

# **Arts & Sciences eLearning Working Group Report April 2014**

## Addendum Materials:

1. On-Line Education in the Arts & Sciences @ William and mary
2. eLearning Seminar in Arts & Sciences @ William and Mary (incl. list of participants)
3. Arts & Sciences eLearning Working Group Charge (& Vision Statement)

# On-Line Education in the Arts & Sciences @ William and Mary

Currently, On-line Education in the Arts & Sciences at William and Mary has been focused on the concept of “Blended Learning”, which is a combination of face-to-face and on-line education. For most faculty, this has consisted of the placement of course syllabi and other materials on Blackboard that are supplemental to class sessions. The goal is to create a more interactive or “flipped” classroom experience. For the more technologically advanced, the use of Skype, Adobe Connect and Twitter, have provided an ability to interact virtually with students and scholars in real time.

The question is what to do now, and if we decide to expand our on-line presence, what is our mission and purpose? While the Schools of Business and Education are considering or even currently preparing to offer fully integrated on-line programs, is this a path that Arts and Sciences wants to follow? Do we have any policies or plans for assessment in place to ensure that we are keeping true to our commitment and focus of being a residential campus that is providing a highly interactive education to our students.

My take away messages from the CCAS Conference on On-Line Education...

1. On-line Education is coming...and we need to develop a plan as well as our mission and goals...before it just happens.
2. We need to be thinking about policies and plans for assessment and have them in place before anyone in Arts & Sciences develops a course...and just does it. Currently, there is no clear requirement for a faculty member to bring an already approved course to EPC if they want to take it on-line. We also do not have a set of standards for assessing on-line courses or a commitment from faculty that we will follow these standards.
3. If we are to do this right and avoid repeating many of the mistakes others have made, we are already behind. This includes how to decide on granting credit, faculty pay or courses counting towards teaching loads, assessment, and revenue sharing.

Forms of On-Line Learning (Pros & Cons for Arts and Sciences):

**1. The Flipped Classroom:**

Through the use of technology, the classroom experience becomes more interactive and less based on traditional lectures.

Pros: This can be done at many levels and most of the resource needs are already in place. We are already working to provide faculty training as well (e-Learning Community).

Cons: If taken to an extreme situation where all lectures are video segments on-line, one could easily slip into fully on-line courses unless some policies are in place.

Needs: While training for faculty in the use of education technology is already happening, the development of formal policies for using these technologies needs further development.

2. **The Legacy MOOC Course:**

These are developed as specialized on-line courses that are taught by prominent community leaders and/or educators. While they may initially be formal face-to-face courses, the on-line versions are meant to be purely informative (non-credit bearing) and enhance the reputation of the University.

Pros: These courses provide a venue for showcasing great lecturers at the University.

Cons: Non-credit bearing and lack interaction.

Needs: Truly for specialized situations.

3. **Discipline Specific Pre-Enrollment On-Line Courses:**

These short term (three week) courses would be developed to assess a student's knowledge in a particular subject area as well as give a student a sense of the Arts and Sciences' educational experience. They would be targeted to entering students (traditional or transfer) who wish to assess whether they should revoke AP, IB or transfer credits and retake a particular course or set of courses in their major area of interest. We would need to determine if they can be offered for credit or will be fee based, and if they can be required for transfer students.

Pros: As students come to us from a variety of educational backgrounds, these courses could be used to assess student knowledge and prepare them for entering the classroom at William and Mary.

Cons: We will need to build the policies and procedures for these courses from the ground up. This could help us if we do move to full term, full on-line courses.

4. **Other Course Options:**

Short Term Hybrid Courses

Dual Courses (One Course, Two Sections)

Fully On-Line Courses

# eLearning Seminar in Arts & Sciences @ William and Mary

Many faculty members at William & Mary have been experimenting with various forms of “blended learning,” which is a combination of face-to-face and on-line activities. For most faculty, the practice consisted of the placement of course syllabi and other materials on Blackboard that act as supplements to class sessions. For the more technologically advanced, the use of Skype, Adobe Connect and Twitter, have provided an ability to interact virtually with students and scholars in real time.

