Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)

Between Office of Academic Affairs
And
School of Business Administration

Reference: Reaching Out: Utilizing Technology to Enhance the Student Experience

I. Purpose

This MOU outlines partnership roles and responsibilities for implementation of the Provost Challenge project: Reaching Out: Utilizing Technology to Enhance the Student Experience.

II. Project Description and Key Project Outcomes

Overview:
The Undergraduate Programs Office will utilize technology to enhance the student experience for undergraduate business students. We will put systems in place to offer online advising & job counseling using video chat. By offering video chat advising to students outside the state or country, advisors will be better able to assess whether information is being understood and identify areas for further clarification. This will likely result in fewer registration mistakes and thus decrease the students’ “time to degree”. An online undergraduate degree is currently being developed for the business major and having online advising will align with that program perfectly. An additional component of this program will be developing a more significant online presence, including a redesign of the School of Business website. The redesign will include the addition of professionally created videos with faculty, alumni and employers discussing information relevant to prospective students like potential career options and testimonials on their experience.

Key project outcomes (as agreed by Project Lead and Vice Provost):

1. Deliverable: Two promotional videos about the value of a business degree for the SBA website including a “call to action button” with a direct link to apply to our programs

2. Deliverable: Standards of Practice (SOP) for distance advising
   a.) SOP for advisors – how to advise online including worksheet tools and technology use routines
   b.) SOP for students – how can students access online appointments and what tools do they need to do so

3. Deliverable: Student satisfaction survey measuring webpage quality and advising availability/satisfaction

III. Funding

The project team will be funded up to $13,000 to achieve the outcomes established for this project. Vice Provost for Academic Innovation in consultation with Provost and the appropriate dean may increase, reduce or terminate funding for this project.
IV. Funding Agreement Terms
The funding agreements in this document are contingent upon completion of the proposed project as describe above.
Changes to the agreements, timetables or funding will be based on written agreement between the College/Department and Office of Academic Affairs designees. OAA will provide an index code that will be used for funding of this project. There will be no transfer of funds.

V. Resolution of Disagreements
In the event of a disagreement that cannot be resolved by the parties, resolution will be through agreement of Vice Provost for Academic Innovation and the Dean of the Department's College or Director of the Unit.

WITNESS WHEREOF, the representatives have signed this Memorandum of Understanding on the

20th day of August, 2013.

Becky Sanchez, Project Lead, Academic Advisor, SBA

Scott Marshall, Associate Dean of Graduate Programs, SBA

Sukhwant Jhaj
Vice Provost for Academic Innovation and Student Success

Scott Dawson, Dean, SBA

Enclosures:
- Copy of reThink PSU: Provost Challenge project proposal
#78 Reaching Out: Utilizing Technology to Enhance the Student Experience

Last modified: February 20, 2013 - 10:52am

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Challenge
Inspiration Challenge

Abstract/Summary
The Undergraduate Programs Office will utilize technology to enhance the student experience for undergraduate business students. We will put systems in place to offer online advising & job counseling using video chat. By offering video chat advising to students outside the state or country, advisors will be better able to assess whether information is being understood and identify areas for further clarification. This will likely result in fewer registration mistakes and thus decrease the students’ “time to degree”. An online undergraduate degree is currently being developed for the business major and having online advising will align with that program perfectly. An additional component of this project will be developing a more significant online presence, including a redesign of the School of Business website. The redesign will include the addition of professionally created videos with faculty, alumni and employers discussing information relevant to prospective students like potential career options and testimonials on their experience.

Introduction

There is increasing demand for online or phone advising. This is due in large part to the new requirement that all incoming students must attend orientation. Out of state and international students frequently seek out the online orientation option. After completion of online orientation, students are then required to have an advising appointment which at this time is a phone appointment because of the lack of video technology available to advisors. These conversations are often disjointed and it is difficult to identify whether the complex information is being understood. There has been an increased marketing effort to out of state students which (when successful) creates advising issues for out of state students who do not plan to arrive in Portland until a week or two before the term begins. Video chat advising would be an excellent option for these students to get complete and thorough advising without having to wait for an on campus orientation. Having the ability to offer video chat advising will enhance the student-advisor connection and increase the likelihood that requirements are understood. With the addition of an online business degree, video chat advising will be greatly replied upon by students in that program. We would like to purchase six laptops with video technology in order to begin offering video chat advising as well as to use at orientations and recruiting functions.

The School of Business website is currently very basic and not representative of how dynamic our programs are, creating some videos
with alumni and employers discussing potential career paths and the strengths of the program will greatly enhance our marketing abilities.

Impact/Significance
The School of Business has 3,393 declared business majors, and 1,800 students admitted to the School of Business who took classes within the past year. 1,079 PSU applications for 2013 are on file, pending review, from students who have indicated they plan to major or minor in business. There are also more than 1,000 prospective students currently working toward admission to PSU and the SBA. These changes would directly impact all of those students especially those prospective students who may be seeking out information on our website as well as the students who plan to pursue the online business degree program.

