E-campus/Web delivered Curriculum Subcommittee
Cost considerations for E-campus (web) based course offerings
Meeting Minutes: March 2 and March 13, April 16, 2007

Committee Members: Alfonso Bradoch, Mike Bailey, Alison Bobal, Carol Brown, Mary Cluskey.

The sub-committee met and discussed how to approach the charge posed by the Curriculum Council Chair, which included the development of:

1. a listing of actions that the CC might propose to the EC regarding E-campus courses
2. a listing of information that would be useful in determining student learning outcomes or performance in subsequent courses (following enrollments in web delivered version of existing traditional campus based course.)

The committee determined that we would divide the task into two sub issues: Cost issues and pedagogy/approval issues. While the cost considerations may seem tangential to the Curriculum Council, the potential for revenue generation within departments via e-campus based course offerings may impact approval and pedagogy decisions, therefore, the committee believed that it needed study. In addition, there is genuine broad based concern about the cost of e-campus course enrollments for campus based students, which is likely to grow with increases in e-campus curricula.

The committee met two times in consideration of the cost issues relative to e-campus courses. They have spent time gathering data regarding costs, and in making cost comparisons among various types of students and enrollments in e-campus (web) delivered courses. A summary of the findings are attached.

The committee makes the following remarks regarding the cost considerations:

1. Residency: The issue of residency came up, as costs for tuition as well as fees are based on formulas depending upon residency within the state of Oregon, and in use of campus services. Can a non-resident on campus pay lower tuition by taking e-campus courses? Will campus based students enrolling in primarily e-campus courses pay equitably for campus based services?

2. Scholarship/fellowship/GI benefit/GTA/GRA: Revenue/funding for e-campus curricula are unique from campus based curricular funding frameworks. Thus, while e-campus web site refers to tuition and fees, in actuality, it is all fee based. Given that, scholarships, fellowships, GI Bill benefits and GTA/GRA tuition waivers cannot be applied toward fees. When a department chooses to change from a traditional to an e-campus course offering, students using such tuition based awards must pick up significant uncovered cost for their course load.

3. Plateau: Charges for e-campus (web) courses to students who are primarily campus based students may not be equitable. Students within the plateau for
tuition (12-16 hours) pay additional tuition charges ($120/hr. “tuition” + $80/hr. fees) for their e-campus courses, regardless of the plateau benefit. Should there be a mechanism whereby campus based students enrolled in courses within the credit hour tuition plateau be charged only for the fees associated with the web based course ($80/hour)? Could there be a method whereby the amount a faculty “earns” currently when offering an e-campus course ($60/SCH) be directed to departments from the tuition paid within the plateau? This would allow for reimbursement for additional faculty time devoted to offering e-campus (web) courses, generated from the tuition that the student is already paying to the registrar. This would result in equitable application of the tuition plateau benefit.

The committee discussed whether offering campus based students course access via web-based courses was contributing to a growth in enrollments and shielding the impact of the increase enrollments/insufficient funding to the public and the legislature.

The committee makes the following remarks about the pedagogy/approval issue:

1. **Clarification:** The pedagogy and approval concerns are primarily (but not exclusively) relevant to the use of web based delivery for courses that have a parallel campus based, traditional course offering.

2. **Cat II:** The concerns regarding pedagogy and approval are linked. Without a Category II approval process the mechanism to double check that courses are meeting established syllabus, outcomes and liaison criteria is eliminated. Delivery of a course via e-campus (web) mode is typically a significant change to the course. Since there is a stream of direct revenue associated with delivering courses via e-campus mode, instructors and departments have an incentive to offer them. Course approval proposals and syllabi are often submitted that fail to meet the established criteria, even with guidelines posted on the Academic Programs website. Review inherent in the Cat II approval process corrects those shortcomings when they occur.

3. **Parallel outcomes:** The pedagogy issues relevant to the delivery of parallel courses include the following unknowns (which may also be related to multiple sections/instructors):
   a. Are learning outcomes parallel between traditional and e-campus delivered sections, particularly for those courses serving as prerequisites or part of a sequence. If web delivery results in what seems to be an inevitable change in those outcomes, is it the same course?
      i. Wet lab versus virtual lab: Is the outcome of a wet lab to learn laboratory manual skills? If so, how does the virtual lab achieve and assess that?
      ii. If all sections/offerings of a campus delivered course include a standardized and/or proctored exam shoulde the web delivered course also utilize proctored exams?
b. Is there assurance of liaison for departments when a traditional course gets converted to web delivered? How does a department learn when a delivery mode changes, and determine how or if the course continues to fit the needs for a particular option or major requirement?

Conclusion:

E-campus serves a legitimate student need. Diverse mechanisms for course delivery should exist and serves students that may have limitations in enrollments in traditional courses (e.g., flexibility in schedules, remote locations, course conflict, etc). The tuition plateau benefit for campus based students should be applicable to enrollment into e-campus courses. Students receiving fellowships, scholarships, and graduate assistantships should not be assessed fees not covered by tuition based awards when they enroll in distance based courses. Equity in assessing tuition and fees should be examined for on-campus versus off-campus/resident versus non-resident in light of the growth of e-campus courses.

Assurance of departmental liaison should occur when course changes occur among courses utilized across campus. Courses utilized across campus may serve unique needs for distinct options/majors. Course outcomes that may inevitably change with changes in delivery mode may need review by those outside of the offering department, to determine if the course change will impact the utility of the course for their students. A change in delivery mode can be a significant change for some courses.

If the Cat II approval process does not occur for the transition of a traditionally offered course to e-campus (web) delivery mode, and the current method for approval lies with departments and instructors; what mechanism exists for assurance of parallel outcomes, syllabi review and liaison. Is it reasonable or sufficient to ask for e-campus to require that instructors/departments submit documentation of parallel outcomes and liaison before accepting a course for e-campus web delivery?