

Blended and Online Learning at the University of Manitoba

Blended and Online Learning Task Force

May 2014

Contents

Blended and Online Learning at the University of Manitoba	1
Blended and Online Learning Task Force	1
The Task Force	3
Executive Summary	3
I. Guiding Principles	5
II. Definitions	6
III. Background and Rationale	7
IV. The Task Force’s Process	8
V. Comparing Learning Across Delivery Modes	9
VI. Survey of Blended and Online Learning at Canadian Universities	12
VII. Survey of Blended and Online Learning at UManitoba	14
VIII. Opportunities, Threats, Strengths and Weaknesses	18
IX. Recommendations	22
X. Next Steps	31
References	32
Appendix A – Task Force Members and Term of Reference	33
Appendix B – Units with Blended Offerings	34
Appendix C – Technologies Used in Masters in Nursing—Nurse Practitioner	35
Appendix D – IST Wireless Upgrade Schedule	36
Appendix E – Department Head Survey	38

The Task Force

Dr. Janice Ristock, Vice Provost (Academic Affairs), established the Blended and Online Learning Task Force in late 2012 with Dr. Jeffery Taylor, Dean of Arts, as Chair (see Appendix A for the *Terms of Reference* and the Task Force's membership).

Executive Summary

Courses and programs at the University of Manitoba are delivered primarily in face-to-face classroom, laboratory and clinical environments. We do have a significant number of online offerings, however, as well as a small but growing number of courses offered in a blended format (face-to-face and online). Furthermore, the technologies available to support teaching and learning are changing rapidly and offer a range of possibilities to enhance learning across delivery modes. The Vice-Provost (Academic Affairs) asked the Task Force on Blended and Online Learning to take stock of the current state of blended and online learning at the University of Manitoba and to make recommendations regarding future developments in these areas.

There are at least four factors that combine to make this an appropriate time to undertake such an assessment. First, we are committed to making learning accessible to Manitobans, which has meant, among other things, that we have a long history of delivering many of our courses at a distance. Second, there now exists two decades of academic literature on the effectiveness of blended and online learning that suggests, on balance, that learning outcomes are similar for face-to-face and online delivery while slightly better in a blended mode. Third, many programs and individual instructors across the institution are experimenting with various blended and online approaches. And fourth, we are in what may or may not be a pivotal moment in the history of online learning in higher education with the current fascination with Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs), which is prompting many universities to consider the place of online learning in their institutional strategies. It seems prudent, therefore, for us to reflect on our own experience and future direction in this area in order to ensure we are creating high quality learning environments for our students, as well as maintaining and enhancing our commitment to accessibility, providing appropriate supports for the various delivery modes that we use for our courses and programs, and making informed choices about our place in the broader online educational environment.

This report shows that the University of Manitoba has an established infrastructure for delivering online courses and that about 8% of our undergraduate credit hours across a variety of courses and programs are offered in this delivery mode. Furthermore, a handful of programs are offering some courses in blended format and are experimenting with various forms of blended delivery. In addition, the university now has one institutional learning management system (Desire2Learn), that has a number of advantages over previous systems as well as a number of challenges as identified by members of the university user community. And our Wi-Fi infrastructure is in the process of being upgraded across the campus to the highest current standard.

The Task Force has not produced a Blended and Online Learning plan in this report. Rather, it has made a number of specific recommendations that it hopes will assist the University of Manitoba to develop an ongoing process to enable academic programs—and the academic staff

members who develop and deliver those programs—to make delivery-mode choices that will result in the best possible learning outcomes for students.

I. Guiding Principles

The following principles emerged from the Task Force’s work and consultations to guide the writing of this report:

1. Delivery-mode decisions should be made at the program level;
2. Delivery-mode plans should be integrated into the academic and strategic plans of the units and the institution;
3. Programs and academic staff members should have the support they require to deliver courses in a variety of delivery modes;
4. Decisions about delivery modes should be evidence-based and should be made with due consideration to improving student learning as well as course and program flexibility and accessibility;
5. Courses and programs should be subject to the same quality assurance and approval processes regardless of delivery mode;
6. The same financial and compensation system should be applied to all delivery modes unless a decision is made to apply differential systems to achieve a specific strategic objective;
7. No delivery mode should be considered inherently superior or inferior to any other and there should be no delivery-mode bias in any university policy, procedure or practice that is not evidence-based;
8. Units should consider the balance between cost-effectiveness and appropriate pedagogy in all delivery modes and no delivery mode should be considered inherently more or less cost-effective than any other;
9. Course and program delivery-mode planning should be a continuous process that is integrated with virtual and physical learning-space planning (learning technologies, classrooms, laboratories, informal learning spaces, etc.); and
10. Students should be provided with the support they require to successfully engage in all delivery modes.

II. Definitions

Blended course:

A blended course integrates online with face-to-face instruction in a planned, pedagogically valuable manner by substituting online activity for face-to-face time, or vice versa. It offers less classroom time than a face-to-face course (for example, students meet one or two times per week in the classroom and time they otherwise would have spent in the classroom is spent online). Conversely, a fully online course may be modified to decrease the online activities in order to add face-to-face activities.

Fully Online course:

A fully online course conducts all learning activity in an online environment, with no face-to-face contact. At the University of Manitoba, fully online credit courses are normally offered through Extended Education in conjunction with an academic unit.

Face-to-face course:

A face-to-face course is a classroom course offered with or without the aid of online enhancements. If online enhancements are used in a face-to-face course (for example, the use of a learning management system such as Angel or Desire2Learn), they *supplement* rather than *reduce* the face-to-face activity as in a blended course.

Program:

A program is any recurring sequence of learning experiences for which a unique credential is awarded to students. For the purposes of this document, the term refers to any discipline-specific grouping of majors, minors, advanced majors, honours, and graduate credentials. For example, the Department of English, Film, and Theatre in the Faculty of Arts contains three programs: English, Film, and Theatre.

Blended Program:

A blended academic program is designed to include a mix of face-to-face, fully online, and/or blended courses.

Academic Unit:

An academic unit is the administrative unit responsible for the delivery of academic programs (normally a department, college, school, or faculty).

III. Background and Rationale

There are a number of factors that combine to make this an appropriate time to be assessing the current state and future development of blended and online learning at the University of Manitoba.

First, the University of Manitoba has many decades of experience with the development of credit and non-credit courses for distance delivery. Extended Education has been offering distance education courses for over sixty years, beginning with film- and print-based courses and, after the arrival of the World Wide Web in 1992, via the internet. In recent years, some academic units have begun to offer their own online courses independent of Extended Education. Furthermore, both Extended Education and individual Faculties have been experimenting recently with various forms of blended instruction. (The range and nature of our current blended and online offerings are detailed below in [Section VII](#).) With our long history of traditional distance education, almost twenty years of online course delivery, and expanding interest in blended and online delivery across the university, it is prudent to step back and take stock of what we are doing as an institution in these areas and chart a course for our future direction.

Second, we are at what may or may not turn out to be a pivotal moment in the history of online learning in higher education. Some have suggested that the recent interest that highly ranked American universities are showing in online education through their adoption of massive open online courses (MOOCs) are leading to a “great disruption” in higher education. While our assessment of this phenomenon is more measured, we do recognize that the focus on online learning occasioned by the MOOC movement has caused many universities to reflect, to a greater or lesser degree, on the place of online learning in their academic planning.

Third, one of the reasons we have been providing distance delivery options to students for so many years is because of our commitment to making university learning accessible to Manitobans. The advent of online education in the 1990s expanded the opportunities for accessible course and program delivery both technologically and spatially. The Internet, and the World Wide Web in particular, generated new possibilities for students and instructors to learn and interact across the province and beyond. This assessment of the present and future of blended and online learning at the University of Manitoba allows us to reflect on how we can enhance and deepen our commitment to accessibility with these delivery modes.

Fourth, there now exists two decades of academic literature on the effectiveness of blended and online learning, which builds on an older and broader corpus of work on the effectiveness of traditional distance learning. This literature, which we briefly explore in [Section V](#), allows us to assess the extent to which delivery mode affects learning outcomes and the learning experience for students. This evidence can then inform our support for various delivery modes and the decisions that are made regarding the delivery of specific programs and courses.

IV. The Task Force's Process

The Task Force first met on 12 December 2012, where it was joined by Dr. Tony Bates who provided the group with an introduction and overview of strategic thinking about the use of learning technologies in higher education.

Following its first meeting the Task Force established a schedule, assembled a variety of materials on a secure Task Force [website](#), administered a survey of department heads regarding blended and online learning, and, in early March 2013, conducted an initial SWOT analysis within the Task Force. The Task Force then conducted a series of engagement meetings and focus groups with the university community from mid-March to mid-April through which the draft SWOT analysis was shared, comment and feedback on the SWOT was solicited, and general input was received regarding the future development of blended and online learning at the University of Manitoba.

Focus groups were held with department heads (one), Bannatyne faculty members (one), Fort Garry faculty members (three), and students (one). In addition, the Task Force met with the Senate Committee on Instruction and Evaluation, the Graduate Students' Association Council, UMSU Council, Senior Sticks' Council, the Senate Committee on Academic Computing, the President's Advisory Committee on Information Technology and Innovation, Associate Deans Undergraduate, Provost's Council, and the Council of Student Affairs. A [blog](#) was also established to allow community members to contribute to a virtual discussion of the Task Force's work and a confidential email address was provided for those who chose to make private submissions.

The Task Force circulated a draft report to the university community in January 2014. The draft report was then presented to the Senate Committee on Instruction and Evaluation, the Senate Committee on Academic Computing, the President's Advisory Committee on Information Technology and Innovation, Associate Deans Undergraduate, Provost's Council, the Council of Student Affairs, the Division of Extended Education, and an open session at the Bannatyne campus. A blog was also established to allow community members to comment on the draft report.

The department heads' survey, the material collected through the community engagement process, external and internal documents, broader literature on blended and online learning, and the feedback received on the draft report have all informed this final report.

