

**MANAGEMENT REPORT**

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| *Report Title:* | **Blended Learning Update** | | | | | | | | | | | |
| *Report Number:* | **A.12.06.113** | | | ***Date to Committee:*** | |  | | | ***Date to Board:*** | | **June 6, 2012** | |
| *Report To:* | **AUDIT, FINANCE & INFRASTRUCTURE**  **GOVERNANCE**  **PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT & RENEWAL**  **STUDENT SERVICES**  **NOMINATING**  **OTHER:** | | | | | | | | **BOARD**  **MEG**  **SMT** | | | |
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| *Item Class:* | CLOSED |  | OPEN | |  | | DECISION |  | | INFORMATION | |  |

1. **RECOMMENDATION:**

**THAT** the Board of Governors receives for information Report# A.12.06.113, *Blended Learning Update.*

1. **Purpose & EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

The purpose of this report is to update the Board of Governors on the Blended Learning strategies that have been implemented to date in the academic area, and to identify key next steps to achieve the goal of becoming a blended learning college by 2013.

1. **BACKGROUND:**

Mohawk staff initially presented the blended learning strategy at the 14, 2009 October Board of Governor’s retreat. At that time the Board discussion concluded by agreeing that the e-Learning strategy is an exciting initiative for the College and that wherever possible, either through pilots or other activities, the four year timeframe should be accelerated. Mohawk set the goal to be a blended learning College by 2013.

Mohawk committed to be a blended learning college by 2013 in order to achieve three key objectives:

1. **Enhance the flexibility of the learning experience**. This will provide students with more ways to engage learning, providing opportunities to review and learn concepts with electronic supports, such as the electronic textbooks and tutorials offered by Pearson Canada.
2. **Ensure greater access to the learning environment**. Mobile technologies, including tablets and smart phones as well as electronic lecture capture techniques will enable students to gain access to learning nearly anytime and anywhere.
3. **Improve learning outcomes**. Increasingly technology tools will provide students with more opportunities to engage peers and faculty in problem solving and group learning across disciplines. These tools include document sharing services, social networking and access to expertise via open learning initiatives such as the Khan Academy and MITx lecture series.

In 2009 Mohawk adopted Desire2Learn (D2L), to enable the plan to move to one learning management system and to facilitate a blended learning strategy using one management tool. This learning management system was branded as eLearn@Mohawk. A blended learning strategy was developed by a team of professors, support staff and administrators, utilizing a broad and thorough consultation process.

Definition of Blended Learning

The following definition is being used when communicating with Deans, Associate Deans and Professors:

*Blended Learning is best described as the thoughtful fusion of face-to-face and online learning, using the web to deliver substantial course materials. Blended Learning maximizes the best of both online and face-to-face learning through the strategic use of electronic tools and related learning activities.*

A blended course is designed to integrate face-to-face and online activities so that they reinforce, complement, and elaborate one another, instead of treating the online component as an add-on or duplicate of what is taught in the classroom.

Teaching a blended course can be challenging, since it requires acquiring different teaching skills, redesigning a course to take into account new teaching and learning opportunities, managing the course content both online and in-class, and preparing students to work in a hybrid format.

Status

The following summarizes the progress made to date:

Year One:

* Two programs( Child and Youth Worker and Concurrent Disorders) and one course per School were developed and are now being offered in a blended learning mode

Year Two:

* All general education courses were developed and offered in a blended learning format
* An “Expert Professors in Residence” program began in May 2011. Professors were selected to attend the *Blended Learning Intensive* sessions to develop courses and to begin a peer mentor program. Intensives were repeated in the fall and winter semesters, with the end goal of a cohort of School “experts” providing peer-to-peer, just-in-time mentoring and coaching for faculty support
* All courses were migrated onto one common learning management system when all legacy platforms were decommissioned for teaching. Course migration occurred over the Spring/Summer semester, and each course and program achieved web-facilitated mode of delivery. By September 2011, all college courses had a presence in eLearn@Mohawk. This was the single most significant step to allowing the goal of becoming a blended learning college to occur.

