

SENATE COMMITTEES ON
FACULTY AFFAIRS AND OUTREACH

Report on Administrative Structure of Penn State Online

(Informational)

The purpose of this short informational report is to increase faculty understanding of the structure of Penn State's online educational enterprise, which has grown dramatically in the decade since it was launched. This report provides a foundation for a series of upcoming reports and Senate discussions. For example, the Outreach Committee is sponsoring a report on Penn State's World Campus, and the Faculty Affairs committee is reviewing policy concerning intellectual property rights relative to online education (RA17).

Faculty Affairs' 2007/08 charge to evaluate RA17 was prompted by the "Report of the ACUE/Senate Work Group on Academic Issues in Online Education" (January 2007). Policy-specific interest in the ownership (copyright) of "courseware" designed for use in computer-based and computer-assisted instruction emerged within the Task Force On Intellectual Property Policies and Procedures appointed in late 1998 and came to the Senate's attention in two April 2000 Senate reports on Intellectual Property. During the discussion of one of these forensic reports (offered by the Senate Committees on Faculty Affairs, Libraries, and Research), much attention was paid to what was then the new concept of "courseware" and its relationship to both University property and a faculty member's own intellectual property. Subsequently, Research Administration Policy, RA17 (Courseware; <http://guru.psu.edu/policies/RA17.html>), was established in 2001 to define courseware, itself, and to establish governing copyright principles. Later (2005), RA17 was amended to include a Courseware Policy Advisory Committee that monitors the effectiveness of RA17, recommends updates, and provides guidance on other courseware issues. This committee meets under the auspices of the Senior Vice President for Research.

From this short overview of the context for Faculty Affairs' current work, one sees University committees and centers of regulation that affect faculty teaching. These are nested within a network of online learning initiatives and administrative functions known as "Penn State Online." For example, the Penn State Online Steering Committee is the policy governing board designed to function as an internal collaborator across the university with regard to three specific Penn State Online initiatives: World Campus; the e-Learning Cooperative (administratively housed in Undergraduate Education); and the Blended Learning Initiative (administered by Outreach through a leadership team that includes ITS, Undergraduate Education, and World Campus). The Steering Committee is informed (in terms of reporting lines) by a Coordinating Council whose members have explicit responsibilities for the development of University-wide policies, standards, and procedures that facilitate growth of high-quality e-learning at Penn State, including courses offered by World Campus, through the e-Learning Cooperative, or locally at campuses. Additionally, each college and campus has a designated e-Learning Advocate who serves as a liaison on University-wide e-learning issues.

As the Faculty Affairs committee set out to explore faculty issues and questions related to RA17 and intellectual property ownership, it learned about parallel structures designed to administer an increasingly elaborate online teaching enterprise. The need to understand Penn State Online underlies the inquiry into questions of intellectual property and courseware copyright. It suggests faculty questions and concerns likely to arise as the Penn State Online initiative matures. For example, we also foresee Senate reports concerned with expectations for faculty to develop and teach new online or blended courses, and we expect Senate discussion of evaluation of the quality of online course content and delivery, including those initially approved for face-to-face curricula.

To engage such questions, the two committees believe that members of Faculty Senate must first be knowledgeable about the purposes and structures of the Penn State Online initiative. Toward this end, we are sponsoring this informational report in order to increase the collective literacy of the Penn State faculty regarding these initiatives so that the policy implications of Penn State Online can be thoroughly investigated by the Senate. Yvonne Gaudelius, Assistant Vice President and Associate Dean for Undergraduate Education, and Wayne Smutz, Associate Vice President for Academic Outreach and Executive Director of Continuing and Distance Education, co-chair the Penn State Online Coordinating Council and will present the report.

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Understanding the Penn State Online Learning Context

Yvonne Gaudelius and Wayne Smutz

Faculty Senate Informational Report
March 18, 2008

PENNSTATE



Penn State ONLINE

What is Penn State ONLINE?

- Collaborative structure
- Represents the main, centralized online delivery mechanisms
 - Penn State World Campus
 - The eLearning@Penn State Cooperative
- Represents centralized support resources (the University Libraries, course development initiatives)

Penn State ONLINE

What are the Goals?