V. Comparing Learning Across Delivery Modes

It is generally established in the distance education literature that there is no significant difference in learning outcomes between face-to-face and distance delivery. Robert Bernard and his colleagues concluded in their meta-analysis of 232 studies that differences in achievement, attitude and retention outcomes were effectively zero based on delivery mode. However, there was wide variability in outcomes across delivery mode, showing that in some cases outcomes were more positive in distance courses and in other cases the outcomes were more positive in face-to-face courses.¹ Yong Zhao and his research team concurred with this assessment in their meta-analysis of 51 studies (culled from an initial identification of 8840 articles), concluding that a range of pedagogical and technological factors affect the success of instruction, regardless of delivery mode. Indeed, Zhao et al. suggest that the distinction between distance and face-to-face education is dissolving as the latter increasingly uses the technological supports that have traditionally been a defining feature of the former.²

A more recent meta-analysis by the United States Department of Education (USDE) narrows and refines these earlier assessments by focusing more specifically on comparisons among online learning, blended learning, and face-to-face instruction. Furthermore, the USDE analysis differs from earlier meta-analyses by limiting its search to studies with random-assignment or controlled quasi-experimental designs and those that assessed only objective measures of student learning (measurable academic achievement and not student or instructor perceptions of learning). The authors considered 51 studies (culled from an initial identification of 1132 articles) based on these criteria.³

The USDE report arrived at a number of conclusions, including the following:

- Learning outcomes for fully online and fully face-to-face instruction were the same (they were statistically equivalent);
- Learning outcomes were better in blended environments than in either fully online or fully face-to-face instruction;
- Learning outcomes were better when the online instruction was collaborative or instructor-directed than when online learners worked independently;
- Online learning is effective at both the graduate and undergraduate levels and across various disciplines;
- Including media such as video or using online quizzes do not appear to influence the amount that students learn when material is delivered in online environments; and

¹ Robert M. Bernard *et al.*, "How Does Distance Education Compare With Classroom Instruction? A Meta-Analysis of the Empirical Literature," *Review of Educational Research* 74(3) (Fall 2004), 379-439.

² Yong Zhao *et al.*, "What Makes the Difference? A Practical Analysis of Research on the Effectiveness of Distance Education," *Teachers College Record* 107(8) (August 2005), 1865-1866.

³ United States Department of Education, *Evaluation of Evidence-Based Practices in Online Learning: A Meta-Analysis and Review of Online Learning Studies* (2010).

- Giving learners control of their interactions with media and prompting learner reflection enhances online learning.

[The University of Central Florida](#) (UCF) provides another significant source of evidence and analysis regarding learning experiences across fully online, blended, and face-to-face delivery modes. This institution made a strategic decision in the mid-1990s to develop its capacity in fully online and blended learning as a means, primarily, to increase access in order to meet local demand and to do so in a manner that would minimize the need to expand physical infrastructure. UCF's enrolment has doubled since 1995 to more than 60,000, with most of that increase occurring in non-face-to-face modes of instruction. An important component of UCF's strategic decision to develop its capacity in these areas was the establishment of a research facility dedicated to studying its experience over time with multiple delivery modes. As a result it now has almost twenty years of data and analysis to inform its own practice and to contribute to a broader understanding of learning across the face-to-face, blended, fully-online, and video-capture courses that it offers.

Among UCF's conclusions based on its experience are the following:⁴

Student Success and Retention

- Blended courses have higher success rates (percentage of students obtaining A, B or C) and lower withdrawal rates than comparable face-to-face courses.
- Fully online courses have slightly lower success rates and higher withdrawal rates than either face-to-face or blended courses.
- Females have higher success rates and lower withdrawal rates in all delivery modes.

Student Participation

- Seventy-five to eighty percent of students who enroll in fully online courses are also enrolled in face-to-face courses.
- The ethnic distribution of students is the same across all delivery modes.
- Fully online courses consistently have more females than males enrolled in them.
- Students in fully online courses are generally older than those enrolled in comparable blended and face-to-face courses.

Faculty Profile

- The majority of faculty members teaching fully online or blended courses have been male and tenured.

⁴ University of Central Florida Center for Distributed Learning, Distributed Learning Impact Evaluation, retrieved from <http://cdl.ucf.edu/research/rite/dl-impact-evaluation/>; see also Joel Hartman, Chuck Dziuban, and Patsy Moskal, "Strategic initiatives in the online environment: opportunities and challenges," *On the Horizon* 15(3) (2007).

- The average age of faculty members teaching fully online or blended courses is 50.

Faculty Perceptions of Student Interaction

- The majority of faculty members indicate there is more interaction—and the quality of the interaction is higher—in fully online and blended courses than in comparable face-to-face courses.

The evidence from these various studies shows that no specific delivery mode is inherently superior to another. The USDE meta-analysis and the UCF data suggest that blended learning results in better learning outcomes for students than either fully face-to-face or fully online delivery. As the USDE study points out, however, it is not clear if these better outcomes in the blended environment are because of the delivery mode or other factors such as the pedagogical approaches or the amount of learning time in specific courses. It is reasonable to hypothesize that the ability of course developers and designers to choose the best features of online and face-to-face instruction in a blended course, combined with the fact that this delivery mode requires a great deal of advance preparation, are the primary reasons for these outcomes.

VI. Survey of Blended and Online Learning at Canadian Universities

Canada has no national education ministry or funding body and no centralized approach to developing blended and online learning strategies. Therefore, while online education is a national activity, strategies and funding are provincially based. As demand for online offerings has grown and international interest in Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) has increased, provincial governments and universities have responded. Networks and collaborations have been established, universities are developing online learning plans, and an increasing number of Canadian universities are moving into the MOOC arena. This section outlines the roles and actions of the universities, governments and groups involved in shaping the online learning environment in Canada.

Canadian Landscape

Provinces and universities invest separately for up-front course development, content, supports, and other costs for online learning. Larger provinces like British Columbia, Quebec, Alberta and Ontario (and smaller ones like Newfoundland, New Brunswick, and Manitoba) are setting up their own networks and building on existing institutions, each trying to attract enough students from across the country to achieve economies of scale.⁵ Examples include Newfoundland and Labrador, which invested in infrastructure by partnering with Desire2Learn to offer a province wide system that supports distance education for students regardless of location, and the establishment of collaborative networks including BCCampus, e-Campus Alberta, and Contact North, Ontario's Distance Education and Training Network.

So far, international for-profit universities have a small presence in Canada and thus avoiding issues the U.S. is facing such as higher student costs and the lack of transferable credentials. Overall, Canadian public online university tuition and fees seem to be fairly close to on-campus fees,⁶ and online education offers the same transferability as on-campus education. Most universities offer some online courses and student supports. Six institutions have a significant focus on distance education and online learning: [Athabasca University](#), [Centre collegial de formation a distance](#), [Memorial University](#), [Royal Roads University](#), [TELEQ](#) and [Thompson Rivers University](#). Common among all of these universities is a provincial transfer credit system and the offer of services to all Canadians and international students. Many other universities including British Columbia, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Queen's, Ottawa, Laval, and McMaster offer programs across Canada (and some internationally) using online platforms.⁷

Collaborations

Two groups have been formed to enable partner universities, including the University of Manitoba, to collaborate in online learning research and practice in Canada. The Collaboration for Online Higher Education Research [COHERE](#) is a collaboration of universities⁸ focusing on

⁵ Canadian Virtual University, *Online University Education in Canada*, 12.

⁶ Canadian Virtual University (CVU), *Online University Education in Canada: Challenges and Opportunities* (2012), 18.

⁷ Contact North, *Online Learning in Canada: At a Tipping Point A Cross-Country Check-up 2012* (2012), 11.

⁸ COHERE members are: University of Alberta, Athabasca University, University of Calgary, Empire State College, MacEwan University, University of Guelph, Kwantlen Polytechnic University, University of Lethbridge, University of Manitoba, Memorial University, Red Deer College, University of Regina, University of Saskatchewan, Simon Fraser University, York University.

the research and practice of blended and online learning in higher education, while the Canadian Virtual University [CVU](#) is a consortium of AUCC-recognized Canadian universities⁹ collaborating to provide online education to students in Canada and from around the world.

According to Vicky Busch, Executive Director of CVU, there has been a 70% increase in the enrolments in online courses at CVU member universities since 2000, with the greatest growth at the University of Manitoba and Royal Roads University (300%). In the 2012-13 academic year, CVU members reported 210,000 registrations by 100,500 students in over 630,000 course credit hours. The University of Manitoba ranked second among CVU dual-mode institutions in undergraduate registrations in online courses, third in the number of students enrolled in undergraduate online courses, and third in the percentage of undergraduate curriculum offered fully online.¹⁰

Blended and Online Learning Initiatives

Canadian universities are actively involved in blended and online initiatives. Select examples from 2013 include UBC's introduction of the [Flexible Learning Initiative](#), which aims to enable pedagogical and logistical flexibility through the use of technology; Queen's University's [draft report](#) on virtualization and online learning, which contained 18 recommendations aimed at informing university policy and planning around online learning; the University of Windsor's launch of a new [grants program](#) to support departments interested in expanding online offerings; and Ryerson University's announcement that it is [forming committees](#) to explore online and e-learning practices at the institution.

MOOCs

Canadian universities are moving into the area of Massive Open Online Courses. According to their websites, in 2013 the University of Toronto (already a member of Coursera) and McGill University signed on with edX, a U.S.-based, non-profit MOOC venture founded by Harvard and MIT. A free online science course offered by UBC and Stanford University attracted more than 130,000 registrants (including learners from every Canadian province), and UBC plans to pilot additional MOOCs. Other universities are beginning to experiment with the platform to offer credit, fee-based, and/or college readiness offerings: this fall the University of Alberta will launch [Dino 101](#), a course available in credit/non-credit and free/fee versions, while UPEI is launching [Experience U](#) – a five-week college readiness MOOC delivered on Facebook and available to anyone interested in preparing for the UPEI experience.

⁹ CVU members are: Athabasca University, Carleton University, Laurentian University, Memorial University, Mount Royal University, Royal Military College of Canada, Royal Roads University, TÉLUQ, Thompson Rivers University, University of Manitoba and University of New Brunswick.