Approach and Strategy
We plan to utilize award money to purchase six laptops that have video technology built in to enable online video chat for all five advisors and our career manager. Currently the computers used in the Undergraduate Programs Office are slow and unable to handle the increased speed that video chat advising will necessitate. The award money will also fund production quality videos for the website and enable us to hire someone to redesign the undergraduate programs website to make it more efficient and intuitive. We will implement video chat advising/career counseling and through our experiences identify best practices and share them with others on campus.

Milestones
1. Consult with a web designer on making the website flow more intuitively
2. Identify video production resources and potential alumni and employers to interview
3. Purchase six laptops and begin advertising and offering video chat advising
4. Make changes to the SBA website
5. Create and publish videos about career placement
6. Assess what works and what does not in video chat advising and share with all advisors

Benefits
Students will be able to receive advising even if they are not able to come in to the advising office. Distance advising will be more effective when done via video rather than phone. Many business students work full time and have difficulty coming in for appointments. Sometimes these students have difficulty in courses and would like to seek out the typical advising appointment but their work schedule prohibits it. Distance advising also aligns with the university mission of recruiting more out of state students. Redesigning the SBA website will assist students to more effectively seek out information online. Offering placement information and videos attesting to the value of the business degree on our website will aid us in communicating and marketing that information to students who may be more likely to seek out information online.

Consequences
If this proposal is not implemented, program information may continue to be difficult to find on our website, marketing job prospects will be done via print, distance advising will be done over the phone thus advisor-advisee relationships will not benefit from that initial visual connection and non-verbal give & take. We will also not have laptops to use at orientation (which would greatly speed up our on-site admission and pre-requisite override process).

Needs Assessment
Download (http://www.rethink.pdx.edu/sites/default/files/needs%20assessment%20Reaching%20Out.pdf)

Inspiration Challenge Only
1. Improve communication with students - Connecting with students via video chat can greatly assist in our initial communication with students whether they be incoming students who need an online orientation appointment or prospective students outside the state or students interested in our online program. In addition, developing dynamic web content will also greatly enhance the quality of the web communication to students.
2. Intentional advising and charting a pathway to degree completion - Part of the intentional advising system is the requirement of new student orientation for all incoming students before they can register. As previously stated, many students do not plan to come to Portland until right before the term starts which creates problems for their registration due to the availability of courses. Offering a standardized and effective way of delivering distance advising will increase the likelihood that these students receive timely information for registration and will aid in achieving the goals of intentional advising.

Media
Reaching out 1 (http://www.slideshare.net/Becky_Sanchez/reaching-out-1-16047632) from Becky_Sanchez (http://www.slideshare.net/Becky_Sanchez)

Tags

Comments

Kerry Wu — January 23, 2013 – 1:25pm

Great proposal! I hope you get the funding for the new computers and technologies to make it happen! Maybe also create a dedicated SBA Undergrad Youtube channel where videos are organized into various topics (student videos on why they choose PSU, faculty intro videos, online tours of SBA, career counseling for graduating students, etc.). Youtube is a major discovery platform for many young people so the more promotional outlets the better.


Good luck with the proposal!

Becky Sanchez — February 14, 2013 – 2:10pm

Thanks for your suggestions Kerry, this is very helpful and I appreciate the ideas!

Becky Einolf — February 14, 2013 – 4:21pm

PSU has a large number of students who commute to campus rather long distances, and many who work during the day and take as many classes as they can in the evenings. This creates challenges for advising, whether it’s academic advising or career counseling (I do that latter). We are now adding an online degree program in Management and Leadership. It is becoming increasingly important that we have access to effective means of providing advising to students who are not able to come to campus during normal business hours. It is a very real and immediate need.

Jeanne Enders — February 15, 2013 – 5:15pm

Becky and team, you guys always put students first and it shows here. We could build out a more vibrant website. Also, this capacity to advise from a distance is no longer optional. I hope this gets funded so that we can serve students better. With the advent of mandatory advising I know our team is working so hard. It seems that perhaps the option to serve students in this way could ease the burden somehow by reducing missed appointments and leveraging online tools. I wonder if you might observe the advice you give 20 times a day and we then produce short learning objects you could send students following an online advising session, for example. In any case, great work!
News

Portland State University professor invents zero-gravity coffee cup »

The Oregonian: Merkle proposes federal money to boost Oregon’s ‘pay it forward’ plan for student loans »

Sustainable Business Oregon: New ‘combo charger’ hits Oregon, foresees EV power showdown »

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Events

Tuesday, Aug 13
Annual SEmpdx Rooftop Networking Party »

Wednesday, Aug 14
Free MATLAB & Simulink Seminar »

Wednesday, Aug 14
Sounds of Summer Concert Series in SoMa »
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