

MINUTES - DRAFT
STATE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM OF FLORIDA
BOARD OF GOVERNORS
TASK FORCE FOR STRATEGIC PLANNING FOR ONLINE EDUCATION
AFFORDABILITY WORKGROUP
MEETING VIA CONFERENCE CALL
March 9, 2015

1. Call to Order

Chair Pam Northrup convened the meeting at 3:03 p.m. CST on March 9, 2015, with the following members present: President Judy Genshaft. A quorum was established. Other attendees were UWF Provost Martha Saunders, as well as, Cindy Deluca and Jose Coll from USF.

2. Opening Statement

Chair Northrup said the workgroup is tasked with putting together a 45 minute presentation on the workgroup recommendations to the full task force. A draft was sent to all committee members.

3. Discussion

Chair Northrup mentioned one of the tasks was to define affordability. Jose Coll stated that affordability should relate to the student and the institution offering the courses. Chair Northrup and Cindy Deluca agreed. Chair Northrup read the workgroup charge of: "The Plan should outline strategies for reducing costs to students and for achieving efficiencies that will reduce costs to institutions and the system, but not impair quality. These efficiencies should include collaborative ventures among institutions, such as resource sharing and joint development of online programs."

Chair Northrup went on to address issues brought up in the past meeting and how they were being used in the report to the full task force. Chair Northrup started with tuition and fees and how we go about defining fully online and blended students and how to assess fees differently, as well as, student flexibility to add online courses to increase accessibility and costs of providing an online education. All SUS institutions were asked to provide information on tuition and fees in regards to online learning (request went out from Board of Governors staff and data will be shared with this committee). Chair Northrup mentioned that the Florida Virtual Campus provides opportunities for efficiencies with shared services but further investigation is needed on existing services coupled with the needs of campuses.

Jose Coll asked about whether the restrictions on the utilization of distance learning fees have an impact on implementing efficiencies. Cindy believes this is an issue and does not allow distance learning fees to be used for instruction which is a high cost expense. Chair Northrup says the statute for the use of distance learning fees is very general and to be used to for the development and delivery of distance learning programs but also needs to supplement

funding an institution has already received and not to be used to replace funding from another source. Chair Northrup said this workgroup is a great avenue to bring forth this issue. Jose Coll hopes the distance learning fee will be changed to allow institutions to use the fee to improve access and affordability. Cindy Deluca mentioned that the problem is how institutions interpret the restrictions on the fee and that is shown in the great deal of disparity in the amount of the distance learning fee. Cindy Deluca uses the example of proctoring with some institutions charging the students directly for proctoring services and others including the cost in the distance learning fee. Chair Northrup states that proctoring is a good example of where we can find efficiencies by creating a shared service for proctoring. Chair Northrup states that it would be too late for this session to make recommendations on parameters surrounding the distance learning fee, which gives this subcommittee time to develop a proposal for future consideration.

Chair Northrup mentioned that the Quality Metrics Workgroup can assist in helping determine the best way to define the levels of online learning. The workgroup is working now to define “online program” and to differentiate it from blended programs.

Chair Northrup asked the group for their input on possible shared resources avenues. Cindy Deluca brought up ebooks as one possible place to look for cost savings by having those become a shared resource.

Chair Northrup states the Florida Virtual Campus is statutorily required to provide several shared resources but many of them are hard to find, outdated, difficult to use or people just aren't aware these shared resources exist. These services have a significant potential to reduce costs. Cindy Deluca brought up that not every institution is a member of Complete Florida. Chair Northrup clarified that this the renaming is confusing and that all Florida public institutions are members of the Florida Virtual Campus, with its new statutory name “Complete Florida Plus Program”.

Chair Northrup started discussing joint program development. Chair Northrup mentioned that there was great interest in pulling together the best talents from Florida business leaders and our exceptional faculty to develop degree programs that can be used by all universities. Jose Coll asked if this is to address duplication of programs. Chair Northrup said in her Complete Florida discussions with the Board of Governors, that was not discussed. Jose Coll asked how creating a best of the best program will help reduce costs. Chair Northrup mentioned that the Georgia Board of Regents has an “opt in” program called eMajor for universities to create joint program with one institution to be the lead program. The universities involved in a degree program split the cost and revenue of providing the degree program to students by working together with one set of course designers to develop courses within the program, one entity was responsible for coordinating the ongoing offerings, developing the schedule and establishing who would be teaching sections of courses (across institutions). This system has reduced costs to the student and the institution. Chair Northrup hopes to start with a pilot program due to the complicated nature of implementing a program like this.

Chair Northrup believes competency based education is a way to provide significant savings

to students. Chair Northrup, Board of Governors staff and Florida College System Staff are in discussions with the Lumina Foundation to create a Competency Education Strategy Lab in Florida. Cindy Deluca raised the question on the cost to develop a competency-based program as consideration.

Chair Northrup briefed the workgroup on the subject matter of the final slides in the presentation. These slides included: Use of other Resources to Reduce Cost and Further Areas of Investigation slides: Tuition and Fees at SUS Institutions, State by State Analysis of Distance Learning Fees, and Best Practices in U.S. Higher Education. Cindy Deluca asked that we mention how each proposal has an effect on affordability.

Chair Northrup listed a few state education systems that have system wide online programs. Cindy Deluca has been polling these systems to see how they are managing their programs and looking for best practices.

4. Concluding Remarks and Adjournment

Chair Northrup, with no further business, adjourned the meeting at 3:58 p.m CST.

Dr. Pam Northrup, Chair

Andrew Romer