

**ADEC (American Distance Education Consortium) Annual Meeting
April 25-27, 2007**

Opening Session - Approximately 60 participants:

- ADEC – more than agriculture and now more than U.S. (Costa Rica, Mexico)
- Partnerships are key to ADEC's success

Keynote: Dr. Sam Smith – WSU – Interviews with University Presidents about Online Education

How is education industry adapting to meet needs of country? – by 2020 only top 20% of wealth class will be able to afford to send their children to university; so need to look at options for keeping education affordable.

Questions: How do you influence academia? What do Presidents know about online learning? Most Presidents did not grow up with technology so they conducted interviews with ten Presidents/Chancellors. Core questions: How do presidents view online learning? And what information do they have about this field; do they view it as a strategic asset?

Context: Recently released data from the Sloan C Annual survey showed that in fall of 2005 over 3 million students enrolled, approximately 18% of all students at degree granting institutions, in at least one online course. For the last five years the annual growth rate for students enrolled in online courses has held steady at 20%.

Interview Themes:

- How are universities benefiting from online education?
- How do you see online education developing in the future?
- How could you promote online education?
- Do you see online learning as a strategic asset?

Findings:

- importance of internal champion for distributed learning is the greatest indicator of interest in enlarging this concept
- oversold in the beginning about what this would do for enrollments
- works well for universities funded by FTEs
- helps to have one common descriptor for what online education is
- lack of clear data and comparison analyses on the costs and quality of online education to onsite instruction (is it a selling point to talking to other people)
- if main campus has medical school there is stronger emphasis on online education
- use the changing characteristics of incoming students and their technology expectations as a discussion point
- need to distinguish between distance and online education; concept of localness is a concept that is big for LGU presidents (need to get more \$ from legislatures)
- was more often in their strategic plan as a program element, not strategic
- was not seen as a great positive influence, was on the edge (the more can demonstrate usefulness, the higher the position of it in plan)

Information Needs:

- we do not have actual costs for traditional education (Presidents usually hide that number because it comes out very high) - \$35,000-\$55,000 per student for LGUs; take the instructional costs and costs of equipment and make a rough projection, but do not try to go for true costs or will be in trouble

Keynote: Dr. Deborah Wilds – has received 3 largest scholarship programs privately funded, is COO for the College Success Foundation: Advancing Student Success

- founded in 2000 (Cosco and Gates) to reduce the inequities in BA attainment for students in Washington State
- now has staff of 80s with multiple programs
- mission to provide scholarships, mentoring, and support to low-income, high-potential students
- strategy: create public/private partnerships (5013c program)

E-mentoring – faculty need support systems to handle online learning so they provide formally trained online mentors; students also have mentors

Keynote: Dr. Moshe Vardi: Impact of Offshoring on Innovation and Human Resources

Outsourcing scare – increase in IT in India, but decline in students going into IT. Association in Computing Machinery (ACM) – task force on job migration (developed to developing countries) to conduct a study

Take home points:

- offshoring is just a symptom, the issue is globalizations (business networking)
- IT enabled it. Now we have to live with it
- It's like winter you cannot stop it, but you can dress warmly
- Much of what is written in media is hype; very hard to measure job loses, but you can look at what is known now, zero impact of offshoring
- but much competition is growing globally and increasing higher level skills
- how many people have been pulled out of poverty by off-shoring

Why does Offshoring Occur?

- communication technology has increased dramatically; don't have to move people

We Enabled It

- info technology is now a truly global business and industry (technology, work processes and education)

If Offshoring good or bad?

- Is the economy better? Yes, but there are winners and losers.

Job Loss from U.S. data:

- some categories have moved away
- what can we really measure in terms of jobs? IT started rebounding in 2003 in spite of off-shoring.

- Data problem – “mights” are not useful – “projections are not really useful – especially for the future!” we have much better hindsight than foresight

Issues for Education/Academia:

- need to have a highly skilled workforce
- more initiative, individualism
- educate people for global marketplace
- paradigm shift: - we need to educate people who can align technology with business world (business, communication, and interpersonal skills)
- Innovate or die: investment in research

The Road Ahead?

