

**LEARNING RESOURCES COUNCIL**  
**Thursday, April 17, 2003**  
**Minutes**

A meeting of the Learning Resources Council was held on Thursday, April 17, 2003, in the Sea/Shell Room at the Applied Technology and Development Center. Attendance was as follows:

**Official Members**

Cheryl Thompson-Stacy (Chair)	present
Foster Flint	present
Pattye Grady	present
Pam Ladner	present
Richard Marlowe	absent
Monica Miller	absent
Brenda Rivero	present
Tom Taylor	present

**Resource Persons**

David Besancon	present
Colleen Hartfield	absent
Jan Moody	present
Charlie Neumann	present
Mark Smith	present

**Other(s) Present**

Karen McQueen, recorder

- I. CALL TO ORDER. Dr. Thompson-Stacy called the meeting to order at 1:05 p.m.
- II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA. The following items were added to the agenda:
  - A. DOCUMENT IMAGING.
  - B. COMPUTER CENTER UPDATE.
- III. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING – **February 6, 2003.**
- IV. UNFINISHED BUSINESS.
  - A. EXECUTIVE COUNCIL ACTION. Dr. Thompson-Stacy reviewed recent actions of the Executive Council, noting that they had met twice since the last Learning Resources Council meeting. She said the Student Services Council had recommended and the Executive Council approved charging international students a \$100 admission fee and a \$50 per semester administrative fee; this must be approved by the board of trustees. Also approved was the use of technical courses as general electives for degree programs; this was previously done at the Jackson County and Jefferson Davis Campuses.  
  
Dr. Thompson-Stacy discussed the retirement of Carolyn Brooks and Karen McQueen. Those two positions will be replaced with a college director of student services and distance learning and a level-five secretarial position. The deadline was two days ago for the college director's position, and nine applications were received. The screening selection committee consists of Jeff Donahoe, Joe Cliburn, Carole Pearce, LaShanda Mitchell, and Cheryl Thompson-Stacy.

Ms. Hartfield said there will be no increase in tuition and fees for 2003-2004. A small increase in adjunct pay was recommended, and it is hoped the board will approve that for fall semester.

Dr. Moody mentioned the graduation committee's recommendation during the last Instructional Affairs Council meeting that faculty be allowed to remove their robes after the students exit. The Executive Council asked the committee to reconsider, so the previous procedure of faculty marching out will continue. However, the process for turning in their caps and gowns will be expedited; more tables will be set up and they will not be restricted as to campus. Ms. Hartfield said about 650 students are expected to walk, which is about 150 more than last spring. The process goes fairly quickly considering the size of group. It was noted that graduation committee members who work all that day might be allowed some time off.

- B. CENTRALIZED CATALOGING. Ms. Miller was absent due to the birth of her baby boy. She is expected back at work mid-May.
- C. DISTANCE LEARNING. Mr. Smith said the SACS visit went well. He thanked everyone for their help. He also expressed appreciation to MGCCC test proctors and noted that we were able to answer the SACS committee's proctoring questions easily because of our new proctoring centers. Summer registration opened Monday and as of this morning there were 270 Gulf Coast students registered for online classes in almost 500 seats. He said he expects 600-700 seats to be occupied by this afternoon.

With registration coming up, the students are asking lots of questions about distance learning; Mr. Smith asked that personnel direct students to the distance learning page on the MGCCC website; they may also look at MSVCC, and then back to MGCCC's distance page. There are links to extracts straight out of Banner which is updated overnight with all offerings. If a student desires a course offered by MSVCC that we do not list, Mr. Smith can build the course listing in about five minutes.

Mr. Smith said two sections of speech will be offered with an adjunct instructor from Hinds this fall. Generally, videotaped speeches with an audience of five or more adults are required for online speech courses. Meridian uses the Community College Network for online speech courses. Some students have requested to use our VCRs to tape their speeches.

Online courses must have at least one proctored exam, per the community college presidents. Instructors have been requested to not make the proctored exam the final exam. This will prevent an overload in the proctoring center at that particular time.

During spring 2003, 100 sections were taught by 72 instructors. As of today, 87 online summer courses and 110 online fall courses are listed. About 69% of

online instructors are full-time instructors. Fall registration opens Monday. Reports are coming every three hours for students who register through Banner; this is a great improvement over the previous 24 hours.

