A System Approach to Academic Transformation

SREB Regional Working Group
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University System of Maryland (USM)

- USM
  - 11 universities
    - Represent the diversity of US Higher Education
  - One research institution
  - Two regional higher education centers
  - System office

- USM Facts
  - Undergraduate Students: 111,674 statewide (129,269 worldwide)
  - Graduate/Professional Students: 43,929 statewide (44,040 worldwide)
  - Full-time Faculty: 8,685
  - Part-time Faculty: 6,357
  - More than 1,000 bachelor's, master's, doctoral, and professional programs
  - More than 100 locations in Maryland
  - FY 13 Operating Budget: $4.8 billion
Course Redesign: Low Hanging Fruit

- *Course Redesign* is a specific approach for improving large-enrollment courses
  - National Center for Academic Transformation
  - Dual goals of improving learning outcomes and reducing necessary resources
- Applies to a wide range of disciplines
- Each project is in response to a specific set of stated problems
- Take advantage of the complexity of large-enrollment
  - Not just about how a course is delivered
Background of Course Redesign in USM

• Second phase of USM Board of Regents’ 'Effectiveness and Efficiency Initiative’

• USM First System to Adopt CR Across the System-Maryland Course Redesign Initiative (MCRI)—2006
  – Have a demonstration project at each institution
  – Simultaneously improve learning outcomes and lower institutional costs
  – Perturbing element----effective use of technology
Evolution of Course Redesign in the USM

- MCRI
- Lumina Growing by Degrees Program
- USM Carnegie Course Redesign Initiative
- Complete College America
Successes of Course Redesign Initiatives

• 68 Maryland courses at 30 institutions across Maryland redesigned to date
  – Developmental to graduate courses
  – Humanities, Social Sciences, and STEM
  – Have approved 15 new redesigns within the USM

• Move to Student Centered learning

• Assessment ‘baked into every project’ and shows most achieved improved learning outcomes and savings

• Improved student success

• Improved satisfaction---faculty and students
Course Redesign from a System Perspective

• Provide a common structure and supporting tools for redesigning large-enrollment courses
• Provide a uniform framework for assessment and quality assurance
• Develop a multi-institutional support model
• Create a culture of innovation broadly across the System
Course Redesign from a System Perspective (2)

• Disseminate best practices
• Sustain the effort
• Establish leveraged relationships with external partners
• Develop funding for innovative activities
  – Cooperatively with institutions
Lessons Learned

• A significant number of faculty are ready to engage in academic innovation
• Academic Transformation works best if initiated locally and supported from above
• Course Redesign Fellows’ peer consulting has been instrumental for acceptance and success
  – Within their discipline across institutions
  – Within their institution across disciplines
That Said.....

• Initiatives have revealed common challenges
  – Faculty “buy-in”
  
  – Students’ willingness to engage in active learning
  
  – Technology readiness and available platforms
  
  – Culture accepting change
What Comes Next for USM?

- Move to “Academic Transformation” which moves beyond large enrollment courses
- Develop and sustain culture of academic innovation at institutions
- Continue to share knowledge with Community Colleges
- Create a Center for Innovation and Excellence in Learning And Teaching (CIELT) in USM Office
  - Track innovation within USM and nationally
  - Assess best practices
  - Raise funds
  - Disseminate best ideas
Current Activities

• Gained support and funding from the Governor and Legislature
• Partnership with Ithaka S+R supported by Gates Foundation
  – Repurpose MOOCs for use in traditional institutional courses
    • Coursera
    • Carnegie Mellon Open Learning Initiative
  – Pearson summer bridge courses
• Structure for further innovations
  – Institutions establishing Centers for Academic Innovation
  – USM Office has established and is staffing CIELT
Two Handouts

- Timeline of Academic Transformation in USM
- Short summary of cost savings in most recently reported projects (available after the panel)