- broadening – more players than U.S. and India
- Referred to book: How do we compete? 2005

Quote: It takes some doing to just stay in place, otherwise have to run twice as fast to get somewhere else – Queen to Alice

Dr. Chester Bateman, Grassroots Learning Project, College of Education, Oregon State University - Web 2.0 – Democratizing Innovation

Time’s Person of the Year – YOU - information age, grassroots activities, and collaborations are creating new world

- Podcasting – social network hook
- Community generated content drives half of U.S. internet content
- Lowering barriers for participation
- Democratizing innovation is unleashing all types of creativity
- How to leverage user-generated content? Digg.com – aggregation of services; 2nd life/avatars; faculty are using it

“Prosumers” and user-led innovations is where it is at - platform for participation,

Grassroots Learning Project – OSU – uses podcasting

- New Web is about: permission, subscription, personalization
- Tag clouds – show what is popular, in the news
- Pull-based systems on the Web are altering the traditional enterprise (power and control is with the user communities)
- Social computing and internet singularity – thinking beyond Web 2.0 – software needs to be a service; needs a culture change which is driven by leadership
- Web services – content to go; podcasting (podcast.oregonstate.edu)
- Eric Von Hippel – MIT – Creative Commons.org
- Microsoft Live Labs: labs.live.com
- Apple – long tail API
- Hakia.com – what is different is that they are using ontological semantics; search engines to help people understand their organizations by the way they search the organization’s site
- Learning by doing – small grants with early adopters

- Instructables.com – hundreds of individuals who create things and are sharing them (recipes, cars, etc.)
- Craig's List – non-profit – classified ads online – users drive new functionality for the site, too.
- One.org – campaign to make poverty history – millions of people united with one voice.

Final Thought: Make disruption your friend – fund and create partnerships, rapid prototyping, checking and learning.

Session: Teaching, Learning, and Technology

Dr. Krishna Madhavan - Cyberinfrastructure-enabled Proactive Educational Ecosystems – Clemson University

Traditional Learning: workshops, seminars, courses, software tools, interactive content

Flaw in way we approach this: it is a teacher-focused/centric (information push technology) – see book: *The False Promise of Technology in the Classroom*

- Disparity in how faculty and students see technology and the Internet – mash-ups, etc. – look at what all is on a student's web page
- Time and You. Innovations: iPods, cell phones – democratization of ideas (anyone can contribute in any modality) – but NOT in the classroom, leave all that great stuff outside.

NSF priority – how to transfer these environments into the classroom and into NSF programs?

Collaboratories, Observatories, and Virtual Organizations – environment reacts to what you do, not the opposite.

Metadata and Inference services – interoperability and reusability – complementary convergence (video podcast, PDA, etc.) Looking at SAKAI, proactive learning services

Future directions: how to understand new learners, ontology for learner social development; content that will bend around you.

Dr. Tom Lewis – University of Washington – Use of employing unbundled learning technologies

What is courseware? Some are running Moodle, but most are running monolithic and commercial systems (communication, collaboration, authoring, aggregation, evaluation, course aware environment – involves significant investment)

Virtual learning environment – What works?

Modular and flexible, features originate with the needs of campus community, pedagogy and research needs are central. Used for teaching, research, staff work groups, advising,

community activities, and by students for their own purposes; open architecture allow web services and “hacks”. Weave system with other systems.

What is their software Catalyst? Unbundling – webfiles, email, peer review, shared spaces, group manager, quickpoll, Collect-It!

- 13,368 active owners
- 50,000 use UW NetID
- 14,500 individual sessions per day
- 86,786 Catalyst tools
- Making websites faculty and students, portfolios, QuickPolls (over a million responses)

Development Process

- engages community of users in all stages of the process
- requirements and specifications are developed based upon evidence from user research
- end-product usability is the primary concern and is shaped by informal and formal usability studies.

