes? Klute mentioned that Columbus State and OSU use a system that allows the transmittal of student transcripts to CAS via XML. **Question:** Should Emerging Needs recipients be required to show collaboration through CAS? This question will be taken up by the EN review committee.

**Discussion:** Academic Outreach and Professional Development Committees had a joint meeting. Both committees helped to identify and clarify their roles in implementing the Quality Report.

**Action:** After lunch both groups met briefly and discussed the possibility of having a job bank for adjuncts interested in teaching online. Steele thanked the AO committee for its service and Tim Mott for his leadership of the committee.