¹⁰ CVU Board of Directors meeting agendas: March 14, 2013, Appendix A; Oct 26, 2012 Item 5.3.

VII. Survey of Blended and Online Learning at UManitoba

This section surveys the current range and nature of our blended and online programming as well as the learning management systems, related learning technologies, and infrastructure the University of Manitoba has to support it.

Fully Online Courses

Most fully online credit courses at the University of Manitoba are offered through the [Distance and Online Education](#) unit in Extended Education. The unit works in partnership with academic units directly responsible for programs to develop and deliver online courses. Extended Education assumes responsibility for the development and delivery of the courses, while the academic units recommend content specialists, approve the course content, and determine which courses will be offered and who will teach them.

Distance and Online Education and the academic unit are partners in course development and revision. A content specialist recommended by the academic unit works with an instructional designer from Distance and Online Education. Other Distance and Online Education staff members, including instructional technologists, editors, copyright specialists, web publishers, audio/video production specialists, and clerical staff support them. Distance and Online Education is then responsible for delivering the courses, including mounting the course on D2L, managing course sectioning and appointing instructional staff in consultation with departments, marketing, registration assistance, tracking assignments, and providing technical assistance with D2L for both students and instructors.

Distance and Online Education offers professional development to new online instructors during both the course development phase and the delivery phase. During the development phase, the instructional designers provide training focused on how to create an effective online course and how to teach in this environment. Designers structure and sequence content as well as choose appropriate and effective delivery methods, teaching strategies, learning activities, and assessment mechanisms. They also select appropriate media and learning technologies. The designers ensure that courses are learner-centered and interactive, clear and concise with logical sequences and components that match course goals, and equivalent to face-to-face offerings. In preparation for delivery, two types of training are offered to online instructors: 1) half day workshops and 2) one on one training (either remotely or face to face). In the training sessions, participants are introduced to different components of the Learning Management System. In addition to this preparatory training, support is offered during the online course's delivery phase.

The instructors for online courses offered through Distance and Online Education are normally sessional instructors (part-time term staff) represented by Local 3909 of the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) or faculty members teaching on overload (over and above a faculty member's regular load) represented by the University of Manitoba Faculty Association (UMFA). The 2010-2011 collective agreement between the University of Manitoba and CUPE 3909 specifies a per-student payment for distance and online courses of \$95.25 per student in a three-credit course. UMFA members who teach distance and online courses receive the same compensation as CUPE 3909 members, although payment for this method of instruction is not specified in the UM-UMFA collective agreement.

Distance and Online Education offered 188 different courses and 296 course sections in 2011-12. Furthermore, there were 41,102 distance and online undergraduate student credit hours taught across the university during that year, which equals 7.9% of all undergraduate student credit hours taught. Courses were taught in the faculties of Agricultural and Food Sciences, Arts, Education, Engineering, Environment, Human Ecology, Nursing, Kinesiology and Recreation Management, Science, and Social Work as well as in the School of Art.

The Faculty of Nursing has developed its own fully online learning capacity, including its own instructional design capacity, with support from Extended Education. Most of its fully online courses are offered independently of Extended Education.

Blended Courses

In contrast to fully online courses, there is no established infrastructure at the University of Manitoba to support the development and delivery of blended courses. Nonetheless, a number of academic units have begun to offer blended courses. Twelve department heads or deans indicated in an early 2013 survey that their unit had offered one or more course sections in a blended format in the previous academic year. In most cases this was one or two sections. The Faculty of Dentistry, the Faculty of Social Work, the Department of Psychology in the Faculty of Arts, and the Department of Biological Sciences in the Faculty of Science, however, reported significant blended activity. (*Appendix B*)

The Department of Biological Sciences has a long-standing practice of providing video-captured lectures for students in its first-year courses. Students are able to view the videos in the Faculty of Science library, and then receive face-to-face instruction in the class laboratory sections. The department has experimented with making the video available online through a learning management system (Angel), but this resulted in system crashes as a result of insufficient bandwidth. The Faculty of Social Work, meanwhile, offers courses in which some students are together in a physical classroom and others, in the same class, are connecting remotely from across Manitoba via Adobe Connect. While neither of these delivery methods as currently practiced meet the strict definition of blended learning, they are important forms of distance or distributed learning that deserve to be noted as part of this report.

The Department of Psychology, for its part, offers most of its Introductory Psychology course in a blended format. Students taking the blended section of the course receive most of the course material in an online format, have the opportunity to meet once a week with graduate teaching assistants, and meet with the course professors in large classroom sessions twice each term.

The Faculty of Dentistry has identified blended learning as an area of significant expansion in the coming years. It anticipates that 60% to 75% of its courses will use a blended format by 2014-2015.

Extended Education has assisted a number of academic units with blended learning initiatives, including the Faculty of Kinesiology and Recreation Management and the departments of Biology, Mathematics, Interior Design, and Educational Administration and Foundations.¹¹ It

¹¹ Lori Wallace and J. Young, "Implementing Blended Learning: Policy Implications for Universities," *Online Journal of Distance Learning Administration*, 13(4) (2010).

has also used blended learning in some of its certificate programs and summer session courses. The unit sent a survey on blended learning to all of its 2012 summer session students. Of the 2300 students who responded (a 36% response rate), 69% indicated that they would be interested in taking a summer session course in a blended learning format and about 50% indicated that they preferred that no more than 40% of the course be online.

Blended Programs

The Faculty of Nursing initiated a blended delivery approach to teaching one course in the Master of Nursing Program in 2007; by 2009, two courses were also offered via blended delivery in the Nurse Practitioner Program. A Strategic Plan for online/blended course delivery was developed (by a faculty member & member of the IT Department) and presented to the administration team of the Faculty in April of 2009. This Strategic Plan identified the current state of online/blended delivery and the benefits and challenges inherent in this delivery modality. A survey of faculty members to determine experiences and comfort with and willingness to engage in online/blended course delivery was completed in the Fall of 2009. The results of this survey and recommendations for blended delivery were presented and discussed with nursing faculty in December of 2009. A decision was made following this meeting to offer one section of all courses via blended delivery in the Master of Nursing program (exclusive of the Nurse Practitioner courses) beginning in September of 2010.

The Masters in Nurse Practitioner curriculum, meanwhile, has just been revised to make it a blended program with a mix of face-to-face and fully online courses for rural and remote nurses in Manitoba. The curriculum is delivered over two years in three terms and includes 45 credit hours and 712 practice hours. Students will be brought on campus five times a term. They will be on campus about three days each time in the first term, with the number of days per visit decreasing to one or two as students progress through the program. Instructors will use a variety of learning technologies in the fully online and face-to-face environments. The Centre for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning has been actively consulting with and supporting the Faculty of Nursing in this initiative. (*Appendix C*)

In the Faculty of Medicine, the Undergraduate Medical Education curriculum is delivered using a combination of OPAL and Desire2learn (formerly through Angel and WebCT). The Physician Assistant and Interprofessional Education programs have a significant amount of their curricula online, and the Postgraduate Medical Education program delivers a significant portion of its core curriculum using Desire2Learn, and will be moving to a curriculum management system (VENTIS) shortly. The Department of Medical Education (DME) within the Faculty of Medicine currently uses Desire2Learn to reach a distributed campus for both faculty and organizational development. Both Continuing Professional Development (CPD) and DME are currently investigating AdobeConnect as an additional delivery modality. CPD is also exploring Desire2Learn as a course delivery option, and expects to have a number of courses offered through it in the 2014-2015 academic year.

Learning Management Systems and Related Learning Technologies

Desire to Learn (D2L) is the University of Manitoba's main learning management system. It is hosted on the vendor's offsite servers so we do not directly control server capacity or

maintenance. In September 2013, the Centre for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning (CATL) assumed the role of the business lead for D2L providing overall coordination for the system and its application. Information Services and Technology's (IST) will continue to be the technical lead. CATL and IST Enterprise Systems will receive user requests, data, and experiential information, provide solutions, and when necessary communicate issues to D2L for resolution. Recent monthly reports from D2L suggest that the system is regularly available, and Enterprise Systems is working to expand the number of metrics that are measured in the reports.

The Faculty of Medicine uses Online Portal for Advanced Learning (OPAL) as its main learning management system. OPAL is a web-based system that runs on virtual servers onsite. It is easy and straightforward to add additional capacity to these virtual servers.

The Faculty of Dentistry, meanwhile, uses a client/server learning system called Axiom in addition to D2L. With the former, data is accessed through a virtual server, which makes it easy to add additional capacity. Users must access the system through workstations running the client software, however, which are limited to on-campus locations. Dentistry also uses a number of other learning technologies for its blended learning, including Vital Source Technologies (eBooks), MedEdPortal (teaching and learning objects repository), Articulate for lectures, Tooth Atlas for three-dimensional rendering of teeth, and Second Life for exploring the geographical locations of nerves in the head and neck.

Wi-Fi Infrastructure

We first have to have a reliable and robust technological infrastructure in order to offer high-quality blended and online courses and programs. This includes on-campus wireless capability for students using online course materials locally and sufficient server capacity and connectivity for our learning management systems. Information Services and Technology (IST) is in the midst of a multi-year project to install new 802.11n standard wireless across the Fort Garry and Bannatyne campuses. IST determines priority for wireless upgrades in consultation with the University of Manitoba Students' Union and the Graduate Students' Association, with attention to the existing building's age and the ability of its existing network. All buildings on the two campuses will be at "n" standard by the end of the 2014-2015 fiscal year. (*Appendix D*)

VIII. Opportunities, Threats, Strengths and Weaknesses

As indicated above in the “Task Force’s Process” section, the Task Force undertook a preliminary SWOT analysis among its members and then presented the preliminary SWOT to the university community for responses and input. The following is the final outcome of that exercise.