Think about blended and unbundled rather than one size fits all and monolithic technologies

- good communication and collaboration tools should not be confined to the course context only

For more information: tomlewis@u.washington.edu

Elizabeth Kellison – Director, WebJunction – Online community that supports public libraries using elearning

OCLC project – serves visitors, library staff, customers, young patrons – gives staff knowledge of latest technologies especially in rural public libraries (28,000 individual members mostly in U.S.)

- 250 self-paced courses (started 4 years ago); blended learning programs
- Communities of Practices: workshops in 50 states
- Discussion boards for participants and trainers
- Monthly webinars
- Published “Blended Learning Guide”
- Asked customers what you need to do better? Tools and training in new e-tools

Pilot Programs: learning partner beta program (tools, tools, tools) – web conferencing service; Content Creation collaboratively

Next: baseline research every two years; provide online learning management services to other organizations; bring together cohort organizations; testing social networking tools

- E-learning institute: to help ensure organizational success for courses
- Competencies for library staff – public access computing in patron assistance and system administration

Session: Collaboration for Quality and Impact - ADEC and Sloan Foundation

Adapting the Sloan Survey – Jeff Seaman – CIO Sloan-C

- How many students are learning online? No reliable data so Sloan did a web-based survey (numeric and opinion questions; responses merged with College Board and National Center for Ed Statistics descriptive data)

National Reports – 4 reports have been published on Sloan-C website

The Progression: how many taking at least one online course in 2002? 1.6 million then, over 3.18 million in 2005. 2006: 59% of schools believe online education is critical to their long-term strategy

What they found:

- institutions in the lead with online offerings: public, large, multiple program offerings
- institutions least interested in online: private, small, liberal arts

Sloan is working with ADEC to determine how online education fits into the institutions long-term strategy.

Goals: produce a comprehensive picture of the role of online education at LGUs compared to similar types of schools, etc.

NASULGC/Sloan Affiliation Activities

- 8 institutions per workshop site
- Creating a national commission on On-Line Learning with Presidents of Universities
- 10 dialogue events with discrete subsets of public college and universities presidents
- Do they use online learning to increase graduation rates?
- White paper will be prepared and published as a result
- Planned to develop tool-kit for decision-makers (delayed until they know if they are on right track)

New type of students – older with families, working students, staying connected with alumni associations, returning military, etc.

- Online learning can help address institutional priorities for diversity
- Online learning is more in institutional mainstream now

ADEC Business Meeting:

ADEC's online store

- can have items from multiple institutions (now have 100 products, CDs, etc.)
- can include banner ads; they have stats on for number of views
- their ecommerce system allows 6 languages, acceptance of PayPal payments
- downloadable-e-documents and media products
- pay-per-view, digital “tokens” for one-time or unlimited access to streamed content
- increased participation by ADEC member institutions

New ADEC Website/CMS will go live at end of May 2007 – ADEC and LSU collaboration

- rearranged the menu structure to bring to top most used content
- redesigned and simplified home page
- Left to do: implement site search and RSS feeds; content (ADEC-specific metadata, html authoring); Management – move server to hosting center at UNL IANR
- Implemented pages through Del.icio.us – shared collection of bookmarks and then served into content management system

E-Answers.adec.edu (in prototype - try this out)

- Google for ADEC member content (University of Florida first)
- current crawling 400,000 +documents at 50 ADEC member sites; Averaged 40,000 searches per year in 2005 and 2006
- Future developments – Nutch search engine; higher performance, implemented in Java (not Perl), “show me more like this one”, clustering and taxonomy support

ADECnet

- currently have 38 self-funded ADECnet sites
- will be changing hardware to improve service; will may increase fees by \$55

Steven R. Conn, ADEC CTO seven.conn@adec.edu

Sessions: International Collaborations

Virtual learning in Latin America and Caribbean

- important because there is a large divide between existing information and that utilized by producers
- prohibitive costs of traditional training and higher education programs
- historic opportunity: technologies are improving and costs are coming down with an emerging digital culture
- growing need among professionals to take part in life-long learning