Dr. Thompson-Stacy informed the group that the final response is due to SACS next week. Jason Pugh will look at the responses from the 13 community colleges teaching online and will get it to SACS. There was one finding on a MGCCC faculty member teaching astronomy not having what the committee said was the correct amount of hours in the field; however, he does have 18 hours in physics. What we had in the MSVCC records repository was insufficient. The record from human resources to SACS was missing the transcript which was in the file at the Jackson County Campus. The finding was that he did not have the 18 hours in astronomy. A different group looks at the responses, so perhaps this issue will be resolved. MGCCC had to respond to 7 of the 17 committee recommendations.

Mr. Smith again thanked everyone for their past work and what they will do next week in online course registration.

- D. PRIORITIES FOR EQUALIZATION OF LRCs. Mr. Flint said almost all of the special allocations funds have been spent; the small balance will be spent soon. Dr. Thompson-Stacy said the special allocation of \$100,000 was included in the budget for 2003-2004; the board of trustees will act on the budget in May.
- E. ONLINE TEST PROCTORING. Mr. Taylor reported that the test proctoring situation has improved, though there are still improvements needed. Mr. Smith, Mr. Taylor, Ms. White, Dr. Sykes, and Dr. Thompson-Stacy will go to Meridian Tuesday to see their proctored testing site, built with a \$100,000 grant from Phil Hardin Institute. They have 35 computers for testing. Mr. Taylor said he supposes someone at Gulf Coast will try to write a grant for this purpose.

Mr. Smith said the proctoring centers are for online courses only, not for hybrid courses. Mr. Taylor predicted 496 online exams college wide until the end of this semester. Several instructors were persuaded to offer their tests earlier than the traditional final exam week. Jefferson Davis Campus will proctor 311 tests next week alone. Jackson County Campus has 150, while Perkinson Campus has 35 scheduled. If all those students show up, we will have to average eight per hour all day long. Since there are only six machines, some will have to use lab computers. Hours have been extended slightly (earlier and during lunch) to about nine total hours. Dr. Thompson-Stacy and Mr. Smith will continue to encourage instructors to make their proctored exams other than their finals. Growth in online instruction will require additional support for this system.

Dr. Thompson-Stacy discussed the statewide technology committee she chaired which recommended (1) a two-hour time limit for proctored exams, and (2) not having to fax tests or other documents. These recommendations were approved by the statewide deans association at their April meeting. Mr. Smith said we will still have to fax worksheets for math, etc. Mr. Taylor said that some online students do

not want to type data. He mentioned an English instructor who had students write on four or five topics and then have the document faxed it to her.

Mr. Smith asked Mr. Taylor and others to consider proposing a time limit for proctored exams. Projects sometimes get out of hand as far as time is concerned and perhaps could be done at another time. Concerns over inability to e-mail databases were expressed; Mr. Besancon discussed possible solutions to this problem, such as changing the file extension to bypass security or revising the registry file to change the way Outlook handles these attachments. He said there may be send error and it may appear that the file has not been received. Outlook may allow a user to send a file but then prevent viewing it. Another fix would be to use POP (Netscape) or IMAP (Netscape or any other browser). Mr. Taylor discussed the fact that instructors at other campuses/colleges are sending files to the proctoring centers.

Mark Smith will chair a committee on guidelines and requirements (including time limits) for MGCCC online testing; other members will be Mr. Besancon, Mr. Taylor, William Martin and at least two online instructors. With continued growth in online instruction, MGCCC will continue to make changes to improve the system. Deadlines will be established for instructors to load their proctoring information (perhaps the first two weeks of the semester). Test centers should receive all necessary files and information in working order at least two weeks ahead of tests.

- F. ELECTRONIC GRADEBOOK. Dr. Thompson-Stacy said both the electronic grade book and the electronic attendance book (EASY) will be implemented college wide the fall semester of 2003. Faculty members who participated in the grade book pilot test are now training other instructors. A refresher will be offered prior to fall semester.
- V. NEW BUSINESS.
- A. SIRSI TRAINING. Mr. Flint reported that SIRSI personnel will present specific training during a workshop scheduled for June 24-26. Pam Ladner and the Jackson County Campus will host the seminar. Other community colleges are invited to attend and will help pay for the training, and questions are being gathered from all concerned. Dr. Rivero noted that most SIRSI training is designed for novices, so the questions will help them tailor the training to our specific group. Mr. Besancon said he does not foresee any computer downtime during these dates; precautions were discussed.
- VI. OTHER BUSINESS.
- A. DOCUMENT IMAGING. Mr. Besancon reported on a new document imaging system for the college. The system will be purchased over two years with capital funds. Michelle Sekul is chairing the committee which will make a recommendation after demonstrations. The system will be used in areas such as

human resources, student records, integration with Banner, and reference materials. Employees may think of additional ways to use it; suggestions may be given to Michelle Sekul.