Opportunities

1. Flexibility and accessibility for students.
2. Demographics are changing. The fastest growing group of young people in Manitoba is Aboriginal, many of whom are located in the North. The University of Manitoba has a mandate to serve the whole province and must be willing to get out into the communities, especially in relation to Indigenous Achievement, to serve this population. Adult learners over age 25 are another growing demographic with accessibility challenges (full-time work and family responsibilities).
3. Blended and online learning provide the opportunity to develop the skills and capabilities students require to succeed in and critically engage with digitally networked environments.
4. Blended learning provides the opportunity to combine the best pedagogical approaches from face-to-face and online delivery.
5. The fastest growing population in Manitoba is Aboriginal, and many do not live in Winnipeg. We need to address their needs.
6. There are many potential alumnae who may be interested in various learning opportunities through online education from the University of Manitoba rather than other institutions, if the option is available to them.
7. This would be an opportune time to move blended and online learning into graduate studies. There is great opportunity to build capacity for graduate online degrees because of our strong brand, particularly in the province.
8. Increasing our blended and online delivery could lower physical infrastructure costs.
9. We have leading national and global subject-matter expertise in many academic areas, which we can share with the world through online education.
10. Many students are better wired than in the past, and we have an opportunity to utilize the computer power we have inside and outside the classroom with laptop computers and various mobile devices.
11. There are potentially better learning outcomes for students in blended formats.
12. The University has a mandate to serve the entire province, as well as an accessibility mandate. Online and blended learning provide geographic as well as temporal accessibility to courses.
13. Student Advocacy is developing a policy regarding the use of social media at UM. An opportunity exists, therefore, to create a policy that takes full account of the role of social media in teaching and learning.
14. Academic staff members have a variety of teaching skills in various delivery modes. Providing opportunities to share pedagogical approaches and to ensure adequate support and training for instruction delivery modes will increase our ability to create a variety of rich learning experiences for our students.
15. UM can take advantage of international agreements with other universities to have our academic staff develop and deliver content with academic staff in partner institutions.

Threats

1. Beyond Campus Manitoba (a consortium of Manitoba public universities and colleges providing online courses, with some administrative and technological infrastructure provided by COPSE), there is no provincial strategy for funding or developing blended and online programs.
2. Athabasca University's continuous enrolment policy, self-paced study, and range of courses are attractive to UM students seeking fully online options.
3. There is increasing global and national competition to recruit students to study in fully online or blended learning formats, particularly at the graduate level.
4. External regulatory bodies may not recognize some online or blended credentials.
5. Students outside of urban areas may have technical limitations/ infrastructure that reduce their access to learning management systems and other online systems and resources.
6. Some students may have a lack of skills using software developed for blended and online learning.
7. Many universities are offering massive open online courses (MOOCs). The University of Manitoba needs to determine if and how it will be part of this phenomenon.

Strengths

1. Many faculty members are already committed by way of involvement and/or support to engage in fully online learning.
2. The University of Manitoba has recently introduced a new learning management system (Desire2Learn: D2L), which is more integrated and robust than earlier systems. The University will soon have only one learning management system; Angel will be discontinued as of September 15, 2013.
3. A small number of academic units are using blended learning formats. The Department of Psychology in the Faculty of Arts, the Faculty of Dentistry, the Faculty of Social Work, and Extended Education are the university leaders in this area.
4. 33% of certificate courses in Extended Education are offered in fully online or blended format.
5. The University of Manitoba ranks 3rd among ten Canadian Virtual University (CVU) dual-mode institutions with respect to the percentage of curriculum offered fully online (8%), behind Thompson Rivers (20%) and Memorial (11%). UM also ranks 2nd among those CVU universities in undergraduate registrations in fully online courses and 3rd in the total number of students taking fully online courses. 22% of the undergraduate student credit hours in the Faculty of Arts are in fully online or blended format.
6. Student demand remains high for fully online courses: 22% of UM undergraduate students took a fully online course in Winter 2012 (8150 students in Summer 2011, Fall 2011, and Winter 2012).
7. Extended Education funds the infrastructure for the development and delivery of fully online courses offered in partnership with other academic units for the development. Extended Education does not currently provide support for blended courses, although it has developed blended courses in conjunction with Graduate Studies.
8. The Centre for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning (CATL) has received strategic funding to support teaching innovation, including expanded support of blended and on-line learning as the transfer of the D2L system from IST to CATL occurs in

autumn 2013. This includes support for a D2L trainer, faculty developer (technology and innovation), and an instructional designer.

9. 70%+/- of summer-session students surveyed in 2012 indicated they would be interested in taking courses in a blended format.
10. The median course completion rate for fully online courses offered through Extended Education is 86%.
11. There is good research and scholarship on online and blended learning within the University.
12. There is senior-level interest in and support for the development of a blended and online learning strategy.
13. Quality control in fully online courses is well established, and courses and programs completed wholly or partly online have parity with face-to-face courses.
14. We have a variety of services in various units that can be marshaled to provide more systematic support for blended and fully online delivery, including:
 - Copyright office
 - Information Services and Technology
 - Centre for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning
 - Access and Privacy Office
 - Extended Education
 - Libraries
 - Academic Learning Centre

Weaknesses

1. Face-to-face delivery is perceived as the norm, while fully online and blended are perceived as the “other.” There is a view in some parts of the university, including some faculty and students, that face-to-face learning is superior to blended or online.
2. A number of Heads (and perhaps, therefore, departments) have no interest in participating in either online or blended learning, as suggested in a survey of Heads.
3. Many people in the university community do not understand what blended or online learning involves, and do not have the information to make decisions.
4. A number of members of the university community have expressed concerns that D2L, the new learning management system, has a number of limitations: the interface; the lack of flexibility for users to rearrange its components; problems with uploading video; problems with the grader and eportfolio; the lack of capacity to use blogs and wikis or support mobile devices; the fact that students without a UM student number cannot register in courses; the limited amount of data that can currently be extracted from it; its inability to cope with the symbols used in some disciplines, and other issues.
5. Currently there is no single log-in to get library, D2L and other online access.
6. Support for course delivery across all modes (varieties of face to face, blended, fully online) is fragmented and uncoordinated. D2L, classroom-technology, and other digital infrastructure is supported by Information Services and Technology (VP Admin side) and the Centre for the Advancement of Teaching and learning (VP Academic); physical infrastructure is supported by Physical Plant (VP Admin side); face-to-face and some blended delivery is supported by the Centre for Academic Teaching and Learning (VP Academic side); and fully online support is from Extended Education (VP Academic side).

7. Some faculty members are unclear where to find support for fully online and blended learning course development and delivery.
8. There are a limited number of classrooms with the technology or configuration to engage fully in blended learning opportunities (making use of the connections between the online and face-to-face components of a specific course).
9. Some students have argued that the face-to-face component of some of our existing blended courses use passive learning techniques.
- ~~10.~~ There is a perception among some students that fully online courses are less rigorous than face-to-face courses.
11. The University of Manitoba is very weak in blended and online program delivery at the graduate level. Face-to-face delivery is even more the norm at this level than at the undergraduate level.
12. There are different budget and teaching models for fully online delivery, on the one hand, and face-to-face and blended delivery on the other, largely because fully online delivery is through Extended Education (with some exceptions). There may be a financial incentive for units to offer distance education courses—including fully online courses—through Extended Education, which does not exist for face-to-face or blended courses. “Regular” teaching is face-to-face delivery from September to April. Fully online teaching through Extended Education is usually considered to be overload teaching for regular faculty. As a result, most fully online delivery is by sessional staff.
13. Instructors may not have experience with blended or online learning, and there is no substantive, systematic training for teachers in any mode (varieties of face-to-face, blended, fully online).
14. Our use of blended and fully online delivery modes is not as strategic as it could or should be, although some units (Dentistry, Nursing, and Social Work, for example) appear to be thinking about the strategic mix of various delivery modes.
15. We may not provide sufficient support to students in our blended or online learning classes. There should be more information and supports available to help students succeed. Many students enter online courses for convenience, but with little understanding of the unique challenges.
16. IT systems with multiple login requirements, with complex or limited capability for shifting content across systems, and which are viewed as too confusing push faculty to use friendlier external systems such as Facebook and Dropbox, but which involve increased institutional risk including possible privacy violations.
17. There may be a lack of understanding across the university about copyright issues in blended and online learning environments.
18. We do not have sufficient institutional research capacity to conduct comparative analyses of learning outcomes, student satisfaction, costs, and other matters across multiple delivery modes (fully online, blended, and varieties of face-to-face).
19. We do not have university-level policies and procedures governing multiple modes of course and program delivery.

IX. Recommendations

Rather than proposing a specific plan for the future development of blended and online learning at the University of Manitoba, we make some general and specific recommendations that we hope will provide a first step in the evolution of a systematic institutional approach to the development and support of blended and online learning as part of the range of course and program delivery options that are available to programs and instructors.¹² We recognize that the recommendations that follow are not exhaustive and that further recommendations will necessarily be generated as the university continues to develop its capacity in this area.

The recommendations are organized in the following categories:

- *Organization and Leadership*
- *Technology*
- *Research*
- *Teaching and Learning Support*
- *Quality Assurance*
- *Faculty Development*
- *Academic Workload*
- *Financing and Compensation*
- *Services for Students*
- *Fostering Innovation and Sharing Experiences*

Organization and Leadership

The governance and management of course and program delivery, including the role and use of learning technologies, takes place at a variety of levels from individual programs through to senior administration and the Board of Governors. This governance and management requires a degree of central coordination and control while ensuring academic units have enough flexibility and autonomy to plan and offer the courses and programs that best meet the educational needs of their students. Senior leaders must support multiple delivery modes and the use of learning technologies, planning and support must be integrated and continuous, and considerations regarding delivery mode and technology use should be an integral feature of program planning.

Recommendation 1

The Task Force recommends that the President's Executive Team signal its support for multiple course and program delivery modes and learning technologies as part of a renewed Strategic Planning Framework.

Recommendation 2

The Task Force recommends that the university-level coordination and direction of course and program delivery, including the use of classroom-based and non-classroom based learning technologies, be placed under the authority of the Vice-Provost (Academic Affairs). It is further recommended that a formal liaison be established between the Vice-Provost

¹² Bates and Sangra refer to this approach as “strategic thinking” rather than “strategic planning”: A.W. (Tony) Bates and Albert Sangra, *Managing Technology in Higher Education: Strategies for Transforming Teaching and Learning* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2011), 94-95.

