Meeting of the Distance Learning and Student Services Members Council (DLSS MC)
May 17, 2023 (1 p.m. - 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time) and May 18, 2023 (9 a.m.-12 p.m.)

Attendees:
DLSS MC Members: Priscilla Suarez and Luz Negron Alvarez, (BC) Vicki Milton, (CC) Josh Strigle and Tammi Viviano-Broderick (CCF), Bill Harrison and Faith Testerman, (DSC), Philip Simpson and Andrew Lieb, (EFSC), Julie Golden Botti and Willie Freeman (FAU), Franzetta Fitz and Robert Seniors (FAMU Brandon McIntire (FGC), Dr. David Jaeger (FGCU), Evangelina Prevolis, and Garbriela Icabalceta (FIU) Dr. Rozalind Jester and Laura Osgood, (FSWSC), Dr. Ujjwal Chakraborty and Ansa Reams-Johnson, (FSCJ), Robert Fuselier (FSU), Lori Driscoll, (GCC) Laurie Saylor (HCC), Katie Profeta and April Litton (IRSC), Dr. Michael Nathanson, (LSSC), Dr. Donna Jennings (MDC), Chryystal Bundrage (NCF), Kristin Summers, (NFC), Melanie Jackson, (NWFSC), Bryan Biggers (PBAU), Laura Bassett, (PBSC) Breanna Perry, (PHSC), Holly Vaughn (PSC) Cody Moyer (Polk State College), Page Jerzak (SFC), Marisabel Irizarry and Carlene McNeil (SSCF), Joann Kramer (SFSC), Dominic Christison, (SCFMS), Christina Will, (SJRC) Anthony Jones and Kim Manning, (TCC) Nicole Gerrard and Kristina Neihouse, (TCFK), Robert Reed (UCF), Kevin Hulen, (UNF), Dennis Walpole, (USF) and Geni Wright (VC).

Guests: Dr. Carrie Henderson, Executive Vice Chancellor of the Florida College System, Dr. Jon Rogers, Assistant Vice Chancellor, Innovation and Online Education of the State University System, Krystian Grodecki and Michelle Piper (D2L) Cindy Hewitt, (Tutor.com), Birgitta Rausch-Montoto (FIU).

FLVC Staff: Tim Brown, Brooke Tome, Lauren Claerbout, Dr. John Oppen, Nashla Dawahre, Ashley Thimmes, Tom Tu, Kathy Parker, Dawn Aguero, Chase Fiorini, Sarah Michael Anderson, Mike Neff, Stevan Polansky, Richard Conn, Shawn Wilson, Dawn Aguero, Michael Porter, and Tucker Anderson.

Welcome and Call to Order
Josh Strigle (UCF), Chair, called the meeting to order and recognized the incoming and outgoing Council members. Lauren Claerbout with FLVC took a verbal attendance.

Strigle asked for a motion and a second to approve the minutes from the Feb.7-8, 2022 meeting, which were given, and the minutes were approved. Strigle then introduced Tim Brown, Assistant Vice-President for ITS, NWRDC and FLVC, who welcomed the Members Council to the FLVC campus. Brown mentioned that FLVC had a particularly good legislative session and that all the organization’s budget requests were approved.

Strigle told the group that Robert Fuselier (FSU) would be taking over as the chair on June 30 and there will need to be another election for a new chair-elect. Because the chair alternates between the SUS and FCS, Strigle said the new chair would have to be from the FCS. A vote would be taken near the end of the meeting since there was already a quorum.

Future Meeting Planning for DLSS Members Council
There was then discussion about the next Members Council meeting which is scheduled for Nov. 7-8 at Hillsborough Community College. With that date confirmed, potential dates for a February 2024 meeting were discussed. Fuselier led the discussion. Cody Moyer from Polk State said his institution would be able to host the spring meeting. A tentative timeframe of Feb.6-8 was scheduled for the spring meeting.

System Updates
Dr. Carrie Henderson, Executive Vice Chancellor of the Florida College System, then gave an update on a recent study that the Department of Education worked on related to Associate of Arts degree pathways. Dr. Henderson showed Council members enrollment trend data for five years.

She talked about the need for the study and that the data on AA enrollments and completions suggest there is room for improvement. The study seeks to understand current trends in Florida AA pathways and help to inform policies that will better support student success. She said there has been a decline in enrollment for the AA
enrollment and degree programs. She said a larger portion of students are enrolling in workforce programs. The research study had three questions and Dr. Henderson discussed one of those that related to student behavior - What are some of the most common academic sequences taken by AA students in the Florida College System?

