

**Minutes**  
**Faculty Senate Committee on Technology (FSCOT)**  
**September 21, 2010**

Committee met in Calvin 301 at 3:30 PM. Attending were committee members Brooks-Kieffer, Keen, Knackendoffel, Ok, Raine, Rintoul, Stadlander, Willbrant, and Wyss. Guests: Ken Stafford

Approval of minutes from previous meeting (9/7/2010)

Agenda items included:

- 1) Distance Ed plan – KBOR approved the policy (attached as Appendix A) on 9/15/2010, rendering moot our plans to contact them with questions and concerns prior to approval. The policy does set some specific timelines for the Regents institutions. The provost will be setting up a committee (chaired by Sue Maes) which will be tasked with development of a plan/strategy in order to meet those deadlines. A member of FSCOT will be added to the committee, along with others who have some interest in distance education and the ramifications of that policy.
- 2) iTunes University - update from Ken Stafford indicates that the University's attorneys are still negative about this initiative. It was decided that we needed to hear from advocates of iTunes University (Mike Wesch? Tweed Ross) in order to get both sides of the story, as well as from Apple representatives. Inviting these folks to a FSCOT meeting seemed to be the best way to do that. We may also need to design a survey to get answers to other questions. Questions that arose included:
  - a. How many people on this campus desire to put their class materials (or other materials) on iTunes University?
  - b. What's different about this initiative; what can iTunes U do that current campus technology can't do?
  - c. Is the only advantage the marketing clout that Apple can provide?
  - d. How do we expect to compete with courses offered from places like Princeton, Stanford, Yale and Harvard?
  - e. Do we need to get a definitive answer from the university administration? If so, how do we proceed?
- 3) Meeting adjourned.

## Appendix A

### KBOR distance education policy as passed by the board 9/15/2010

#### **2. Approve Distance Education Plan Summary and Recommendation**

*K.S.A. 74-3202c(b)(9) directs the Kansas Board of Regents to “develop and implement a comprehensive plan for the utilization of distance learning technologies.” The attached document represents a revision of the original plan approved by the Board in January 2006. Staff recommends acceptance of the plan and the attendant revision of the definition of a distance education program. (08/31/10)*

#### **Background**

SB 345 requires the Kansas Board of Regents to develop a comprehensive plan for distance education technology in Kansas. The current plan was developed in consultation with the System Council of Chief Academic Officers and was accepted by the System Council of Presidents in January 2006.

In addition, Board policy on Academic Extension states that “the Vice President for Academic Affairs of the Board shall be responsible for the development, implementation and coordination of policies and procedures that will serve to achieve an effective and efficient system of credit and noncredit academic extension instruction including distance education and off-campus face-to-face courses and programs” (Ch. II.D.6.a.).

In Fall 2009, the Board Academic Affairs Standing Committee (BAASC) was charged to revise the existing plan. To fulfill that charge, Board staff reviewed other state plans, consulted with the Council of Chief Academic Officers (COCAO), the System Council of Chief Academic Officers (SCOCAO), and campus-based distance education experts. In addition, multiple drafts of the plan were discussed with BAASC.

#### **Proposed Distance Education Plan**

The final draft of the proposed plan was shared with the full Board at its August 2010 retreat. Board members emphasized the importance of distance learning, in particular its critical role in helping provide Kansas students with greater access to higher education.

The proposed Distance Education Plan is guided by three core values: innovation, collaboration, and quality. Universities are encouraged to implement distance education technologies in innovative and effective ways that are congruent with their mission and resources. In addition, they are urged to find appropriate ways to collaborate in the use of distance education to serve the needs of their students. And, at base, all distance learning applications must maintain or enhance the quality of the institution’s educational mission. As with all teaching applications, the ultimate goal is student success.

The proposed plan incorporates the core principles of the original document, but adds elements that enable the Board to monitor campus activity in the area of distance education. Specifically, the plan:

- Requires that each campus develop a distance education plan, to be approved by the Board
- Requires annual report to the Board that will provide an inventory of distance education activity across the system
- Encourages collaboration among system institutions in the development of distance education programs

- Establishes responsibilities for both the Board and universities.

**Distance Education Program**

The proposed plan defines distance education as “any program in which the proportion of content delivered via distance learning is fifty percent or more.” In order to maintain consistency in Board policy, it is requested that the current definition of distance education in Appendix F, Section 3 of the *Policy and Procedures Manual* be revised:

g. A Distance education program is ~~a curriculum comprised entirely of distance education courses~~ one in which the proportion of content delivered via distance learning is fifty percent or more.

**Staff Recommendation** - Staff recommends approval of the proposed Distance Education Plan and attendant revision of the definition of a distance education program.

# KANSAS BOARD OF REGENTS DISTANCE EDUCATION PLAN

August 2010

## Background

Distance Education is critical to the Kansas Board of Regents' goal of increasing access to postsecondary education for the citizens of Kansas, and it is the Board's expectation that the state's public colleges and universities provide students with quality distance learning options. In support of this goal, Kansas statutes stipulate that the Kansas Board of Regents will "develop and implement a comprehensive plan for the utilization of distance learning technologies" [74-3202c(b)(9)].

Distance education technologies are dramatically changing the higher education landscape in the nation and state. In order for Kansas' colleges and universities to continue offering high quality educational opportunities that promote student success in a global and knowledge-based society, it is imperative that these new technologies be creatively employed where feasible and appropriate. To serve that end, this Distance Education Plan is guided by three core values:

1 **Innovation** in the use of distance education technologies is vital, since the technologies for mediated instruction and distance delivery remain very fluid. Understanding the effective use of these technologies in ways that improve learning and enhance teaching is increasing, but much remains to be learned. Kansas' public colleges and universities are encouraged to find the most effective ways to implement those technologies that are congruent with their respective missions and resources.