(Academic Affairs) and the Chief Information Officer to ensure the orderly management and maintenance of basic technological infrastructure required to support teaching and learning.

Recommendation 3

The Task Force recommends that the Senate Committee on Academic Computing (SCAC) and the President's Advisory Committee on Information Technology Innovation (PACITi) jointly consider the matter of a governance body for learning technologies across multiple delivery modes that will provide strategic direction in this area.

Recommendation 4

The Task Force recommends that academic units include attention to the mode in which courses are taught when they develop their multi-year academic plans.

Technology

Our ability to offer high quality and reliable programs and courses that rely on technology are dependent on computer hardware, computer networks, learning management systems, and various classroom technologies. Information Services and Technology's current multi-year plan for upgrading wireless service has been determined in consultation with the University of Manitoba Students' Union and the Graduate Students' Association, while also considering the age and ability of the existing network in the building.

Recommendation 5

The Task Force recommends that an appropriate academic officer or committee be directly and actively involved in decisions regarding learning technologies, including wireless service upgrades, to ensure that instructional needs are given appropriate priority.

Some members of the university community have expressed a number of frustrations with D2L, while others are happy with the new learning management system, as noted in the "Opportunities, Threats, Strengths and Weaknesses" section above. Currently, the Centre for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning manages the relationship between the University of Manitoba and D2L. Furthermore, there are a variety of learning technologies being used across the university to supplement learning in all delivery modes.

Recommendation 6

The Task Force recommends that the Senate Committee on Academic Computing form a learning-technologies users' subcommittee, with appropriate user representation, to gather ongoing input and advice on the management and development of learning management systems and other learning technologies, including horizon scanning (mobile and technology), in order to ensure that these technologies are as responsive as possible to user needs.

Recommendation 7

The Task Force recommends that the administrative units that manage relationships with external learning management systems include academic representation from among users of the learning management systems.

Research

Extended Education conducts an annual analysis of performance in its fully online, other distance, and blended learning environments, and provides this analysis to academic units. In addition, a few individual academic units appear to do some of their own ad hoc analysis. Notwithstanding these activities, we do not have systematic and comprehensive institutional data that allows us to assess learning experiences across delivery modes. Furthermore, we do not have institutional data on our faculty and students' access to and use of communication technologies.

Recommendation 8

The Task Force recommends that the University of Manitoba establish dedicated teaching and learning research capacity in an appropriate existing unit ("The Unit" for the purposes of this report), under the direction of the Vice-Provost (Academic Affairs), to compile data and conduct analysis that will allow us to make evidence-based decisions about learning strategies across delivery modes. This dedicated research capacity will enhance existing research that is taking place in various academic units across the university and will assist in coordinating this research. This research should align with the university's Strategic Research Plan.

Recommendation 9

The Task Force recommends that The Unit conduct a regular horizon scan and surveys of student and faculty technology use in order to better inform our learning, teaching, and technology needs across all modes.

Teaching and Learning Support

Course development support is currently located in various units across the university and there is no systematic coordination of that support. Extended Education supports the fully online and blended courses that it delivers on behalf of academic units and on its own through the provision of course development and delivery infrastructure, including instructional design support. Those academic units that have developed their own fully online or blended capacity provide their own support to a greater or lesser degree, depending on the resources available to them. And the Centre for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning supports face-to-face instruction— including technology-enhanced classroom instruction— by offering workshops and individual consultations.

Recommendation 10

The Task Force recommends that support for teaching and learning across all delivery modes be centrally coordinated and managed through The Unit. This unit will follow a federated model in which it will be responsible for establishing and maintaining support standards in consultation with academic units, determining in consultation with academic units the circumstances under which support services may be provided at a local or central level, and providing teaching and learning support to those academic units for which it has responsibility.

Academic staff members who bring their subject-matter and pedagogical expertise to any course development process should not also be expected to contribute the other skills that are required

for successful and high-quality fully online and blended courses. These courses require a significant amount of preparation and planning prior to delivery that use the skills of a variety of individuals, including an academic staff member with responsibility for the course (who will normally be the subject-matter expert developing the content for the course), a course designer or designers with various skills (learning design, visual and media design), an editor, and a copyright officer.

Recommendation 11

The Task Force recommends that the University establish that each fully online and blended course have a course team with a designated course-team coordinator. The team will normally include an academic expert (who will have the right to be the course-team coordinator or to delegate this responsibility to another team member) and an additional member or members with expertise in course design, multimedia design, editing, and copyright. The purpose of the course team is to ensure that academic staff have the support they need to develop high quality blended and online courses.

Quality Assurance

We have a number of mechanisms to ensure the quality of our programs and courses. Faculty councils and Deans, Senate and the relevant Senate subcommittees, the Provost's Office, and the Council on Post-Secondary Education, which ultimately approves them, review new programs. Externally accredited programs are subject to periodic review by the accrediting bodies. All of our programs undergo regular review according to the [Academic Program Reviews](#) policy. The Senate Committee on Curriculum and Course Changes, meanwhile, approves new programs and courses as well as revisions to existing ones. And, finally, Senate's [Multi-Sectioned Courses Policy](#) provides some degree of consistency across multiple sections of the same course.

Generally speaking, distance and online courses at the University of Manitoba and elsewhere benefit from a greater degree of collective and collegial judgment than is the case for face-to-face courses. This practice developed in part because, like academic publications that are subject to peer review and collegial acceptance, distance and online courses are akin to published materials that are potentially available for public scrutiny and assessment. Students benefit from this collective academic judgment by having access to course materials that have been reviewed by more than one academic authority.

Online courses offered through Extended Education are subject to final sign-off by the Head of the department offering the course (or Dean in non-departmentalized faculties) declaring that the course is equivalent to a face-to-face course. The quality of blended and online courses not offered through Extended Education is monitored by the individual academic units, which may or may not have standards or processes in place.

Recommendation 12

The Task Force recommends that Senate develop a policy and procedures for the collegial judgment and approval of fully online courses offered at the University of Manitoba, building upon practices currently in place in Extended Education. This system will respect the academic freedom of academic staff members to choose the course materials and present them as s/he deems appropriate and will include a peer review mechanism, a process for approval to proceed with an online course or revision, and a regular revision or review cycle for online courses. The Task Force further recommends that mechanisms be explored to ensure that the online component of blended courses attend to the best practices in design and delivery.

Recommendation 13

The Task Force recommends that the Academic Program Review procedures contemplate that University of Manitoba programs may contain a variety of delivery modes and that at least one external reviewer be familiar with blended or online instruction in the case of programs that contain these delivery modes.

Faculty Development

Academic staff members have not normally been trained to be university teachers in any delivery mode. The University of Manitoba does offer a voluntary Certificate in Higher Education Training for graduate students. Academic staff members do not receive any formal training in university teaching, although the Centre for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning does provide a number of workshops and other supports, and Extended Education offers instructor training for online course development and delivery.

Recommendation 14

The Task Force recommends that a course or program be developed to provide academic staff members with training as university teachers across all delivery modes from face-to-face to fully online. It further recommends that this course or program be required for all new UMFA hires, with appropriate course release or other compensation determined at a Faculty level following advice provided by The Unit.

Recommendation 15

The Task Force recommends that the course in teaching and learning that will be required for all new hires be available to existing academic staff, with appropriate course release or other compensation determined at the Faculty level following advice provided by The Unit. Priority should be given to those academic staff members who will be teaching a fully online or blended course for the first time.

Recommendation 16

The Task Force recommends the development of a workshop or course for academic administrators on the selection and management of delivery modes and learning technologies in program planning.

Academic Workload

Academic work may be organized differently depending on the delivery mode. A fully online or blended course will normally require more advanced planning and preparatory work than a face-to-face course. In addition, the fully online or blended course requires that the academic staff member function as part of a team with other university staff involved in course development and delivery.

Recommendation 17

The Task Force recommends that individual Faculties, with advice provided by The Unit, develop frameworks for determining the appropriate academic workload weighting of blended, fully online, and face-to-face instruction.

Recommendation 18

The Task Force recommends that academic units plan, manage and assign teaching loads for faculty and other academic staff in a manner that values all delivery modes equally.

Financing and Compensation

We do not have institutional data that allow us to compare course and program costs by delivery mode.

We have special budgetary and compensation models for credit courses offered by Extended Education on behalf of academic units. In the case of distance and online courses offered through Extended Education, faculties and departments receive 70% of net tuition revenue from the courses that they offer. Furthermore, individual distance and online instructors are compensated on a per-student basis. The only exception to this is regular faculty members who may teach distance or online courses on load, which is not normally the case. Most distance and online teaching is done by sessional instructors or by regular faculty members teaching overload for additional compensation.

Recommendation 19

The Task Force recommends that the university develop a system to determine the comparative costs of course delivery by delivery mode, including human resource, capital (physical and digital infrastructure), and other costs. It further recommends that the university determine the comparative costs to students of course attendance by delivery mode.

Recommendation 20

The Task Force recommends that the university review the special budgetary model for distance and online credit courses offered through Extended Education in a manner consistent with the principle that the same financial and compensation system should be applied to all delivery modes unless a decision is made to apply differential systems to achieve a specific strategic objective.

Recommendation 21

The Task Force recommends that the University review tuition surcharges and student fees relating to all modes of delivery.

Recommendation 22

The Task Force recommends that, in order to neutralize any unintended financial incentives for instructors to favour one delivery mode over another, the university review the per-student compensation model that is used for distance and online credit courses offered through Extended Education.

Services for Students

Students require various services, including libraries, admissions and registration, accessibility and accommodation, and advising, regardless of their course delivery mode. In addition, students need technological support of various kinds across all delivery modes, with more intensive and extensive support required as the proportion of online activity in a course or program increases. It is essential that comparable student services and technological support are available to all students in order to ensure equitable educational experiences.

Recommendation 23

The Task Force recommends that the University review currently available services and resources for students to ensure that they are available to learners regardless of course or program delivery mode. Further to this review, the Task Force also recommends that a plan be developed to enhance services and resources where necessary and assess their utilization and outcomes.

