



Program in Philosophy & Institute of Professional Ethics

To: Pat Book, AVP for Continuing Education and Academic Outreach
Jeanette VanGalder, AVP for Information Technology

From: Nancy Matchett & David Kendrick, Co-Chairs
On behalf of the entire membership of the Faculty Review Task Force of the LMSAG

Re: Documents and Recommendations

This binder contains policy documents and recommendations developed by the Faculty Review Task Force during the fall of 2009.

In addition to these items, we were tasked with making a recommendation about upgrading the current campus Blackboard system. Our recommendation is that UNC take immediate steps to upgrade from our current version of Blackboard (7.3) to the newest release of Blackboard (9.0). Our recommendation is based on:

1. The results of our faculty survey, where respondents indicated an 83% overall satisfaction rate with Blackboard (See Tab 2 for detailed results of that survey).
2. The Instructional Design/Institutional Technology team's recommendation "for UNC to try to stay no more than one version behind the current major release of Blackboard" (*UNC Test Environment and Procedures*, under Tab 4, page 9).
3. The fact that version 9.0 represents a substantial upgrade to the system, whereas versions 8.X only contain relatively minor fixes. Information from campuses that have already migrated to 9.0 and research done by our own team of Instructional Designers convinced the task force that 9.0 is a major improvement which will alleviate many faculty frustrations with the current version. In particular, we believe that 9.0 will resolve some of the accessibility issues associated with earlier versions and incorporate Web 2.0 technologies that facilitate collaborative learning and student engagement.
4. The time commitment required to fully test the new version and train faculty and students regarding major changes (see Tab 4 for a description of the process and timing). Given this time commitment, it is conceivable that an even newer version of Blackboard (e.g., 9.1) will become available before our campus moves to 9.0. Assuming we begin the process now, it may well be fall 2010 before we have 9.0 in place.

Should you have any questions about this recommendation or the attached documents, you are welcome to contact me at nancy.matchett@unco.edu or x1-1567.

Finally, please note that the production of these documents would not have been possible without the excellent work of the three ex officio members, Kate Boyer (ID), Sherri Lancton (ID), and Ryan Rose (IT), and the careful work of Sam Penn (IT) on the faculty survey. Thank you for sharing their time with us. And thank you for your commitment to faculty governance at UNC.