Dr. Moody suggested a representative from the Learning Resources Council attend the document imaging demonstration. Mr. Smith mentioned fair use and online programs, as well as placing files in PDF format for student use. The TEACH act provides more freedom in the online arena, much like in a traditional classroom, dealing with copyrights. Brenda Rivero will attend the demonstration scheduled for June 9 at ATDC.

- B. **COMPUTER CENTER UPDATE.** Mr. Besancon announced the expected upgrade to Banner 6 before the new calendar year. The system will be accessible through an internet native browser such as Internet Explorer. A new HP server (the part that runs Banner and keeps our data secure) will be installed before fall registration in August. Lynn Ladner in charge of this upgrade.

Form Fusion will allow forms such as purchase orders to be printed in several locations simultaneously. Check writing will be moved to Central Office. Speede Express, to be implemented by the end of the summer, will allow electronic transfer of transcripts to and from our institution.

In addition, a major, complicated Blackboard upgrade will be done. File migration is not as simple as updating software, however; Blackboard takes all the data and then re-imports the data into a new database. This will be used for our hybrid courses. Mr. Smith was disappointed that during the last DLC meeting, MSVCC decided to put off the Blackboard upgrade until after December this year. He noted that there have been some problems with version 6 but most have been fixed. Online courses will not be able to use version 6 until MSVCC upgrades. One advantage of the upgrade is that it would have allowed students to save tests after each individual question. Some problems have resulted in students' having to retake tests that were somehow lost.

Mr. Besancon announced that the 1997 servers at the centers will be replaced. All campus servers were replaced last year with up-to-date technology servers. Mr. Taylor asked about the possibility of getting another processor. Mr. Besancon said it might be approved if the current one is used at more than 50% on a regular basis; instead, he said he would rather do development work on Lauren. Mr. Taylor said we have the firewall backup; there is no user authentication. Mr. Besancon said he would rather see all website material stored under the MGCCC processor because we do not have that many IP addresses. We will be able to do streaming video soon. There is a need for the Lauren processor, which was intended as a three-campus processor; however, if it is only used as a web server, it probably is not used that much. Mr. Taylor noted that some other issues are connected to this, such as manuals. Most of them have been pulled. Mr. Besancon said the band width usage has been throttled back. One solution to

the manual problem may be to create sample questions for download but keep the manuals accessible only at the campuses.

Mr. Taylor said some vendors gave us permission to place their manuals on the web, though they are available for purchase. The calculus manual is at printing, and the chemistry manual is no longer available. The manual had to be scanned and saved as a JPEG file because the software will not convert the math formulas. They began to divide the manuals into small files to decrease band width use. There are now probably 100 links for the Chemistry I manual.

Dr. Moody said Dr. Mann creates his own manuals, which are copied at printing and sold in the bookstore. The manual created here for trigonometry is online and does not require a password. The calculus manual was created in a processor and in PDF format. Manuals take up a great deal of a 9 GB and another 18 GB hard drive.

Ms. Grady said some instructors are upset that some manuals no longer are available online. Mr. Taylor said one problem with the new calculus book is that the vendor has its own website companion, which is available for a fee. The vendor will not allow us to copy the book. Some textbooks require a Blackboard cartridge to get to the companion website. Students may access content for a year via password available on a CD they may purchase. Algebra texts have lectures on CD (either AVI or MP3 format). Mr. Besancon said if they are in real audio format, we can provide the content. They probably have conversion tools as well. This would be nice for our students. Files in WAV, MPI, AVI format could be played via a launch link or automatically inside blackboard. The CD cost is \$10; the sale price is \$35. Perhaps this could be added to a Blackboard course. Mr. Besancon suggested that they files be placed on servers because a CD optical head cannot support multiple users.

It was noted that financial aid checks will begin to be distributed by mail only.

VII. FUTURE MEETINGS. A schedule is being developed for the next academic year.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:20 p.m.

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