Interest in blended learning has increased dramatically over the last year as many of the most prestigious institutions in the country have begun expanding their online offerings dramatically through the delivery of Massive, Online, Open Courses—MOOCs for short. The rapid expansion of MOOCs, which have attracted over 3,000, 000 student “enrollments” and \$100M in private and public investment, has generated unprecedented interest in eLearning among members of the general public, public officials and the press.

As faculty members at William & Mary, we need to consider how these new tools for delivering courses impact on our vision and values. While the Schools of Business and Education are considering or even currently preparing to offer fully integrated on-line programs, is this a path that Arts and Sciences wants to follow? Do we have policies or plans for assessment in place to ensure that we are keeping true to our commitment and focus of being a residential campus that is providing a highly interactive education to our students?

The goal of this week long seminar is to bring into focus the role of eLearning in the Arts & Sciences and to begin to define the development of a comprehensive plan for how to implement and maintain a program that supports a commitment to excellence in undergraduate education. Faculty who participate in this seminar will be asked to commit to a week of discussions focused on eLearning (see agenda below). In preparation, each will be provided a copy of the book (Higher Education in the Digital Age by William G. Bowen), with additional articles and readings provided via a Blackboard site to which each participant will be enrolled. Each participant will receive \$500 in supplemental pay for their effort.

## **Draft Agenda:**

### **Monday, June 10**

#### **Morning Session (9:00am – 11:30am):**

**Introductions**

**Trends in eLearning**

**Define the current role of eLearning in A&S**

#### **Afternoon Session (1:00pm - 3:00pm):**

**What does eLearning look like at other liberal arts institutions?**

**What do we want it to look like in A&S at William and Mary?**

**Tuesday, June 11th**

**Morning Session (9:00am – 11:30pm):**

**Book Review (Discussion & Lesions Learned)  
Article Discussions**

**Afternoon Session (1:00pm - 3:00pm):**

**Planning: What should eLearning look like in A&S?**

**Wednesday, June 12th**

**Morning Session (9:00am -11:30am):**

**Review: What should eLearning look like in A&S?  
Develop Guiding Principles**

**Afternoon Session (1:00pm - 3:00pm):**

**What policies are needed to make eLearning effective and still allow innovation?  
How will eLearning be assessed?**

**Thursday, June 13th**

**Morning Session (10:00am - 11:30am):**

**Review of Guiding Principles, Policies & Assessment plans?**

**Afternoon Session (1:00pm - 3:00pm):**

**Catch Up Time**

**Friday, June 14th**

**Review Session & Lunch (11:00am - 1:30pm)**

## **Arts & Sciences eLearning Seminar List of Participants**

### **Seminar Directors:**

John Griffin (Dean of Undergraduate Studies) [jdgri2@wm.edu](mailto:jdgri2@wm.edu)

Gene Roche (Dir. Of Academic Information Services) [earoch@wm.edu](mailto:earoch@wm.edu)

### **Participants:**

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John Eisele (Modern Languages and Literatures) [jceise@wm.edu](mailto:jceise@wm.edu)

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Sharon Zuber (English & Writing Resource Center) [slzube@wm.edu](mailto:slzube@wm.edu)

### **Invited Guests:**

Kate Conley (Dean of Arts & Sciences)

Lu Ann Homza (Dean for Educational Policy)

Corey Springer (Senior Assistant Registrar)

Sallie Marchello (University Registrar)

Steve Otto (Director of Communications, Arts & Sciences)

Brian Whitson (Associate Vice President, University Relations)

Kathy Larrieu (Web Specialist, Arts & Sciences)

# **Arts & Sciences eLearning Working Group**

## **College of William and Mary**

During the fall of 2013, a working group of Arts & Sciences faculty will build on the vision statement developed by faculty who participated in a week long seminar on eLearning over the summer. Their specific charge is to detail policies and procedures for the use of eLearning tools and methods in courses and across the curriculum.