Examples of Progress

- growing presence of the Internet at times even in marginalized communities
- growing computer literacy
- INFOAGRO information systems
- Large use of GIS in many countries

Reasons for Partnership

- by networking can respond better to info needs in LAC
- each member has experiences and strengths to contribute to this partnership
- all members are committed to agriculture and sustainable rural development
- all aspire to reaching a larger group of beneficiaries
- Members: ADEC, Zamarano, UCR in Costa Rica; IICA, CATIE

Activities and Initiatives

- Zamorano and UCR – distance education courses, e-learning centers
- IICA-CATIE – SIDALC developed through the Orton library
- IICA, Gov. Mexico & TAMU: Distance Training Center (CECADI)

Overall Vision

- increased participation in the partnership over time by other institutions
- building on progress and successes to date
- flow of info and learning opportunities among partners
- sharing info generated by R&D initiatives implemented throughout the Region
- Assessment and use of know-how, experiences and learning resources available within ADEC

US/INDIA Agriculture Knowledge Initiatives AKI

- 2005 initiative to recapture green revolution by linking LGUs with SAGs through private public partnerships – research, extension, and education
- Bush visited again in 2006 – two initiatives one in ag and one in nuclear energy (\$8 million for three years; Borlog Fellows program, Cochran, ongoing involvement of USAID and FAS) – also \$15 million matching to increase LGU ties but this didn't happen
- Received \$800,000 from NASULGC to start it off
- Meetings to focus on water management, capacity building, food safety, and biotechnology
- 2006 solicited proposals for projects in water management and capacity building
- 27 consortium and individual university proposals and funded 9 of them
- Water: ISU, Cornell, TAMU, Purdue, OSU, University of Florida, etc.
- Capacity Building: Florida, OSU, Virginia Polytech, UC Davis, Cornell, Michigan, Penn State, WSU, Tuskegee, etc.
- Project implementation dates of September 1, 2006 – most in progress
- ICAR received \$1 million for collaboration through USAID
- Next steps: Obtain additional resources through FAS and CSREES to pursue other partnership activities

Opportunities

- build technical capacity at target universities
- need for extension dissemination to rural communities
- joint degrees could be facilitated through online learning

Africa Initiatives – also beginning to work on African connections and developing some pilot activities

- capacity building faces tremendous challenges, losing faculty to HIV-AIDS
- trying to get donors to help develop curriculum support/undergraduate graduates, but they are interested in rural development and alleviating poverty

USDA/ADEC China Scientific Exchange – March 2007

- draft of report for USDA/FAS, and China Ministry of Agriculture (they covered all incountry expenses – minder/translater traveled with them)
- Beijing – ecollege, NSF office, Broadcasting school, Chinese Academy of Ag Sciences
- Kuming – Yunnan ag info center, etc.
- Shijiazchung and Xinji City and Gaocheng City – ag services

Goals: review distance education programs, especially for rural offices; access to bandwidth and internet use; identify opportunities for collaboration and partnership

National Structure: channelized process that centralized government forces into a communications system

- Ministry of Agriculture has a strong mandate for distance learning
 - Central Ag Broadcasting and Television School
 - Provincial Ag Departments
 - City/County Ag Departments
 - Townships and Village level
 - (Natural villages: people who live together but aren't officially recognized)
 - Ag colleges are like upper level high schools

CAU-EDU.net – state of the art for end of 1990s– video and audio production – connections down the hierarchy starting from Beijing.

- 800 million gardeners/farmers out of a population of 1.4 billion
- Recording transferred to MP3 player and broadcast over loud speakers (farmers ride bicycles in to villages hear them)
- to increase farming productivity or other economic outlets

Observations from team: need to move from channelized to Internet is not understood and there are many still not widely connected

- Cell towers all over, and many rural people have them
- Most distance ed is audio and visual (CCTV); some web conferencing going on but not interactive
- Hybrid satellite systems in use to bring internet access
- Infrastructure not too good – lights dim, etc.