The research involved two cohorts of students that were tracked for five years and examined several different factors. She went over the demographics and various enrollment and degree attainment patterns. The data will hopefully help in understanding more about the population and suggest some strategies for how institutions might work to support students in different demographic groups, Dr. Henderson said. The study looked at not only what happened to these students while they were in the FCS, but what happened after they left the system. Dr. Henderson discussed more results of the study. She said the second phase of the research should be completed in the next two to three months and once the information is shared more broadly, there would be webinars held. The goal with phase two of the project is to have a dashboard so institutions can have their own data. Dr. Henderson then wrapped up her presentation. Strigle then turned it over to Dr. Jon Rogers, Assistant Vice Chancellor, Innovation and Online Education of the State University System, who provided some updates on the legislative session and said the money that flowed into the SUS was extraordinary. He said it was an historic allocation. He talked about the funding that was given based on performance and performance-based recruitment and retention, and for capital projects. Dr. Rogers then discussed a report that was done by a steering committee regarding planning for a post-pandemic world in the SUS. That study has already resulted in efforts to provide more telehealth for mental health issues around campuses. There are best practices being considered for remote and flex instruction and more sharing of software contracting. Dr. Rogers said the Steering Committee is working with the data administrators around the universities to talk about the different ways to collect data and information that will inform these issues. He said June would be the biggest Board of Governors meeting of the year. That meeting will be when the board reviews each of the 12 universities accountability plans and approves them for the coming year. He talked about the annual report for online education that is being prepared and some of the data that would be in the report.

Dr. Rogers said in the coming year, the system would begin to think about a new strategic plan. The current strategic plan was developed in 2015 and lasts until 2025. Dr. Rogers then wrapped up his presentation.

Executive Director Updates

Dr. John Opper then gave several update s for FLVC. The U.S.DOE provided guidance in February by sending out a letter that provided an expanded definition of third-party service providers. This definition includes things like learning management systems and systems for retention, such as Starfish. The DOE delayed the reporting date from May until September. On April 4th, a legal challenge was filed by 2U to the requirements outlined in the guidance. They claimed the department went outside its own policies. Dr. Opper said the DOE is now going over 1,000 comment letters. He talked about some of the push back to the requirements and possible concerns. He said the DOE has posted information on the areas that they plan to cover in a new proposed rule-making process. It appears that some topics that had been previously decided may be revisited, including accreditation, state authorization and distance learning. The reopening of these issues has caused some concern. Dr. Opper discussed some of those concerns. He said WCET and the SAN are closely following the situation. Dr. Opper then talked about funding in the recent legislative session that was given to FLVC for several projects. Those include the licensing of a new platform that would provide additional networking, collaboration and information sharing within the Members Council. It will be modeled on the WCET MIX platform. He talked about getting involvement from the members to make the community successful. Dr. Opper said it would give the members more flexibility to communicate with each other around the state and share information. He said FLVC also requested funds for a platform to develop a mobile application for FloridaShines. He said high school counselors have long been requesting a mobile app. He said it would not replace the FloridaShines website but would just provide another channel for resources and information. Dr. Opper next talked about the pre-ITN meeting that is scheduled for the week of May 22 and then discussed the latest stats for the Zero Textbook Cost Indicator in the FloridaShines Catalog and the top seven institutions for summer 2023. There was some discussion about the sections and Dr. Opper talked about the upcoming catalog uploads. The data is used for both FloridaShines services and statewide initiatives. An update was also given on the latest TSAA applications and progress on the RESTrofit project. He updated the connection statuses of institutions. Dr. Opper said one of the other items that was funded in the
budget was the creation of a reverse transfer system. This will provide the ability for universities to identify the students who authorized their records for reverse transfer and for FCS institutions to retrieve the list of students who are to be evaluated to determine eligibility to receive an AA degree. It will allow FCS institutions to notify state universities regarding the outcome of each degree audit evaluation and whether the associate in arts degree was conferred. He discussed the next steps in the process. Dr. Opper then discussed the upcoming College 101 webinars scheduled for September. Next was an update in the IDN and the growth in subscribers and webinars. There was also an update given on the Florida Quality Matters Consortium. There are now 35 member institutions. Dr. Opper wrapped up his presentation after taking a few questions.

