Leading the Digital Transformation of Higher Education Task Force Meeting
Minutes for March 16, 2020
Zoom Conference

In Attendance: Greg Raschke, Tom Miller, Kelly WIck, Jill Sexton, Mark Williams, Melissa Pasquinelli, Joe Sutton, Vicki Gallagher, Mark Hoversten, Aaron Clark, Cara Smelter, Donna Petherbridge, Greg Sparks, Jerrell Coggburn
Absent: Christian Carter, Min Chi, Eric Wiebe, Maria Mayorga

Visitors: Dan Spencer, Traci Temple

1. Presentation from Traci Temple, Director of DELTA Planning and Assessment, about data on student success in online and blended courses
    a. More students are studying online than ever
        i. DE education is slowing, but it is still continuing to grow

    b. Because the data is mixed - defining and clarifying terms is essential- ex: how is student success defined?

    c. Focus on what is known about student performance [success] in online education / blended learning
        i. Success in the context of higher education is in relation to instructional formats (online, blended, or face to face) and various factors
            1. See slight preference to face to face education
            2. Online vs face to face rate of preference varies on perception of instructor and material being taught
        ii. When you delve into the literature you find that what influences student success includes individual factors and individual characteristics
        iii. Dan Spencer looked at NC State Student outcomes to make comparisons of student success in various courses
            1. The literature is complicated
            2. We are still not able to fully investigate all variables [Ex: Does gender have an impact?]
        iv. Course related factors
            1. Data from Delta is complicated and messy
            2. Difficult to find published information- on course related factors - our data comes directly from NC State
        v. Victoria Gallagher asks -- "Interesting that negative outcomes and positive outcomes seem to contradict each other, at least months surface. How do you account for that? Is it based on definitions and comparisons? *At least on the surface…"
            1. "Is there any data re: grade distributions for face-to-face, on-line and blended?"

d. Q&A with Traci Temple:
1. Positive vs Negative Outcomes-- are they in contradiction (slide on Neg Impacts) --- The data of the literature is very mixed.
2. There can be some contextual factors
    a. Are we classifying "online" in the same way?
    b. How is each course set up?
    c. Are the courses following best practices?
    d. Some perceptions of online education are more neg in certain fields of scholarship
    e. Some fields are particularly against teaching online
    f. Haven't found anything in the literature that is trying to tease apart the issues - the possible factors for the wide variation of data
3. Curious as to how to articulate "deeper forms of learning"
    a. Have resources and citations of studies across all forms of learning
    b. Traci Temple will share data with the group
4. Traci Temple and DELTA will be conducting a second phase of study -- why students in face to face are more successful
    i. Gallagher says important to define how we are defining online and what are ways to tease out and define the positive aspects or experience we as a university can consistently provide to students across all of the instructional formats
5. Jill Sexton asks: "Does it seem like the blended models have overall more positive outcomes than pure Distance Ed?"
    a. Interesting that instructors tend to be rated less favorably for distance learning vs. in-person
    b. Is there research that shows how instructors can be more effective in an online setting?
        i. In traditional classroom settings we can interject and be interactive in real time
        ii. in online settings we have to plan ahead of time, so communication from faculty really is everything
        iii. Students need that feeling of connection with the instructor and become anxious if can't see / connect with instructor
    c. We have to know what students expect for an online course and we need to be clear about what is expected of the students

6. Donna Petherbridge: "In the literature (and practice) - communication from faculty is everything "
   a. "Students will forgive a LOT if they just get responses to their email"
7. Victoria Gallagher: " It might be interesting to compare intensive face to face Maymester courses and online equivalent courses; data from Maymester indicates that students have a strongly positive experience due to frequency of contact with faculty and fellow students…."
   a. Traci Temple comments that DELTA had not done this exploration in Maymester-
   b. Dan Spencer and Traci Temple would love to talk to Victoria Gallagher as follow-up to this inquiry-- can talk about first generation and rural students and their success in online courses
8. Donna Petherbridge: "I think this is a useful conversation in today's circumstances; many of our instructors are going to be doing the best they can and they are not going to be immediate "best practices" online instructors; so I would be a strong advocate of not holding teaching evaluations "against" faculty this semester (I think it is important to ask students about how this experience was, but want to acknowledge the stress on the faculty.) And the students."
9. Tom Miller: with the blended courses- a lot of work for preparation and less work is required with purely online courses
   a. do we have any sense of what the impact is of advanced planning for instructional designers
      i. Traci Temple notes that there is no hard data, but yes, preparation by faculty for the courses does make a big difference for instructional designers and the course overall
      ii. Helping faculty prep ahead of time will help faculty set up for success
         1. Whether this looks like instructional design help or teaching faculty best practices for online teaching
            a. That will create a better online course and learning for students
   b. It would be great if could create a study for faculty coming out of OCIP program and see how their courses compare to other courses
10. Melissa Pasquinelli: "Regarding Donna's question on course evaluations, the Associate Deans for Academic Affairs are talking

with the Provost office about that for this semester. I think more directive on that will come ”

e. Traci Temple and Dan Spencer will pull together a google doc with the resources included in the presentation today

2. Board of Visitors (BOV) update from Greg
    a. Had brainstorming sessions
    b. Had 5 BOV members from various areas of business: pharmaceutical company; IBM; Manufacturing; Civil Engineering; Corporate
        i. Brainstorming went quickly
        ii. Talked about the moral and civic lives of students-- idea of keeping those elements - productive life-- need for collaboration of teamwork and interpersonal // growth and leadership skills
        iii. Create People who are adaptive employees can work with others
        iv. Other idea was lifelong learning
            1. idea of cradle to grave learning.
    c. Kelly Wick has notes that she will send out from the BOV meeting
    d. Board of Trustees wants a visit from the co-chairs
    e. Lots of discussion around social sciences and humanities
    f. Jill Sexton: “After our last meeting and Victoria's comments, I was reminded about the recent book by Kathleen Fitzpatrick, Generous Thinking. Not sure if any others have read it. https://www.amazon.com/dp/B07KMG1GGB/ ”
    g. When Chancellor Woodson talks about what he hears about what employers want from our students, this BOV meeting solidifies what employers are looking for in our students
    h. Tom Miller: listening to what BOV is looking for in terms of skills - a lot of consistency in terms of what we heard today
    i. Students who know what is expected of them and have better skills at communicating and participating at meetings is something we ought to look at, call it,“Digital Skills” -- students prepared for social media context and that is different from the world of business and education

3. Next steps and big ideas-
    a. Brainstorm on themes and big ideas
    b. Greg Raschke started a list of big ideas in the shared drive

4. Donna Petherbridge: “I think it is exciting to think about how we might use this information to answer the question, what is the differentiator for the NC State graduate; e.g. our students have a blend of these soft skills employers want and some tech tools in their pockets as well that are not tied to their discipline/major”

5. Recording, minutes, and slides will be uploaded to the shared folder
6. Kelly Wick states that this pandemic should move the timeline back for the strat plan white paper-- will know more soon

7. Blended presence right now sure helps with academic continuity. The present is making some of our work and thoughts about continuity something we can put into our paper