- Guiding the continued evolution and integration of eLearning at Penn State
- Taking an active leadership role in stimulating collaboration and cooperation
- Seamless eLearning environment for faculty and students
- Identifying opportunities for promoting the effective coordination of resources across organizational units
- Create capacity to address strategic priorities
- Developing common standards to guide work across units.
- Encouraging innovation under the general guidance of the Steering Committee
- Increase the total number of students

Penn State ONLINE

Where is PSU ONLINE Housed?

- Exists across units
- Representation from across the university
- Co-chaired by the Vice President for Outreach and the Vice President and Dean for Undergraduate Education

World Campus Background

- Online campus of Penn State
- Conceived in mid-1990s by President Spanier and other Penn State leaders
- Built upon Penn State's distinguished distance education history since 1892
- Opened in Spring 1998
- Part of Outreach and Continuing & Distance Education



QuickTime™ and a PDF viewer are required to view this picture.

World Campus Mission

To extend Penn State undergraduate and graduate degree and certificate programs to adult learners who do not have convenient access to other Penn State campuses (Net New Students)



Paul Thur

World Campus

Programs

- 60 Online undergraduate & graduate programs
- 14 programs in pipeline (exploration – development)
- Program & course offerings
<http://www.worldcampus.psu.edu/>

World Campus

Academic Items

- World Campus as a delivery unit
- Partnerships with academic colleges
- 16 current college or campus partners
- Faculty involvement

World Campus

Service to Students

- Advising
- Registration
- Help Desk
- General Support

World Campus

The Future

- New Approaches to Learning
- Enrollment Growth
- Faculty Capacity

QuickTime™ and a
TIFF (Uncompressed) decompressor
are needed to see this picture.

eLearning@ Penn State

What is the eLearning@ Penn State Cooperative?

- Created by Provost Erickson in June 2003
- Replaces the Campus Course Exchange
- All courses are delivered by Penn State faculty
- Courses are offered during all three sessions (fall, spring, summer)
- Housed within Undergraduate Education

eLearning@ Penn State

What are the goals of the eLearning@ Penn State Cooperative?

- Encourage and facilitate the sharing of online courses among the campuses and campuses of the University
- Provide more diversity and flexibility of curriculum
- Promote curricular integrity
- Share rather than duplicate resources

eLearning@ Penn State

What courses are available through the Cooperative?

- Undergraduate credit courses
- Variety of academic disciplines
- Number of courses continues to expand
- List of available courses will change from semester to semester
- Courses bring students into a common class or cohort
- All courses are entirely online—there are no face-to-face class meetings

eLearning@ Penn State

How many students do I need per class to make this approach work for my campus?

- No minimum requirement per campus
- Provides learning opportunities for students whose campuses do not have a sufficient number of students or faculty expertise to offer a course in a given semester.
- To expand curriculum offerings at a given campus location to ensure students' progress in meeting curricular requirements

eLearning@ Penn State

How does the Cooperative differ from the World Campus?

- eLearning Cooperative: students enroll at their local campus and then join a common section of the online course that may include students from other campuses
- World Campus: primary goal is the delivery of online courses directly to off-campus adult learners

Blended Learning Initiative

Background

- Provost Erickson Initiative
- Approved 2004

Purpose

- Create Both Online & Hybrid Versions of 30 Courses

Blended Learning Initiative

Definitions

- Face-to-Face
- On-line
- Hybrid Courses
Courses reduce 40% or more of face-to-face contact

Blended Learning Initiative

Goals

- Increase Access
- Enhance Flexibility
- Improve Student Performance

Blended Learning Initiative

Criteria for Course Development

- High-enrolling courses not offered at all locations
- Courses with small enrollments at multiple campuses
- Courses that had high failure and/or attrition rate
- Courses nominated by campuses
- Key entry to major courses (so students could remain at campus)

Blended Learning Initiative

BLI Course Availability

- Online--through eLearning@Penn State Cooperative
- Hybrid--available to all campuses at no cost

Quality Assurance Initiative

Purpose

- designed to improve the quality of online courses
- a peer-review quality assurance process
- hands-on workshops for faculty, staff, administrators, and instructional designers
- <http://webhosting.its.psu.edu/elearning/technicalstandards.cfm>