The Working Group will consist of 10-12 full time faculty and will be supported by the Dean of Undergraduate Studies, John Griffin.

Policies and Procedures that result from these discussions will be presented in a report to the Dean of the Faculty and to the Faculty of Arts & Sciences in the spring of 2014 for discussion and approval.

### **eLearning Seminar Vision Statement**

The suite of technological tools and methods encompassed by "eLearning" holds great potential for enhancing the engaged learning that is already taking place within the curriculum of Arts & Sciences. We recommend this specific enhancement as the primary focus of future discussions and exploration of eLearning. We also see the potential for interested faculty to apply eLearning tools in beneficial ways that can, for example, generate revenue, free up faculty time for intensive work with students, enable student learning, increase student retention and completion rates, internationalize the curriculum and student experiences, and strengthen diversity in the William & Mary community.

### **Objectives for eLearning in Arts & Sciences**

1. Learning objectives should be the driving force behind the use of eLearning, and its use should reinforce our emphasis on student-centered education.
2. eLearning should make courses more interactive (between students and faculty and among students) and allow an increased emphasis on problem-solving and more immediate faculty feedback.
3. eLearning can free up the space and time necessary for students to develop tools for self-learning; at the same time, care should be taken that the introduction of eLearning not significantly increase the amount of student time required for the course.
4. Uses of eLearning should vary by discipline and level of advancement (i.e., lower-division vs. upper-division courses, undergraduate vs. graduate levels).

## Action items

1. Arts & Sciences faculty need to develop clear and transparent policies in the area of eLearning. These policies should address the following issues:
  - a. what criteria should govern the transfer of eLearning course credits from other institutions
  - b. what levels and kinds of eLearning integrated into A&S courses will require review/oversight (by the EPC? by SACS / SCHEV?)
  - c. definitions of ownership and right-of-use for on-line course materials developed by W&M faculty
  - d. possible compensation and incentives for faculty to adapt courses to integrate eLearning.
  - e. criteria and methods for the monitoring and assessment of the extent to which eLearning tools and methods are meeting the goals of a liberal arts education.
2. Faculty should be informed about the various uses of eLearning for instructional purposes, and sufficient support resources should be available to faculty so that they can integrate the technology effectively.

## Recommendations for best practices in eLearning:

1. Use of existing online resources

Faculty can usefully embrace on-line resources to complement or substitute for textbooks and other traditional sources, where appropriate.

2. Students absorb course content online, then engage and apply the content in the classroom:

This generally is what is meant by "flipping" the classroom, a transition that has been under way in the humanities for several decades. This model provides for student learning outside the classroom through online lectures, additional resources, and other forms of engagement, then using the classroom setting for productive problem-solving and face-to-face interaction. eLearning tools and methods offer increasingly sophisticated and nuanced ways to provide course content outside the classroom.

3. Location-specific teaching:

We envision the use of eLearning methods to allow faculty members to take advantage of a research or field location to teach a class or provide augmented instruction for the site-specific context. This could be structured to allow synchronous (simultaneous) student collaboration and synchronous or asynchronous teaching. Examples include performing site analysis in large bio-regions with students taking advantage of each other's observations and expertise; or a faculty member sharing unique site-specific material such as access to museum curators, dignitaries, and political actors. This potential extends to off-campus guest lecturers.

4. Strategic tapping and exchange of niche curricula:

We envision building networks of academic partners that share courses with one another, particularly at the specialized graduate level, to supplement our expertise and courses with those at other institutions. These collaborations could also lead to additional student learning opportunities beyond the walls of the College.

5. Development of new learning communities

eLearning can be used to more effectively connect the A&S curriculum with other learning environments and communities, for example making A&S instructional materials available to broader audiences.