Recommendation 24

The Task Force recommends the provision of an appropriate ~~model~~ combination of real (i.e. human contact in real time) and virtual 24/7 technological and library support for students.

Recommendation 25

The Task Force recommends that the University develop an online student orientation, including materials on academic integrity, which students are able to complete in the learning management system. The Task Force further recommends that students complete an “Are you ready” or “Is this format for you” exercise before they register for an online course.

Recommendation 26

The Task Force recommends that the University commit to ensuring that all course materials, including audio and video, are accessible via assistive technologies or produced, as outlined by Student Accessibility Services, in an alternate format regardless of the delivery mode.

Recommendation 27

The Task Force recommends that the University promote information, technological and digital literacy for students, and that resources are developed to support that promotion regardless of delivery mode.

Recommendation 28

The Task Force recommends that the University review the Students' Evaluation of Educational Quality (SEEQ) student evaluation tool to ensure that it is appropriate and applicable for all delivery modes.

Fostering Innovation and Sharing Experiences

All University of Manitoba academic staff with teaching responsibilities engage in face-to-face instruction, but only some take part in fully online or blended delivery. As a result, all have some familiarity with the strengths, weaknesses, limits and possibilities of classroom pedagogy, but few are aware of what works and does not work in an online learning environment. There is a variety of approaches to blended and online learning across the university and there are individual faculty members scattered across both campuses who are either attempting innovative approaches to online learning or who would like the opportunity to experiment with the application of specific learning technologies. The university should make efforts to foster innovation in blended and online pedagogy and to allow the sharing and showcasing of experiences and best practices.

The first Massive Open Online Courses (MOOC) was offered at the University of Manitoba in 2008. They have since become the latest wave or fad in the long history of distance education (beginning with nineteenth century postal courses, which were predicted to revolutionize education when they were introduced). While there is much more to distance and online education than MOOCs, many who have just discovered or have just turned their attention to online education tend to reduce all of online education to MOOCs. MOOCs, as they are currently constituted, are used to offer non-credit university-level education to a global audience at no cost. They are, in essence, twenty-first century versions of university extension. They are different than their nineteenth and twentieth century predecessors in two ways, however. First, they can reach learners anywhere in the world, which is a characteristic they share with other forms of online education, and, second, the range and nature of the data they gather provides the opportunity to conduct sophisticated analyses of student learning behaviour. The Task Force believes that the primary role that MOOCs can play in the University of Manitoba's blended and online learning strategy is to raise awareness of the university's strengths with a global audience.

Recommendation 28

The Task Force recommends the establishment of an innovation fund under the auspices of the Vice-Provost (Academic Affairs) to provide grants to staff and grants and teaching release to individual academic staff members or groups of academic staff members who propose innovative projects in blended or online learning. The Task Force further recommends that individual academic units consider comparable programs aligned with the central fund.

Recommendation 29

The Task Force recommends that the University, through the appropriate committees or units, create learning communities for blended and online learning innovators in order to foster the sharing of experiences and best practices.

Recommendation 30

The Task Force recommends that the University, through the appropriate committees or units, undertake educational initiatives within the university community to showcase best practices and innovative approaches in blended and online learning, including services for students, from the University of Manitoba and elsewhere.

Recommendation 31

The Task Force recommends that the University, through the appropriate committees or units, lead department-based or Faculty-based workshops to discuss and consider the creative use of learning technologies in teaching and learning as a first step in the development of unit-based learning technology plans.

Recommendation 32

The Task Force recommends that the University of Manitoba identify three to five subject areas in which we are world leaders, and that we develop and offer MOOCs in one or more of these areas.

X. Next Steps

The Task Force proposes that an Implementation Working Group, under the direction of the Vice-Provost (Academic Affairs) and with representation from both campuses, be formed with the task of overseeing the implementation of the various recommendations, including which university officer or university committee has responsibility for the implementation of specific recommendations.

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Appendix A – Task Force Members and Term of Reference

Blended and Online Learning Task Force Terms of Reference

- Consider the state of blended and online learning at other Universities in Canada
- Assess where we currently are at the University of Manitoba through a SWOT Analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) regarding blended and online learning for teaching and learning across campus
- Develop a university-wide strategy for blended and online learning: where we want to go (identify new opportunities, areas to build on) and the potential benefits to students, faculty and the institution
- Determine what we need to do to achieve the strategy (recommendations for next steps)
- Prepare a report for submission to the Vice-Provost (Academic Affairs)

Task Force Members

Jeffery Taylor, *Dean of Arts (Chair)*

Karen Adams, *University Librarian*

Greg Bak, *Assistant Professor, Department of History, Faculty of Arts*

Gabrielle Bartsch, *IST, Assistant Director, Client Relationships*

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Donalda Wotton, *Instructor, Faculty of Nursing*

Kathleen Legris, *Resource, Office of the Vice-President (Academic) and Provost*

Paula Chorney, *Support, Office of the Vice-President (Academic) and Provost*

Appendix B – Units with Blended Offerings

Academic units that reported in the survey of department heads that they have some blended courses.

Department of Interior Design, School of Art

Department of Native Studies, Faculty of Arts

Department of Psychology, Faculty of Arts

Faculty of Dentistry

Department of Administration, Foundations and Psychology, Faculty of Education

Department of Curriculum, Teaching and Learning, Faculty of Education

Faculty of Kinesiology and Recreation Management

School of Physical Therapy, Faculty of Medicine

Faculty of Nursing

Riddell Faculty of Environment, Earth, and Resources

Department of Biological Sciences, Faculty of Science

Faculty of Social Work

Appendix C – Technologies Used in Masters in Nursing—Nurse Practitioner

The range of learning technologies used in the Masters in Nursing—Nurse Practitioner program:

- Desire2Learn
- Adobe Connect
- Skype
- Google Circles

In addition, each instructor may offer a range of technologies as teaching strategies, which will likely be adapted over time. For example:

- YouTube
- Apps for cell phones (prescribing and/or for various medical conditions)
- Excel spread sheet to track clinical hours
- Word
- Adobe Reader
- Zotero
- PowerPoint
- Links to key websites
- Case-based discussion
- Learning lab – standardized patients, videotaping health assessment exams, return demonstrations

Appendix D – IST Wireless Upgrade Schedule

The following is IST's multi-year schedule, by building, for upgrading the wireless network to IEEE 802.11n standard.

2012-2013

University Centre
Bio Sciences
Art Lab
Machray Hall
Armes
Sinnott
St. Andrew's
Administration
Allen
Education
Buller
Duff Roblin

2013-2014

Welcome Centre
Chancellor's Hall
Grains Storage
Physical Plant
Stores Bldg.
New Stadium
Dairy Science
Dafoe Library
Wallace
Brodie/Buhler
Basic Medical Sciences Building
University College
Mary Speechly
Pembina Hall
Arthur Mauro

2014-2015 (some of this will be done in 2013-2014 if IST has the funding and time)

Drake Centre
EITC-E2
Tier
E3-EITC
EITC Atrium and E1
Fletcher Argue
University College
St John's
St Paul's

Robson Hall

Helen Glass

Isbister

Russell

Human Ecology

Frank Kennedy

Pathology

Other Buildings that may have been missed

Appendix E – Department Head Survey

Blended and Online Learning Survey – Department Heads

The Blended and Online Learning Task Force conducted an online survey of Department Heads during February/March 2013. A survey link was sent on February 19, 2013 via email to 81 department heads. Thirty-nine (39) completed the full survey, while a few additional respondents viewed but did not complete the survey.

The survey responses are broadly categorized in this paper into the following topics:

- I. Course Offerings
- II. Purpose
- III. Use of Technology
- IV. Instruction
- V. Copyright
- VI. Resources
- VII. Retention
- VIII. Future Use of Technology
- IX. Support
- X. Challenges
- XI. Additional Comments

I. Course Offerings

Does your unit offer fully online courses?

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
Yes		67%	26
No		33%	13
Total Responses			39

Does your unit offer any courses in a blended format?

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
Yes		31%	12
No		69%	27
Total Responses			39

Could there be courses in your unit that use a blended format that you do not know about?

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
Yes		18%	7
No		82%	32
Total Responses			39

21. Which of the following best describes your unit?

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
Some of our courses are considered blended		92%	11
About half of our courses are considered blended		8%	1
Most of our courses are considered blended		0%	0
Total Responses			12

II. Purpose

Why do you offer fully online courses? (Select all that apply)

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
To provide a variety of course delivery options to our program		65%	17
Revenue generation		42%	11
Accessibility		77%	20
Individual faculty choice		23%	6
Student demand		58%	15
Lack of classroom space		0%	0
Better student outcomes		8%	2
Other (Please Specify Below)		19%	5
Total Responses			26

Why do you offer fully online courses? (Select all that apply) – Response to ‘Other’

- To provide 1000 and 2000 level courses that are required for students who anticipate enrolling in General Major, Advanced Major and Honours Programs.
- Recruitment into Honours and Major program. To increase general awareness of discipline.
- Help meet demand for provincial certification.
- Enhanced student learning.
- Accessibility to high school students, community, and an international audience, and revenue generation with a large on-line course.
- Lack of resources to offer face to face course offerings; instructor/student ratio is above the UM average ... by offering on line courses, we can meet the demand for our courses while freeing up faculty to cover undergrad and grad courses.
- "To provide a variety of course delivery options to our program": to increase visibility of and awareness the department among students who would otherwise not consider our courses in their programs or who would not normally have the opportunity to include them.
- Revenue is welcome, but we have not offered a course with that as a motive.
- Offer the opportunity for students not living in Winnipeg.

Why do you offer blended courses?

