Thursday, March 31, 2016
11:00 AM - 1:00 PM
Campus Center, Clark A

PRESENT: Arena, Barley, Bayerl, Blizzard, Boice-Pardee, Bryant, Casares, Craig, D’Arcangelo, Elliot, Hair, Hall, Hannigan, Hochgraf, Marini, Myers, Parry-Hill, Ray, Rosen, Slusser, Sobierai, Stavoli, Tolan, Wahl, Webber, Wild, Yacci

EXCUSED: Contomanolis, Hermsen, Humbert, Kray

Meeting called to order by Neil Hair, introducing Jeremy Haefner for kick-off

All attendees introduced themselves and their positions at RIT.

Neil Hair gave an overview of the Innovative Learning Institute (ILI) and handed over presenting about edX to Therese Hannigan.

A brief overview of the services offered by Teaching and Learning Services & RIT Online, both units within the ILI (slides 5&6).

An overview of edX:

- Founded by Harvard to offer high quality online courses from many universities
- To increase worldwide access and lifelong learning
- edX is non-profit
- The edX mission:
  - Increase access to high-quality education for everyone
  - Enhance teaching and learning on campus and online
  - Advance teaching and learning through research

edX Learners tend to be continuing education students.

RIT is among many university partners who are working with edX (slide 10)

There are a number of strategic reasons RIT joined edX, such as: visibility; university network; an online platform that can be brought into the classroom as well; increased student access; and more (see
slides 11 & 12). Additionally, edX allows instructors to see real time viewing, rewinding, drop-off, etc. of students in edX courses and will allow RIT to test learning modules, while keeping college affordable.

edX platforms: There are 2 main platforms
- edx.org: The main website, offering free courses in a variety of length (i.e. 3 hours or 13 weeks). This is the platform RIT is planning. Courses are open platform that can be viewed around the world.
- Edge.edx.org is open to RIT only and offers the ability to keep course private. Giving instructors the opportunity to experiment in a safe place.

Two ways to take edX courses:
- No Cost: Courses can be taken as an audit, at no cost.
- Variable Cost: A Verified certificate can be earned after successful completion of a course. The cost varies for each certificate course. There are also XSeries Certificates that can be earned after successful completion of set of two to seven verified courses.
- Credit offering for certain courses is the sole discretion of the college or university.

All RIT wants for now is to create a learning space in the edX environment. Every university partner is different

Planning an event in the fall, to bring other universities to RIT to talk about their experiences with edX. Will be open to the campus community. More details to follow.

The learning experience:
- edX offers weekly learning sequences
- synchronous self-paced courses
- courses include tutorial videos, quizzes, interactive assessments, etc.
- online laboratories

Courses are thoroughly reviewed before they are made available. RIT Online has developed a process to introduce a new course, and with edX each course will need to go to edX for additional review. The public platform must be approved by edX first.

The edX platform has built in features for quizzes, etc. and with MIT engineers at edX’s disposal, they are able to collaborate and create innovative learning outcomes.

Students, faculty, and staff will have 24/7 support from edX.

There is training provided by edX

The edX website, the main site, shows the most popular courses with information about the courses. Including many tools to search for course offerings.
edX updates the website often and there is now mobile device access to take courses on a phone.

Learners are able to customize the videos in a course offering, icons within course shows what is coming next – i.e. video, quiz, etc.

Educators have the opportunity to poll students throughout the course to determine if changes should be made. Educators can also view analytics to determine student engagement at various times within the course. (see slide 22 for sample)

As per RIT’s agreement with edX, we must provide two learning modules by September 2016 and two more at launch. There is no stipulation as to course length.

edX does not have any courses in video game design and are very excited to see RIT offer something on the subject. The first one will be a history of game design with Strong National Museum of Play. It will be non-credit bearing (more of an intro to the history of game design and an intro to programming).

The purpose of the edX Advisory Council (EAC) is to develop rules, guidelines, etc. for RIT. Due to the edX guidelines, we need to keep things moving.

RIT has formulas for accelerated online courses (number of contact hours, etc.), for edX, we need to determine if we keep those formulas.

The council is made up of 3 groups:

Group 1: Advise on how to structure, incentivize, and police, as well as manage the quality of content.

Group 2: Access to global campuses, visibility and awareness

Group 3: The think tank – Additional uses, such as who can offer course (i.e. alumni, staff, retirees, etc.), what other uses

This is a very large committee and that is why we are dividing into 3 groups, but you are not trapped into one group of the other and are welcome to join other group meetings.

Working practices:
We will have closed sessions as well as opportunities for others to join. Meeting minutes will be collected and published. There is some sensitivity to these issues, therefore access to meeting minutes will be limited access, requiring an RIT login ID.

Each group has a lead and an admin that will help schedule the meetings for that group:
Group 1: Deb Blizzard with Peggy Mack
Group 2: Neil Hair with Dawn Severson
Group 3: Jim Hall with Christine Lang

This is a huge opportunity for RIT to offer a beginner course to increase awareness and also reuse that course material in the classroom.
So why now? Considering video game design is not there and there are other popular courses, not there, it is a great way to let the world know what RIT has.

COMMENTS:

If you have not taken an edX course, it would be worth your while to take both a short one and a long one. Knowing what it is like will help in establishing the objectives of the committee.

There is such a great variety, such as: Health & Wellness, Nutrition, Raspberry Pie, Renaissance, Intro to Java, Intro to HTML, how to make tea, online yoga, etc.

As a student and working in academic support, course review is not typically an academic routine. Many fundaments tend to be forgotten. These topics end up in the class, but there is not a real review, causing difficulties. edX classes offer great opportunity for students to review and prepare for a class.

This is a differential learning experience, and not just the delivery of a course with a rigid format. It is more competency based learning.

QUESTIONS:

Q: There could appear to be a gap in the learning outcomes for some courses because students may drop out after they have learned enough. How can we review that?

Q: How does this change the development of courses here?

Q: How can we measure success? What does success look like? We have a variety of courses, so success can be measured very differently.

Q: Are their standards? Are there multi-lingual?
A: Yes

There are also classes offered in foreign language, offering richness.

Q: Thinking “Uniquely RIT”, why not offer an ASL course? Huge potential group that may be attracted to RIT, Deaf culture, etc.
Q: Will we have access to best practices, etc. from edX?
A: Yes, Therese Hannigan will send pdfs of best practices, best tips, etc. Ian & Therese went to edX training and there is overwhelming information, so if there is a specific area of interest, just ask Therese.

Therese will look to obtain a document of common goals other universities have come up with, such as gaining awareness, etc.

Members will break put into their smaller groups to begin discussions and determine when and how often they feel they should meet.

NEXT STEPS:

- Dawn will send calendar invite to the EAC members to join the April 22 meeting with reps of edX.
- Each group will develop a plan to meet on a regular schedule.
- Dawn will compile minutes and forward to the committee along with today’s presentation.