FAB Goals for 2012-2013

The FerrisConnect Advisory Board’s (FAB) primary mission is to work hand-in-hand with the Faculty Center for Teaching and Learning, Information Technology Services, and faculty to support the effective integration and use of current and emerging learning technologies in the teaching and learning process. As stated on the website of the Office of the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs (see: http://www.ferris.edu/HTMLS/administration/academicaffairs/online/faq/planning.htm):

The FerrisConnect Advisory Board’s focus is on the instructional technology associated with online instruction, whether blended, face-to-face, or fully online. They provide guidance to the Information Technology about technology priorities, serve as testers of system improvements, and recommend enhancements. They also plan and deliver training through the Faculty Center for Teaching and Learning.

Upon the reading of the section above, a conversation arose about the name of our committee. Our name implies that we are only concerned with “FerrisConnect”, but our mission states that we are concerned about all instructional technologies. Our mission statement says, “FAB’s primary mission is to ... support the effective integration and use of current and emerging learning technologies in the teaching and learning process.” Furthermore, Academic Affairs perceives FAB to be working with all instructional technology too. The Academic Affairs website says that FAB focuses on the instructional technology associated with all instruction (face-to-face, blended and online) and that we provide guidance, testing, training and recommendations. Kimn and Eric think our name (FerrisConnect Advisory Board) misrepresents what we do. Someone said we should “broaden our scope.” Eunice Beck opposed a name change stating that people identify with the “FerrisConnect Advisory Board” and she thought a name change might cause us to lose that identity. Jackie was not prepared to vote on a matter of this magnitude and suggested that we take the discussion off-line via email.

The goals for 2012-2013 academic year are two-fold:

**Goal 1:** Support the Recommendations of the E-Learning Management Team (EMAT), with particular focus on Recommendation 8 (“Promote the ongoing exploration of, and recommendations for, the use of new and existing academic technology”). The specific objectives that are currently associated with Recommendation 8 and that are relevant to FAB include:

1. The FerrisConnect Advisory Board should continue to review alternative course management systems and make its recommendations, as appropriate, to the Provost as soon as the
evaluation period is completed. Review of systems will be a continual responsibility of this group.

2. A task force (or committee or subgroup of FAB or another entity) should investigate and evaluate academic technology options.

3. The FerrisConnect Advisory Board should also continue to assume responsibility for reviewing emerging technology solutions for academic technologies (those primarily related to support of instructions for all forms of delivery, such as recording technologies, mobile technologies, etc.) in order to recommend improvements to the Ferris learning technology infrastructure.

Upon the reading of goal 1, objective 1, Jackie muttered that since we have just completed the implementation of a course management system, it would not make sense to immediately begin the review of another system at this time and that we should probably have a moratorium on changes to the new course management system to allow IT to stabilize it. This comment generated a conversation about establishing a moratorium to:

a. Give IT time to work out bugs, address known issues and to stabilize the systems, and
b. Give faculty time to learn the new system and rebuild their courses

There were other more specific questions asked, such as:

a. How long should a moratorium last?
b. When would we have a moratorium (i.e. New LMS, Upgraded LMS, New clicker system, new building block)?

Because we need time to analyze the specific details of a moratorium, we are not prepared to have a vote on this matter and suggested that we take the discussion off-line via email.

Upon the reading of goal 1, objective 3, several questions were raised.

1. Who is the conduit in which our recommendations go through?
2. Does the Faculty Senate recommend the FerrisConnect Advisory Board?
3. Is there someone who sits on the FerrisConnect Advisory Board who can represent us on the Faculty Senate?
4. Is there someone from the Technology Standards Committee who can sit on the FerrisConnect Advisory Board so that we can ensure our recommendations align and so that both committees are on the same page? Jackie said she would invite Jody Gardei to FAB.

Also, upon the reading of the section above, several general suggestions were made. (Please note, these suggestions are not necessarily about the wording of the 2012-2013 goals, rather they are suggestions about things FAB can do in alignment with our goals.)