Year Three:

* Twenty five percent of all courses will be offered in blended learning format by March 2013.

1. **RELATIONSHIP TO STRATEGIC PLAN:**

Quality

STRATEGIC PRIORITY ACTION 1.1:

Student Success

1.1.1 Make our programs and services more flexible to accommodate the needs of our students.

Innovation

STRATEGIC PRIORITY ACTION 2.1Innovation Culture:

Makeinnovation a driver of learning, teaching and services.

Sustainability

STRATEGIC PRIORITY ACTION 3.2:Greening Mohawk

3.2.1Embed environmental sustainability principles in our programs and practices.

1. **DISCUSSION:**

**Next Steps**

Blended learning initiatives have been progressing; however, it has become evident that a more aggressive approach is required for the College to achieve the target for 2013. By the end of March, 2013:

* 25 percent of postsecondary lecture courses will be blended
* a full map of the remaining courses to be blended will be produced
* programs where blended learning is not achievable will be documented (for example, some programs’ accreditation criteria will not allow blended learning delivery)

All remaining courses will be in a blended format by December 2013.

In addition and aligned to this aggressive plan,

* Professors will continue to develop courses and refine content
* All program curricula for new programs will be developed in blended mode
* Funds have been requested in this year’s fiscal planning for the development of an Open Learning Platform project. These funds are needed to ensure the successful development of a multi-year initiative, integral to the execution of the academic plan. The Open Learning Platform project will create an environment that transcends the current use of learning technologies at Mohawk and in other colleges and universities. It will result in an integration of existing technologies including the eLearn platform, identity management and a range of additional open learning technologies. Some of these include, collaboration tools, electronic content and social networking services. The Open Learning Platform project will be accessible on a variety of devices including, desktops, laptops, tablets and smart phones. The development of the technology platform will be executed using the iDeaWORKS, project delivery methodology which is based on an “Agile-Scrum” approach. The inception phase will begin in May 2012 and be completed in December 2012.

1. **IMPACT ON STUDENTS:**

Blended Learning:

* Enhances student learning (effectiveness)
* Enhances access (convenience)
* Maximizes institutional resources – space, learning landscape
* Enhances engagement
* Enhances retention

1. **FINANCIAL MATTERS: n/a**

1. **Human resources matters: N/A**
2. **ENVIRONMENTAL MATTERS: n/a**
3. **COMMUNICATION MATTERS:**

A comprehensive Blended Learning Communication Plan was developed detailing directions, issues, and highlights key messages for clear communication to the college community. This will be continued as major initiatives are developed.

In addition, the Vice President Academic has initiated a quarterly newsletter to the academic staff. This vehicle will be used to discuss initiatives, issues and new technologies.

1. **legal matters: N/A**
2. **CONCLUSION:**

There has been considerable progress made on the goal of becoming a blended learning college. However, the plan on how to achieve this goal is evolving. In addition, the consultation work done for the Academic Plan has shown that the journey to blended learning will continue past 2013 and will allow us to move to new technologies as they are developed.

Blended learning will continue to be a priority as new programs are developed and new technologies emerge. It will be essential that program quality and blended learning goals continue to be built into the faculty and management workflow of individual program review and development. The performance management system that is currently underway will provide a significant advantage to moving forward.  An update on progress will be reported to the Board in September 2012.

Respectfully submitted, Approved for Submission,

**ORIGINAL SIGNED BY CHERYL JENSEN ORIGINAL SIGNED BY ROB MACISAAC**

Cheryl Jensen Rob MacIsaac

Vice President, Academic President

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| ***Appendices:*** | Appendix A: Rubric for Online Instruction | |
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| ***Staff & Others Consulted:*** | Name | Telephone |
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| ***Notifications:*** | Name | Mailing or E-mail Address |
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| ***Special Instructions:*** |  | |

The purpose of a hybrid course is to take advantage of the best features of both face-to-face and online learning.