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
To provide a variety of delivery options to our program		58%	7
Revenue generation		0%	0
Accessibility		50%	6
Individual faculty choice		58%	7
Lack of classroom space		0%	0
Better student outcomes		50%	6
Other (please specify below)		25%	3
Total Responses			12

Why do you offer blended courses? (Response to ‘Other’)

- Our desire to stay near the cutting edge of educational delivery.
- To use the current resources available for mandatory on-campus portions of the courses such as labs.
- Coursework aligned with course objectives Ability to access valuable and online-accessible content

- We are really trying to move away from the totally independent study format to include web conferencing and synchronous contact in all of our distance courses.
- To create a global classroom.
- With a summer session innovation fund grant, we are developing a course with a scholar who can provide an expertise that our faculty does not currently offer.
- Provides opportunities to expand our students' curricular options and enhances overall degree program quality by increasing the intellectual base within our courses (long distance, with two faculty members co-teaching the course to learn the content from the 'visiting'/blended learning scholar).
- Typically, if an instructor is going to be away at a conference, they develop some blended learning experiences to engage students in course material from a distance. Very few faculty members actually intentionally develop blended courses in our department. Most prefer face-to-face courses.

III. Use of Technology

Does your unit have any policies governing the use of technology in teaching (e.g. the use of social media)?

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
Yes		10%	4
No		90%	35
Total Responses			39

IV. Instruction

Are courses taught fully online considered regular load or overload for full-time, continuing faculty members?

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
Regular Load		17%	4
Overload		58%	14
Both Regular/Overload		25%	6
Total Responses			24

Are classes taught in blended format considered regular or overload for full-time continuing faculty members?

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
Regular		58%	7
Overload		17%	2
Both Regular/Overload		25%	3
Total Responses			12

What proportion of your fully online course sections are taught by part-time (sessional) instructors?

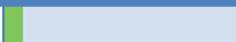
Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
No online courses are taught by part-time (sessional) instructors		21%	5
Some of our online courses are taught by part-time (sessional) instructors		17%	4
About half of our online courses are taught by part-time (sessional) instructors		12%	3
Most of our online courses are taught by part-time (sessional) instructors		50%	12
Total Responses			24

What proportion of your blended courses are taught by part-time (sessional) instructors?

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
No blended courses are taught by part-time (sessional) instructors		75%	9
Some of our blended courses are taught by part-time (sessional) instructors		8%	1
About half of our blended courses are taught by part-time (sessional) instructors		8%	1
Most of our blended courses are taught by part-time (sessional) instructors		8%	1
Total Responses			12

V. Copyright

Do you have unit-level practices for copyright clearance for fully online courses?

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
Yes ²		8%	2
No		92%	24
Total Responses			26

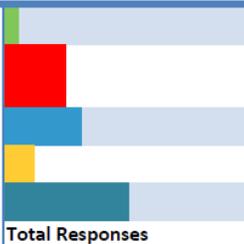
Do you have unit-level practices for copyright clearance for blended courses?

26) Do you have unit-level practices for copyright clearance for blended courses?

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
Yes ⁵		17%	2
No		83%	10
Total Responses			12

VI. Resources

Do you provide resources to support fully online courses?

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
Course release		6%	1
Instructional designers or similar staff support		25%	4
Extra compensation		31%	5
Information technology (describe) ³		12%	2
Other (please specify below)		50%	8
Total Responses			16

Do you provide resources to support fully online courses? 'OTHER'

- Nothing over and above any other course.
- Assign an instructor to ensure compatibility with regular version.
- All pay for course development and course offering, and all technical assistance for course development comes from outside the Department.
- Compensation through Extended Education.
- Some initial consultation was provided by Extended Education and access to software that allows for narration of PowerPoint presentations was provided.
- Most often faculty members who design courses work with the CMS techs from the university though service is sporadic and generally not in a timely fashion because there are too many needs in a centralized service provision model.
- The Department does not have the means to provide such resources; all resources must come from Extended Education.
- The faculty provides course release time in lieu of regular workload.
- We have provided opportunities for our graduate students and/or sessional instructors who have been key allies to our undergrad programs to develop courses - without support from Distance Ed, we would not be able to meet the demands of developing new courses. It is simply a resource issue ... we did request funding from our Endowment fund last year to develop one course, but did not have to rely upon (those very limited funds) in the end because Distance Ed approved our request to upgrade two already existing courses and develop a new course (all U1 level)

- No one has asked for any support. One of my department members did develop a fully online course, but it was for the other department. And I do believe that he was compensated via Extended Education for course development.
- None other than the usual payment to sessionals.
- We appoint academics to develop on line courses for Extended Ed. We also appoint the instructors for such courses.
- Very small amount of admin support.

Does your unit provide any of the following resources to support blended learning? Please check all that apply.

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
Course release		50%	4
Instructional designers or similar staff support		38%	3
Extra compensation		12%	1
Information technology (describe)		38%	3
Other (please specify below)		25%	2
Total Responses			8

Does your unit provide any of the following resources to support blended learning? Please check all that apply. (Information technology (describe))

- D2L and Vital Source Technologies
- Software, equipment, and technical support.
- We offer a limited amount of instructional support to instructors wishing to develop blended format courses. In addition, we have moved to a 100% electronic textbook system that nicely supports the blended learning model.
- The audio visual unit tapes the videos for the lectures. These are high quality videos that support the course. The department would not be willing to fore go quality as delivery of the course in video format is so dependent on that.
- A Teaching Assistant is provided for the courses so that technological connections can be monitored and maximized.
- The one course in which we have a blended approach is supported by a FT faculty member who went to several workshops for the ANGEL and now D2L LMS. He is our "in house" expert.
- The Dean can assign the development of blended or online courses as part of Faculty's regular workload.
- Summer Session provided support.
- Unfortunately, our capacity to undertake this kind of program/course development is limited to the capacity of Extended Ed and the instructional course designers (who are fully tasked, to my knowledge).
- We have provided one of our educational technology instructors 3 credits of teaching release to offer professional development and support for using more technology in their teaching. Some department members may be transferring what they have learned in these sessions into blended course learning experiences and/or might ask for help in doing so.

VII. Retention

Has your unit examined the retention data (i.e. VW rates) of students taking face-to-face and online courses?

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
Yes ⁴		27%	7
No		73%	19
Total Responses			26

Has your unit examined the retention data (i.e. VW rates) of students taking face-to-face and blended learning courses?

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
Yes		25%	3
No		75%	9
Total Responses			12

VIII. Future Use of Technology

Do you predict the number of fully online courses will increase, decrease, or stay the same in your unit over the next 10 years?

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
Increase		56%	22
Decrease		0%	0
Stay the Same		44%	17
Total Responses			39

Do you predict the number of blended courses will increase, decrease, or stay the same in your unit over the next 10 years?

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
Increase		62%	24
Decrease		0%	0
Stay the Same		38%	15
Total Responses			39

IX. Support

Would you like the University of Manitoba to provide more support for fully online course development and delivery? Please explain.

Negative Responses:

- Three indicated that resources would be better spent on face-to-face learning.
- One would prefer that any additional support time not reduce face-to-face learning resources.
- One believes it unnecessary to support fully online course development as few courses are suitable for online learning.

Affirmative Responses:

- Three indicated current supports are adequate.
- The university should support and encourage a variety of learning methods. Incentives for instructors would be valuable.
- Most faculty members have not used online courses in their own teaching.
- There is a great demand, but in order to develop and run a successful online course, additional faculty would be needed.
- More support for making parts of regular courses also available online.
- Additional resources would be necessary in light of all of the other new systems being forced upon them.
- Training workshops for instructors tasked to create online courses.
- Adequate infrastructural support (advice, workshops, and dedicated people) would be useful in helping us upgrade departmental online course offerings and maintain an advanced level as the environment of online learning evolves.
- An introductory course on the 'whys and how's.'
- Organization and delivery is sometimes a challenge for those developing courses.
- The university needs a more fully developed infrastructure for students who study from a distance.
- At the local level. We need faculty members to be able to integrate and develop these courses using the CMS in existence. They need immediacy of support for technology and design.
- Include re-development of existing courses.
- Pedagogical support Technical support Course evaluation support.

- To support a more consistency and higher overall standard.
- Identify who is responsible for what tasks and who decides to avoid situations where the course developers have overruled Faculty - or imposed their idea of what the course should look like.
- More resources to Distance Ed (currently under-resourced).
- Provide research evidence of the most promising online practices. Human relationships are at the heart of teaching and teaching effectiveness often depends upon successful interaction between teacher, students and subject matter.
- Resources and release to update and develop the course content on line.
- If we were to develop on-line courses, we would need and expect support.
- A more comprehensive online manual or more in-person assistance.

Would you like the University of Manitoba to provide more support for the development and delivery of blended courses? Please explain.

Negative Responses:

- Hard to see the value in this.
- I am not sure about the support to be expected from the U of M.

Affirmative Responses:

- The current supports seem adequate.
- Perhaps more potential for this than for fully online courses, so this is where the university should provide support for development.
- We would need more faculty members.
- We would be willing to expand if the University provides server capacity to up load lectures onto the web.
- The limited factor is probably the personnel required for delivery. We would probably be looking to supplement rather than replace existing offerings, requiring additional instructors for the delivery. Existing resources may be adequate for the development of the courses.
- University should provide access to a teleconferencing room for students taking courses off campus.
- Develop local faculty members who can gain course release to help faculty members in internal units feel comfortable designing these courses and support the benefits of these courses.
- On-going technical and education development support.
- The only reasons for blended education might be a specific audience in Manitoba who would come to campus in intense periods. For that, however, our target audience is probably too small.
- University should support instructors who feel they could provide enhanced learning for their students through blended learning.
- If our department will embrace more international content, we would like support for a blended learning classroom.
- There needs to be faculty development and support in the building in an ongoing way for any teaching with technology, from simply using a Smartboard in a regular face-to-face class to the design and development of blended learning courses that draw upon a wide variety of e-teaching, software, and tools.
- Funds and time release.
- If we were mandated to develop such courses, we would expect support.

X. Challenges

Describe any challenges you have faced or are facing in offering fully online courses? How did you overcome them?