1. We should set up and plan advanced training.
2. In effort to help us make better informed decisions in the future, we should generate a detailed report listing the effects that were created by the choice to move from the Bb hosted solution to the self hosted solution.
3. Someone suggested that a list of known issues be created. This list would include the date that each issue is fixed.

**Goal 2**: Support the effective adoption of the Quality Matters rubric, with particular focus on General Standards 6 (Course Technology), 7 (Learner Support), and 8 (Accessibility). The specific standards associated with each General Standard follow:

**General Standard 6: Course Technology**

Specific Standards:

6.1 The tools and media support the course learning objectives.

6.2 Course tools and media support student engagement and guide the student to become an active learner.

6.3 Navigation throughout the online components of the course is logical, consistent, and efficient.

6.4 Students can readily access the technologies required in the course.

6.5 The course technologies are current.

**General Standard 7: Learner Support**

Specific Standards:

7.1 The course instructions articulate or link to a clear description of the technical support offered and how to access it.

7.2 Course instructions articulate or link to the institution’s accessibility policies and services.

7.3 Course instructions articulate or link to an explanation of how the institution’s academic support services and resources can help students succeed in the course and how students can access the services.

7.4 Course instructions articulate or link to an explanation of how the institution’s student support services can help students succeed and how students can access the services.

Upon the reading of general standard 7, someone suggested that Ferris State University have an institution-wide netiquette policy rather than departmental netiquette policies. Deb Thalner will add this suggestion to the EMAT agenda.

An example of how FAB has integrated the QM General Standard 7 is the course template that was designed last summer. We hope to roll the template out for Spring 2013 courses.

**General Standard 8: Accessibility**
Specific Standards:

8.1 The course employs accessible technologies and provides guidance on how to obtain accommodation.

8.2 The course contains equivalent alternatives to auditory and visual content.

8.3 The course design facilitates readability and minimizes distractions.

8.4 The course design accommodates the use of assistive technologies.

These QM standards can be listed in a spreadsheet as a checklist that FAB can use when reviewing emerging technology solutions. If an instructional technology does not meet the QM criteria, FAB may choose not to recommend it.

The University, particularly through the Faculty Center for Teaching and Learning, has made a significant investment in applying the Quality Matters standards to the design of online components of web-enhanced, blended, and fully online courses. The Quality Matters rubric “is a set of 8 general standards and 41 specific standards used to evaluate the design of online and blended courses. The Rubric is complete with annotations that explain the application of the standards and the relationship among them.”

The FerrisConnect Advisory Board will devote attention to the following Specific Standards:

- General Standard 6, Specific Standards 6.1, 6.2, and 6.5
- General Standard 7, Specific Standard 7.1
- General Standard 8, Specific Standards 8.1, 8.2, and 8.4.

FAB Goals and the Vision of the University

The FerrisConnect Advisory Board will align its work and recommendations with the vision of the University, which is to “be the recognized leader in integrative education, where theory meets practice throughout the curriculum, and where multi-disciplinary skills important in a global economy are developed with the result that Ferris State University will also be:

- The preferred choice for students who seek specialized, innovative, career- and life-enhancing education
- The premier educational partner for government, communities, agencies, businesses, and industries through applied research and joint ventures
- A stimulating, student-centered academic environment that fosters life-long engagement, leadership, citizenship, and continuing intellectual development
- A university that aligns its practices and resources in support of its core values of collaboration, diversity, ethical community, excellence, learning, and opportunity.
In advancing the University’s vision, FAB’s work will be transparent to the University community, built on broad stakeholder input and consensus building, and consistent with the Core Values of the University: Collaboration, Diversity, Ethical Community, Excellence, Learning, and Opportunity.
Membership renewal

The members of FAB are listed below. It was moved that we invite a member of the Classroom Technology Standards committee to participate on the FerrisConnect Advisory Board so that the things FAB proposes aligns with the Technology Standards. Marcy Parry and Jon Taylor plans to step down and will find a replacement representative from their department.

FerrisConnect Advisory Board Membership

As of 10/26/2012

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<tr>
<th>Area / Function represented</th>
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<tr>
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Meeting Adjourned at 2:00.