

*Yours, Theirs, and Ours: Managing the  
Complexities of Centralized Control of  
DE and Decentralized Curricula*

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**CCAS Workshop – March 15, 2013**

# My Background in DE

In one of first small cohorts of faculty trained to teach online in our in-house summer *Institute for Technology-Assisted Teaching (ITAL)*

Taught my first course 100% online in 2001

Taught multiple graduate/undergraduate Criminal Justice and Sociology courses online

Department Head (Sociology) with MS and BS degrees offered fully online

Current coordinator of distance education for College of Arts and Sciences

# Full Disclosure – My personal attitude toward teaching online

It places a great deal more responsibility for learning on students

No one can hide

Because all communication is in writing...

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If I want students to engage outside of the class to enhance learning...

My online courses were the most diverse

# Our Context-NMSU

Land-grant institution for New Mexico – three primary urban centers with a great deal of rural territory.

Main campus (Las Cruces) 18,000 students/1,100 regular faculty

Research intensive, Hispanic-Serving Institution. Ranked 1<sup>st</sup> by NSF in R and D expenditures among HSIs (without medical school)

Organized into 7 primary academic colleges and multiple “branch” community colleges throughout the state

State formula funding focused on student credit hour growth

High level of turn over in upper administration

# Our Context – Arts and Sciences

Largest college in the university: 23 academic departments and interdisciplinary programs in MOLB and WS (next largest college has 5 departments)

Home to 90% of general education curriculum, 50%+ of student credit hours, and 36% of student majors

All social sciences, humanities, arts, and most sciences in our college

Administrative, appointed department head model and non union faculty

Tenure track and college track (teaching) faculty with additional temporary faculty per course

# DE Context – Arts and Sciences

Undergraduate completion degrees online in Criminal Justice and Sociology

Graduate degrees online in Criminal Justice, Sociology, Spanish, and Music Education

Many general education courses and major courses taught online

LMS = CANVAS

# NMSU Distance Education

## Early Story - Overview

Began in earnest in 1998. Provost level initiative

Includes ITV, Remote Site face-to-face, Podcasting, and Online

Marketed as expression of land grant mission and "one university" concept

Developed to grow student credit hours

*Permanent* investment up front in...

*Temporary* investment up front in...

# Our DE Early Story

## Department/Faculty View

Say what?!

Free laptop! Money!

Student credit hours galore!

Teach from the beach!

If you build it...

Surely, resources and rewards will follow, right?

# Our DE Early Story

## College View

Pleasing Provost

Student credit hours! State formula funding!

Faculty resources follow growth (right?)

Easing of classroom scheduling problems

Increasing community college transfers

Wave of the future. Cowabunga!

Did I say growth?

# Our Model

Curricular and course offering decisions

Strategy to increase compatibility with on campus offerings

Faculty have complete control over course content.

Faculty have IP rights to developed courses whether on campus or online.

# Our Model, Continued

Fees collected centrally. Limited sharing

No incentive structure currently

LMS, tech support, training, and quality control centrally controlled

Online courses now at community college “branches”

College of Extended Learning

# Strengths of our Model

Same curriculum and degree requirements as face-to-face counterparts - and have the control to do so

No “online” or “distance” faculty

Student credit hour growth

Centralized College of Extended Learning - second layer of student recruitment

Permanent funds poured into tech support and quality assurance.

# Quality Assurance

**Institute for Technology-Assisted Instruction (ITAL)**

**Instructional Innovation and Quality (IIQ) <http://www.qmprogram.org/rubric>**

**Online Course Improvement Program (OCIP) <https://ocipresources.pbworks.com>**

**Teaching Academy**

**Let's Talk Online Teaching**

**Peer Course "Visit" and Formative Evaluation**

**Syllabi review**

**Student Course Evaluation**

# **Complexities and Challenges of our Model – Department Level**

Reduction in physical presence of faculty

Online course evaluation participation

High level of dependence on fee money

Difficulty identifying trends

Frequent LMS changes

# Complexities and Challenges of our Model – Dean Level

Incentive system dried up

QA limitations

Community college branches offering online courses

College of Extended Learning

“Distance” education to resident audience

Online course offerings have surpassed resources

# Our Dean Level Strategies for Managing Complexities

Value/reward participation in meaningful course quality work

Provide support for management of course evaluations online

Limit new distance education programs

Encourage reduction of redundancy

Partner with Enrollment Management VP

# My Dean Level Advice Based on Our Experiences

Insist on both one time and permanent resource investment in academics up front

Don't expect people to do more with less as a show of good faith

Share revenue in ways identified as meaningful to academic units

Have a clear sense of the way that online or distance education fits

Discourage unnecessary parallel academic structures or centralized systems

# Advice, Continued

Find meaningful, win-win scenarios

Pay attention to language from the beginning

Develop meaningful academic-led initiatives for quality assurance across all delivery systems

Develop meaningful academic-led initiatives on liberal arts education and student engagement using technology

# Recommended Resource

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*Engaging Faculty in Online Education: Rightsizing Incentives and Optimizing Support*, 2010, Education Leadership Council