Danish NGO serving a natural village – little power; couple of VCD players, satellite TV access in two homes; phone 2 km away; they were concerned about quality of corn seed

- video taken where they talk about getting information from seed salesmen and TV
- one person who went through 6th grade runs village computer
- project to help women sell their sewing and weavings on the internet (all but 10% is returned to village) so this village finally has cash and it is being used to build houses with cement floors (keeping animals out).

Bottomline – collaborations are based on relationships that come together through time

Next Steps: a lot of interest on a conference in Beijing to help build relationships

- Offer training for best practices for distance education
- Make it easier for institutions to partner with Chinese institutions
- Possibilities to participate in teaching classes, advanced manufacturing center research
- National University of Modern Distance Education Cooperative Group – 68 Chinese university members

Observations:– story of China is where you peak in – modern cities, but also peasant farmer with ox and plow; there is huge hunger for partnering with U.S. and two-way conversations between students and American faculty and students to help improve their English; at political level there is concern for revolution due to economic disparities and TV is bringing that home. They do not have an Extension network but there are some people who serve in villages, however, more is accomplished by NGOs.

Collaboration – Digital Assets and Repositories

Linda Eells, University of Minnesota– Born Digital Extension Archives Project or Bridging to the Future: From Silos to Cooperatives

Motivation: why and why now? At University of Minnesota there is:

- Demand for historic and current ag experiment station and Extension publications
- strong relationship between libraries and Extension – process for moving print to libraries
- process breaks down when going digital (PDFs, web pages, etc.) – not job of Extension to do this
- UM recently launched University Digital Conservancy (digital space for content being produced by their local community - repository) – images from historical societies around state, data sets, etc.

Methodology – what did I do (sabbatical project)?

- obtain commitment and buy-in at the highest levels (including staff and \$\$\$) – provost contributed funds for the Conservancy
- identify stakeholders and participants – local and national
- Research – educate thyself
- Started talking to people

Outcomes will be in her final report:

- selection: scope and priorities for inclusion (what do you keep or don't keep)
- roles and responsibilities – processes
- policies: finding, forming defining, refining
 - o interoperability, metadata, thesaurus, access, copyright

Selection: what kind of formats are you going to collect?

- Web pages, Extension store content AND exclusions – what will we not collect?
- Priorities – what is most important for now?

Roles and Responsibilities – what does the author/creator do?

- Experience of most repositories is that authors have been required to do too much work so librarians have had to help
- Extension staff apply topical sub-headings
- Subject librarian, tech services take over after that

National Roles and Responsibilities:

- National Ag Library?
 - o Needs to scoop local metadata and maybe add more metadata
- ADEC could bring together the groups to work on this together
- Needs coordination and \$\$\$ to do pilot and then scale it up

Critical Issues for Collaboration: Lessons learned

- coordination – needs a Project Director/Champion (from start to finish both locally and nationally – not voluntary basis)
- what should the characteristics be of those who will be participants in pilot (buy-in from higher level, infrastructure, resources, extension-library relationship)
- Selection criteria and content ID
- Audience/Users – analysis/usability
- Interoperability and metadata

Key Thoughts

- get buy-in
- focus on born digital
- build a cooperative not silos
- coordination to keep focus on the big picture

NEXT STEPS - JUST DO IT!

Peter Young, Director, National Agricultural Library – NDLA – the National Digital Library for Agriculture

- concept from 5 years ago from Blue Ribbon Panel; identified need for digital library
- comprehensive content, repository a content piece connected to services (60 libraries have started with DSpace) = NAL has started developing AgSpace with 101 articles authored by most cited USDA scientists; but about 60 % of ag lit is grey literature.
- beginning to do preservation and selection for what needs to be preserved.
- Potential Collaboration: AgNIC Alliance as a partner with NAL and ADEC to come together to build NDLA.
- NALT (National Ag Library online Thesaurus – 68,000 terms now
- Celebrate Partnerships and Let's Just Do It!