2 **Collaboration** is implicit in the very nature of these technologies. Distance education eliminates traditional boundaries and demands that institutions find ways to collaborate in serving the needs of their students. Kansas institutions are asked to develop collaborations using distance education that are consistent with their nature and mission.

3 **Quality** is the fundamental goal of all academic programs offered by Kansas' public colleges and universities. Any introduction of distance learning technology must contribute to the quality of the program in question and, ultimately, to the success of those students who participate in it. In both Kansas and the nation as a whole, colleges and universities are being asked to demonstrate the quality of their programs by demonstrating that their graduates have mastered the materials taught in their academic programs. Kansas' public institutions report on the quality of their programs through the KBOR program review process. In addition, *Foresight 2020*, the strategic vision for Kansas' college and university system, is intended to provide a mechanism for monitoring the quality of that system, including distance education.

In applying the growing array of distance learning technologies, it is important to recognize two competing fiscal realities: (1) quality distance learning can be a source of both revenue and savings, as new student populations are served via distance course offerings and more students are served more efficiently through the general use of education technologies; and (2) the introduction of educational technology in general, and distance education options, in particular, can be costly, given the need for hardware, software, and support for students engaged in distance learning. Given these fiscal realities, wisdom would indicate that flexibility is imperative to enable institutions to effectively and efficiently use these technologies in ways that conform to their resources and mission.

## **Distance Education**

*Distance education is defined as either an asynchronous or synchronous instructional delivery system in which faculty and students are physically separated in place or time. Teaching and learning are supported by a wide spectrum of existing and evolving media.*

For purposes of reporting, any program in which the proportion of content delivered via distance learning is 50 % or more will be considered as a distance education program. These offerings will include those offered wholly online and blended or hybrid programs in which a substantial proportion of the content is delivered through mediated delivery technology to facilitate such activities as online discussions, interactive television, and limited numbers of face-to-face meetings.

## **Board Activity**

To promote effective collaboration and strengthen awareness of distance learning opportunities in the state, the Board will do the following:

- Promote innovation in the development of distance education by system institutions.
- Require each institution to develop a distance education plan by January 2011, to be approved by the Board. Following initial Board approval, these plans will be reviewed biennially by Board staff and updated as appropriate.
- Ensure statewide awareness of distance learning opportunities available through governed, coordinated institutions, and regional organizations, e.g., Colleague-to-Colleague (C-2-C) and Summer Institute of Distance Learning and Instructional Technology (SIDLIT).
- Encourage institutions to collaborate in the delivery of distance education where such collaboration is appropriate.
- Maintain a webpage on the new KBOR website that includes links to Kansas university and college distance learning opportunities, financial information, adult learning opportunities, and best practices in distance education.

## **Institutional Activity**

Each institution will create a Distance Education plan that is consistent with the guidelines and best practices provided by the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools. These plans, which will cover current and future projections, serve as the core of the Kansas Board of Regents' Distance Education Plan. The institution's plan will specify its responsibility in each of the following categories, drawing on some or all of the criteria in each category as is appropriate to its resources and mission (adapted from *Handbook of Distance Education*, ed. M.G. Moore, 2007):

- 1 *Academic.* Each institution will indicate how it maintains the academic quality of its offerings, including such areas as: maintenance and documentation of academic calendars, program accreditation, licensing where required, course quality, course and program evaluation, Carnegie units, grading, admission, curriculum review, and approval processes for distance education offerings.
- 2 *Fiscal, Governance.* Each institution will clarify its responsibilities in such areas as the following: tuition rates, special fees, full-time equivalencies, state-mandated regulations related to funding, consortia

agreements, contracts with collaborating organizations, board oversight, administration cost, and tuition disbursement.

3 *Faculty.* Each institution will make clear its responsibilities in such key areas as: compensation and workloads, design and development incentives, staff development incentives, staff development, faculty support, faculty evaluation, intellectual freedom, and union contracts.

4 *Legal.* The institution will make clear its role in such areas as: intellectual property agreements, copyright, and faculty/student/institutional liability.

5 *Student.* The institution will demonstrate its responsibility for supporting student learning at a distance in such areas as: academic advising, counseling, library services, financial aid, testing and assessment, access to resources, equipment requirements, and privacy. Other areas to consider may include: students with disabilities, expanding online offerings to more high schools, promotion, increasing graduation/completion rates, and exploring adult education options.

6 *Technical.* Each institution will demonstrate that it has sufficient technical resources to support its distance education activity in such areas as: system reliability, connectivity, technical support, instructional design support, hardware/software, and access.

## **Approval and Review**

Campus plans will be brought to the Board for approval in spring 2011. Once approved, they will be subject to biennial review, beginning in spring 2013.

### Timeline for Biennial Review

- 1 In the fall of the review year, KBOR staff will notify institutions that distance education plans are due for review.
- 2 Institutions provide plans for review no later than February 1.
- 3 KBOR staff reviews plans, consults with institutions and develops a report to be reviewed by the Board Academic Affairs Standing Committee and presented to the full Board at its May meeting.

### Annual Report

In order to demonstrate institutional activity in providing distance education, Board staff will prepare an annual report, to be presented to the Board in January, based on information drawn from the Kansas Higher Education Data System (KSPSD; Program Inventory) and/or institutions, as appropriate. This report will include the following information:

- Number and names of programs delivered via distance education.
- Aggregate number of programs offered in individual subject matter categories, e.g., social sciences, humanities, science, math, etc.
- Number of new distance education enrollments.
- Mechanisms used to deliver the programs or sections.
- Examples of innovative strategies in the use of distance learning technologies.
- Examples of collaboration in providing distance education programs.