Going Digital: The Role of Teaching, Learning and Technology Centers

Cynthia Golden
University of Pittsburgh

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ACAO Digital Fellows Meeting
New Orleans

- Campus Climate: Key Challenges facing a Teaching Center
- Role of a Teaching Center
  - Scope
  - Organizational Models
  - Partners
- Some Pitt Initiatives
About me…

30+ years in higher ed (really?)
Bridging technology and pedagogy and people

Issues facing our institutions

• Not unique
• Many not new
EDUCAUSE 2018
Key Issues in T&L

1. Academic Transformation
2. Accessibility
3. Faculty Development
4. Privacy and Security
5. Digital and Information Literacies
6. iPASS
7. Instructional Design
8. Online and Blended Learning
9. Evaluation of Tech-based instructional innovations
10. Open Education
Use of Free Textbooks Is Rising, but Barriers Remain

By Beth McMurtrie  DECEMBER 19, 2017

A growing number of professors are replacing the traditional textbook with an openly licensed one, according to a survey released on Tuesday. But their overall numbers remain small — and widespread adoption of the practice could remain out of reach unless key barriers are overcome.

“Opening the Textbook: Educational Resources in U.S. Higher Education, 2017,” surveyed 2,700 full- and part-time faculty members to measure, among other things, their use of open educational resources, commonly called OER. It is the third such survey produced by the Babson Survey Research Group in recent years.

Over that time the share of faculty members adopting open-licensed textbooks rose from 5 percent in 2015 to 9 percent today, with a higher rate of use in large introductory-level classes. Familiarity with openly licensed materials is
Top 10 strategic technologies impacting higher education 2018

1. Digital Credentials
2. Predictive Analytics
3. Nudge Tech
4. Next-Generation Security
5. Virtual Reality (VR)/Augmented Reality (AR) Comeback
6. Hybrid Integration Platforms
7. Digital Assessment
8. Blockchain
9. Next-Generation SIS
10. AI Conversational Interface

Issues facing my Center right now

• Large Enrollment Course Transformation
• Assessment of Teaching
• OER
• Diversity in the Curriculum
• Accessibility
• Faculty Incentives
• Next Generation LMS
• Competency-based learning, online learning, alternative credentials
• Assessing our Impact
The National Survey of Campus Centers for Teaching and Learning 2015

- Many Centers are new: a third were formed after 2010
- Most Center directors have academic backgrounds and many have also have (full-time or part-time) faculty status
- Most Centers report to provosts and academic affairs offices
- Digital course resources (OER, Third-party software), adaptive learning, and competency-based learning appear to be low priorities for most Centers
- Pre-tenured faculty are the largest group of Center clients.
- Not much collaboration with academic departments and other campus units
• Launched in 1996 as the Center for Instructional Development & Distance Education (after major reorganization)

• Renamed in Fall 2016 University Center for Teaching and Learning
• Organizational Evolution over time

~65 staff, ~45 students, 2 post-docs, faculty fellows

Mission

The mission of The Teaching Center is to inspire excellence and innovation in teaching, learning and scholarly activities at the University of Pittsburgh.
Key Areas of Strategic Focus

Teaching Support (10)
Educational Technology (15)
Assessment (2)
Online Learning (10)
Learning Environments (5)
Academic Services (20)
Admin (4)

Teaching Support

• 1:1 Consultations
• Workshops/Seminars
• SoTL/Research
• Graduate Student Teaching Initiative
• Faculty Learning Communities
  • New Faculty, Online/Hybrid, Diversity, Highly Engaged Professor, SoTL, Assessment
• Center for Mentoring
• Center for Communication
• Center for Diversity
Educational Technology – LMS and beyond

Catchbox: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TEIMnTR4shw&t=6s

Assessment of Teaching

In this course I have learned:
- Much less than in most courses I've taken
- Somewhat less than in most courses I've taken
- About the same as in most courses I've taken
- Somewhat more than in most courses I've taken
- Much more than in most courses I've taken

The grade I expect in this course is:
- A
- B
- C
- D
- F
- Other
Online Programs

Learning Spaces

• Active Learning
• Flexibility
• Acoustics and Lighting
• Technology
• Natural Light
• Study
Nationality Rooms

French Room

Media Credenza
Academic Services

- Testing Center
- Social Media, Newsletters, Publications
- Media Production
- Special Events

Organizational Models – Where do we fit?

No “right way”
Cultural Fit
Changes over time
This model requires close collaboration!

What I know...

• Support for good teaching must be the primary focus
• Technology is an enabler
• We can no longer separate the technology from the pedagogy
  • Necessary for good faculty support
  • Critical in the hiring process
• An integrated (pedagogy & ed tech) model works well for Pitt
Important Partners

- President
- Chief Academic Officer

Provost and Sr. Vice Chancellor Patricia E. Beeson

Chancellor Patrick Gallagher
MAJOR RECOMMENDATION: Connect the (academic) dots:

- 80% of the Centers report to provosts and academic affairs
- 57% of Center directors have an academic background
- 63% of Center directors have some kind of academic appointment Center directors report low engagement with academic units

Engage with provosts to stand up and stand with Center directors as a key strategy to promote innovation.
Important Partners

• University Libraries

Kornelia Tancheva, Director
University Library System

More Important Partners

• We are not the only TLT Center!
• Collaboration is key
Important Partners

• Faculty

2018 University Senate Plenary
“Teaching Today for Tomorrow”

Video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IdNjrQE8wUg

Important Partners

• Our Students
Important Partners

We’re the ‘IT’ in Pitt 24x7
Information Technology
technology.pitt.edu
412-624-HELP [4357]

Important Partners

PANOPTO  Bb  Blackboard
Explorance  Blue  Pod
EDUCAUSE
ETS  OLC
Educational Testing Service  ONLINE LEARNING CONSORTIUM
Back to my priority list...

- Large Enrollment Courses
- Assessment of Teaching
- OER
- Diversity in the Curriculum
- Accessibility
- Faculty Incentives
- Next Generation LMS
- Competency-based learning, online learning, alternative credentials
- Assessing our Impact

http://sgb.pitt.edu/government/governing-documents/

Highlights:
- Pitt has the highest in-state tuition in the country for public universities.
- Students take on additional debt to pay for textbooks, or
- Students “undercut their own learning” by not purchasing textbooks.
- Pitt “should do everything in its power to control the cost of higher education”.
- This resolution calls on faculty to expand use of OER, admin to support with grants and incentives, the library to help with resources, and the government to support the Affordable College Textbook Act.

Collister, Lauren. Pitt University Senate Plenary Address 3/27/2018
LMS Adoption – at 74% in Fall 2017

Active Courses in Blackboard
Fall Term

Next Gen LMS?

Cost to change?
Graduate Student Teaching Initiative

• Credentials in Pedagogy

4th Annual Event!

2017 Inaugural Awards for Diversity in the Curriculum

For Faculty, by Faculty
Discussion/Questions?

Two good books

*Advancing the Culture of Teaching on Campus*

*How Learning Works: 7 Research-Based Principles for Smart Teaching*