- Regular faculty simply are not interested in doing this
- The fact that a series of different programs have been used to deliver online courses - instructor has to learn a new system every couple of years.
- Keeping them "in sync" with regular offerings.
- A small fraction of our course offerings are fully on-line largely because we require students to take a lab portion of the high demand courses. This means the students must have 'face-time' with instructors. For the

on-line courses that are offered any difficulties have arisen with lack of communication between distance Ed and the instructor

- Low enrollment courses are cancelled. We sometimes have trouble meeting CMB face-to-face requirements that we impose on ourselves. Students at a distance can't come. Skype or something like it would probably work better.
- Concerns over academic integrity by some students. Addressed by balancing components of grading.
- Marking loads associated with a fully online W course. Not yet fully solved.
- Divergence in material and assessment between on-line and face-to-face offerings of the same course. Addressed by examination of final grades, discussions with instructors.
- The primary challenge is that our on-line courses are not provided through Extended Education and this limits our students' access to resources such as document delivery from the library.
- Adjustments to the system can usually be accommodated once the right set of contacts are initiated, but this extra work creates stress for the students who need access to books for their research and it makes them feel like even though they pay tuition, they are somehow outside of the university's system.
- Faculty resistance for pedagogical or ideological reasons lack of knowledge of technology or familiarity with systems the time it takes with Extended Ed to design courses that is sometimes more onerous than designing a course one's self constant change-over of CMS has discouraged individuals from constant revision/renewal copyright issues and management has become very burdensome.
- Privacy issues of student information available to multiple techs without just cause (i.e. courses with all that private info available to 25 techs for one course) cms and network problems lack of "just in time" kinds of service.
- Challenges to keep courses sufficiently updated.
- Expertise and support Technological capability Guidelines for numbers of students that can be supported on-line Equipment Student demands for timely response 24 hours.
- Language teaching even with all Web 2.0 advancements cannot replace constant direct interaction in language teaching; so no teacher who has taught an on-line course in our unit, prefers this kind of instruction; it is a useful supplement to widen the program's scope and attract more students.
- Instructors have complained about the quality of some of the course instruction packages. I have asked instructors if they would be interested in developing new course packages.
- Concerns over test validity were raised a couple of years ago, which led our department to restrict the percentage of final course grades that could be derived from online exams. Otherwise, courses we offer through Distance and Online Education have not generated significant challenges.
- Instructors' absence of knowledge and at times, absence of a willingness to learn, about how to use the technology.
- Student isolation - we are trying to include synchronous components (web conferences) in all online courses.
- Perceived absence of control - how can we assess students' abilities when for some of the courses - instructors are simply graders.
- There is not an emphasis on teaching and this is particularly hard for those students who experience academic challenges.
- Courses needed to be revised as textbooks became outdated and better learning material became available. It was difficult to find somebody to revise the course but we eventually found a sessional instructor and graduate students to do the job. Courses could not be offered during the (often lengthy) period in which they were revised.
- There were no challenges for those faculty experimenting with online or blended formats. There were, however, many issues with attempting to bring students from a distance "virtually" into a face-to-face course offering.
- A number of students who do not do well in the in-classroom courses have the expectation that the online equivalents will get them better grades
- None, as far as I can see, that didn't arise in traditional distance delivery.
- None, except for the odd case when course development was not completed on time.
- A sense of disconnection from students. This can be partially mitigated by email and other methods of contact, but it isn't like doing the course in person. D2L is another challenge.

Describe any challenges you have faced or are facing in offering blended courses. How did you overcome them?

- Instructor buy-in is our biggest concern, with an aging faculty. The change to D2L, and difficulties with technical support, has left some professors frustrated with the blended format. We have experienced problems with our expectation that the wireless system would support our use of D2L. As more of our courses went on-line, the wireless system was unable to accommodate the load, leading to instructor and student frustration (i.e., the system crashed during an on-line exam earlier this year). We are now changing to hard-wired internet connections.
- Copyright issues of the material on the dvd's in the library has from time to time been an issue as student will try to copy these while in the library. Demand of the videos in the library is also high, particularly during exam time; however, production of increasing numbers of videos is cost prohibitive to the department. Scheduling of taping the videos in the audio visual department has been problematic. We would like to be able to consider the option of on-line delivery of the video lectures but have thus far been hampered by reliability of service that would go to the students registered in the course.
- I know that I'm using "blended" in a slightly different manner than the term is intended. But we have chosen to provide our two or three distance students with our theory seminars using Skype over a regular semester because we feel that the alternative (block courses that condense the learning experience into one intensive nine day period) is a less satisfying and successful learning experience. But this approach has only been marginally successful in terms of letting the distance students participate effectively with the students who are in residence. Everyone is very cooperative and that is the way we've overcome challenges when they arise.
- Our program is somewhat unique in that there is very little choice involved. The curriculum is set and virtually all of the courses are required. Overall throughout the program we are trying to incorporate a variety of teaching strategies, including, face to face, tutorial style, peer learning and problem based learning.
- Same as online though when blended courses are conducted for the issue of access, we still run into access problems unless Profs are willing to also use alternative face to face frameworks like weekends, etc.
- Challenges mainly have to do with the expectations of some students that on campus courses should have a live instructor presenting material for a certain amount of time per week. Other students appreciate the flexibility to access and learn lecture material through online sources whenever and however many times that they wish.
- The biggest challenge at times is the students' ability to connect to the Internet - we engage with a variety of Indigenous agencies/communities many of which are still using dial-up internet or students do not have access to computers. In terms of overcoming these - it is not within our control - however, I will say that there are likely times that pedagogy loses out.
- Technical difficulties which we lived with.
- We'd like to offer one of our blended learning courses more often but we need to focus on our regular course offerings as we do not have adequate staffing (faculty, instructors) to cover off our program requirements and electives. We can offer courses every other year, where possible.
- I don't think that we have enough experience with online or blended learning course offerings in my department to identify challenges with any degree of certitude. I suspect most of the challenges would revolve around professors' self-efficacy with technology and with the technological problems that occur for students. Also, professors have strong beliefs about teaching and learning, and any approach used has to fit with their philosophies. For some, teaching in an online environment does not align with their orientations to teaching and learning. I am trying to overcome issues related to teaching and technology via faculty development and support. I advocated for the 3 credits of release time for an educational technology

instructor to work with faculty, and I also offered to pay for an online course for all of my department members with money I had saved within my budget. Approximately half of department took the course, and there has been some impact. People are engaging in professional learning and are exploring the area of technology more now in their teaching.

XI. Additional Comments

Is there anything you would like to add regarding the development and delivery of fully online courses in your unit?

- We currently have no courses with multiple sections; adding fully online course sections would mean adding sections of existing courses. We do not see transferring any of our existing courses to fully online courses exclusively with no face-to-face section.
- Across North America, and in other continents, there is a great demand for online courses in our subject, and we would very much like to be able to develop and deliver a few of the highest quality. In order for us to do this, we will need additional faculty.
- Most of our courses come with labs and hence fully online is difficult.
- Languages are problematic to teach fully on line.
- We have discussed this topic in our Departmental meetings and at this time, no one has an interest in taking the lead to develop any on-line courses.
- As described there are only a few courses that we would consider providing a fully on-line version of because many of the high enrollment courses, where fully on-line courses may provide the flexibility to students and relieve the in class pressure on enrollments, also require a lab.
- We will walk a fine line with online courses. We prefer to see students face-to-face but recognize that this is not always possible for all students. The biggest problem, as I have encountered it in the last 36 years, is not being allowed to teach a course in the summer as part of the regular teaching load, e.g. an archaeological field school
- As a unit we are limited in development of these courses by the fact that many of our existing courses include a laboratory component.
- The university's choice of courseware (d2l) is a big improvement over Angel, but it still has not been fully reliable and it is limited in its ability to facilitate interactions that include graphics and the ability to see the faces of participants.
- Software that allows for students to chat at a distance and see each other (like Adobe Connect and other teleconferencing programs) and it would be very useful and very much appreciated if they were provided and supported.
- Role of Extended Education in roll out of on-line courses... Who identifies the courses to go into blended mode?
- It is clear that the online courses do not develop the connection between instructor and student as face-to face courses do. This makes long-term retention in a program less likely.
- So much of our teaching is face-to-face and one-on-one that we are only likely to have a demand for on-line / remote input in the case of, for example, external professional instructors who cannot deliver input on the normal schedule or people who are out-of-town. But even then, we would be more likely to adjust the schedule rather than the mode of delivery.
- We would really like an in-house person assigned specifically to our unit - who could work with the entire faculty to develop capacity - get to know our program - given staff turnover at DD at times - we have become a little frustrated that we are often dealing with new people.
- Good communication with Distance Education is important. We did not have this for a while but it worked well this past year.
- We would like info on "successful practices" in terms of assignments, activities, etc. ... what is the best "blend" in blended learning (we are developing one new course for this summer that is blended).
- Our unit offers many language courses, which are problematic for on-line delivery. We have in the past made some efforts to create an online non-language course, but there is not much enthusiasm in the unit for such courses.
- D2L has been a problem. Grades have been lost and there have been many other complaints about having to re-post things. Also I think today D2L has a problem and it was down for several days at a critical time. The system needs to be more reliable to avoid stressing students and instructors.

Is there anything you would like to add regarding the development and delivery of blended courses in your unit?

- This is an important area for the Faculty, and one that the University could play a much bigger role.
- It would require investing in resources.
- There is a lot of potential for this in our program; time to explore is the biggest challenge.
- Blended delivery may provide a mechanism for including a laboratory component in otherwise online courses.
- The university needs more teleconferencing classrooms. If we had these facilities, we could market our program more aggressively and possibly grow its size.
- I support the use of blended learning frameworks. However, the pedagogy and use of blended learning, or online, is not supported systemically in meaningful, timely and accessible ways, which makes its introduction more about individual instructor willingness than a systemic probability.
- Online courses would be probably the preferred supplement instead of blended courses.

When we listed the courses we offer in fall, winter and SS, we did not include graduate courses (which are limited due to our limited number of faculty members (FTE) per student. We would like to develop more online and blended learning courses and have set this as one strategy for overcoming our faculty's resource limitations, while also enabling us to address the impact of these resource limitations on the quality of education offered in our programs. The revenue generating nature of online and blended learning is an important incentive for us to explore ways to reduce deficits within our department (in lieu of inadequate baseline funding for our core academic program.