

## **APARC Meeting Minutes - April 17, 2019**

Present: Michael Visser, Tim Wandling, Kathy Morris, Daniel Soto, Laura Krier, Beth Warner, Puspa Amri, Karen Moranski, Laura Lupei, Laura Watt, Merith Weisman.

Absent: Sean Place, Jason Gorelick.

Guests: Sandra Ayala (ATISS), Justin Lipp and team members of the LMS Project.

The meeting began with the chair outlining the agenda. Due to time constraints, the meeting only covered the first item on the agenda, which was to hear a presentation from ATISS and the LMS project representatives regarding their recommendation, and for APARC to discuss and act on this recommendation.

Sandra Ayala and Justin Lipp led the presentation of the final report of the SSU LMS Project. The presentation focused on the background, the process (in particular, the Canvas Pilot Project involving students and faculty from 15 courses in Spring 2018), and a summary of the side-by-side comparison of features of the two alternatives: Canvas and Moodle hosted by eThink. The presentation ended with a summary of the recommendation adopted by ATISS, which is to adopt Canvas by Fall 2018, with a one-year transition where both Moodle and Canvas will be made available. The committee also strongly recommends that the administration take the necessary steps to support the one-year transition.

The chair then opened up the floor for discussion among APARC members. Just Lipp stayed until the end of the meeting to answer any questions. At the end of the meeting, APARC members unanimously voted to endorse the recommendation of ATISS. The following is a summary of the discussion that preceded the vote and the decision of APARC.

- While members complimented the report for its comprehensive nature, a few suggestions were made such as: acknowledging that survey results (both the quantitative and qualitative sections) were based on a limited sample, including available information (if any) on how students felt about Moodle vs Canvas, because student input is very important. Whichever LMS is used, there are broader issues such as how can the LMS be used to make students aware of how they are doing in class, how they can observe deadlines of upcoming assignment, etc.
- A good deal of time was spent on the side-by-side score-sheet comparisons of Canvas versus Moodle that was provided as an appendix to the LMS final report. This comparison revealed that on the whole, while there are positive and negative features for both, on average Canvas scored better than Moodle. That said, it is important to acknowledge that

faculty members at SSU have different needs with respect to how they use LMS in their classes, and therefore would attach different weights to the various criteria. For example, gradebook and quizzes/assessment may be of particular importance to some faculty, while not to others. The same is true for collaborative features of an LMS.

- Various members of the committee also noted that it is important to acknowledge that there were divisions within ATISS's decision, and this is likely reflective of the faculty they represent. However, on balance, several APARC members stated that, based on reading the final report and hearing the presentation, they trust the overall process has been fair and balanced. A suggestion was even made to offer faculty members who do not support the transition to Canvas an opportunity to present their view in the form of a written response to the LMS final project.
- In light of the previous bullet point, it is recommended that APARC's own report to the Senate include the following:
  - A statement acknowledging that there are divisions of preferences among faculty and it is important to identify what the campus can do to help support the transition and provide assistance to those who need it. Justin Lipp added that in next phase (phase 3) of the project, the focus will be on facilitating a smooth transition, including identifying a third-party provider that can help migrate "Quizzes and Assessments", which is one of the concerns with adopting a new LMS.
  - The summary data of the spreadsheet which compares the quantitative scores of Moodle and Canvas, with highlights of the main results. This would be useful to inform the SSU community, the basis and the arguments why ATISS voted on their recommendation.
  - Acknowledging that the transition will involve a lot of work.
  - An acknowledgement on other issues such as longevity, financial health of the vendor, as well as forecasts of the future cost of this transition.