**RSI Policy Elements Brainstorming**

Strigle said he wanted there to be a discussion among the group about RSI policy elements. He gave an overview of RSI. The idea of RSI is in statute as a requirement to disperse Title IV funds for distance learning courses. He then provided some more background. He said there are now categories for RSI that are quantifiable. Strigle talked about the broad elements of compliance regarding training, review, and documentation and whether there should be other categories covered in policy. One question was whether type/modality of the training be mentioned in policy. Regarding training, there were question about “At what point(s) should review take place and who are the appropriate parties to conduct the review?” and “How does that fit into your existing instructional review processes?” Another question was “What impact does the outcome of the review have on faculty?” Other questions regarding documentation considered were “Should policy prescribe how/where documentation is stored?” and “How many touch points should be documented?” He said a goal would be to develop a template policy that members could take back to their institutions. There was discussion about institutions that already have a codified policy on RSI. There was lengthy discussion about training and development at institutions such as Eastern Florida State College.

*Following the discussion an afternoon break was then taken.*

**Election: Chair-Elect, FCS**

After some discussion about the rules for elections, the floor was opened for nominations for a chair-elect from the Florida College System. Phillip Simpson nominated Rozalind Jester, who accepted the nomination. There were no other nominations, and a vote was taken electing Jester as the new chair elect. Jester thanked the Council and made some comments about the value of the community.

**Institutional Inventory Review and Update**

There was an update on what type of platform would be used for the institutional inventory, which would define the members’ responsibilities at their institutions and their levels of expertise. It would help the members know who to contact for help with issues. The information is in a dashboard so each member can review it. Michael Porter with FLVC then showed the group the Institutional Inventory section in Teams. Porter said he also had a spreadsheet with all the links that he would send out to members.

*Strigle then adjourned the meeting.*

**Welcome and Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order by Strigle at 9 a.m.

**Standing Committees**

There was time set aside for the Council’s three standing committees – Strategic Partnership and Licensing Standing Committee, the Student Support/Web Services Standing Committee, and the Online Instruction Committee to divide into groups. Those attending the meeting virtually were able to join the rooms of the committees on which they wanted to serve. The committees met until 10:30 a.m.
A morning break was then taken.

**Current Topics, Trends and Tools**

Strigle said the feedback from members on topics to discuss mostly centered on AI so time for this agenda item would be spent mostly on that issue. He said more topics could be scheduled for future meetings. Strigle then turned the meeting over to Dr. Opper who gave a presentation about academic integrity and learning in an AI world. Dr. Opper said he spoke to the Distance Education Accrediting Commission a couple of weeks ago in Santa Fe and there were some concerns about academic integrity. Dr. Opper then talked about Chat GPT, how it works and some of its features. Dr. Opper then detailed how a Wharton professor gave AI 30 minutes to work on a business project and AI was able to conduct market research, create a positioning document, write an email campaign, and create a website among other accomplishments. He said with some edits by a student this could be a capstone project. Dr. Opper then talked about results of an MIT study where a project was done both with and without Chat GPT. Productivity with Chat GPT increased significantly. Dr. Opper then discussed some other platforms, including Quillbot, and mentioned some of its capabilities. Dr. Opper said AI might be embraced in classrooms in certain ways for learning, but it could be banned for certain tests and there might be attempts to control it. He said there have been incidents when AI platforms hallucinate. The problem is really about assessment and ability to control the academic environment. He said it would be a mistake to totally assign responsibilities to a third party and that accreditors are going to start looking at this. Dr. Opper then talked about what could be done to maintain academic integrity including defining for students what unauthorized help is and reviewing conduct code statements. He said all faculty need to understand the capabilities of AI if they want to define unauthorized help. There was then some discussion among the group about certain platforms and publicized incidents involving AI.

**New Items from Any Member**

Strigle turned the meeting over to Fuselier to discuss any items that could be brought up at future meetings. Fuselier discussed some topics that had come out of the standing committee meetings including collaboration tools and AI. Since the next Council meeting is not until November, he said the members may want to have a summit before then where there could be demos for various platforms. Some other topics were discussed that came out of the committee meetings. One of those items was QM training at the various institutions and modality explanation. There has been discussion about creating an inventory of how modalities are used at each institution. Other items from committees included AI policies, RSI, and fully online versus primarily online. Fuselier then mentioned targeting potential dates for the hands-on demos for AI and VR platforms.

**Wrap-Up and Adjournment**

Fuselier thanked Strigle for his work as the chair of the Council, and said he was looking forward to working with the Council. With no other items to discuss, a motion and second were taken to second to adjourn the meeting.