Members Present:
Martha Bidez, PhD, Interim Director, eLearning and Professional Studies
Jeffrey Clair, PhD, Assoc. Professor, Dept. of Sociology, Director, Center for Social Medicine
Catherine Danielou, PhD, Assoc. Professor and Senior Assoc. Dean, College of Arts and Sciences
Elizabeth Fisher, PhD, Instructional Design Manager, School of Business
Roderick Fullard, OD, Assoc. Professor, Vision Sciences, School of Optometry
Nicolaas Geurs, DDS, Professor and Chair, Dept. of Periodontology, School of Dentistry
Maria Hopkins, PhD, Asst. Professor, Psychology and Director, Undergraduate Studies
Karen Kennedy, PhD, Assoc. Professor and Assoc. Dean, School of Business
Elizabeth Maples, PhD, Asst. Professor, Environmental Health Sciences, School of Public Health
Jacqueline Moss, PhD, Professor and Chair, Nursing Adult/Acute Health, School of Nursing
Betty Nelson, PhD, Assoc. Professor, Curriculum Instruction, School of Education
Pamela Paustian, PhD, Asst. Professor, School of Health Professions
Donna Slovensky, PhD, Professor and Assoc. Dean, School of Health Professions
David Yother, Director, IT Customer Service

Members Absent:
Fouad Fouad, PhD, Professor and Chair, Dept. of Civil, Construction & Environmental Engineering
David Rogers, MD, Professor, Division of Pediatric Surgery, School of Medicine
Grant Savage, PhD, Professor, Management, Inf. Sys, Quant Mthd, School of Business
Lisa Schwiebert, PhD, Assoc. Professor, Department of Cell Developmental & Integrative Biology
Jonathan Waugh, PhD, Professor, Respiratory Therapy Program, Co-Director, UAB Center for Teaching and Learning
Suzanne Austin, PhD, Vice Provost for Student and Faculty (represented by Dr. Gregg Janowski)

Guests:
Gregg Janowski, Interim Faculty Director of Academic Assessment (representative of Dr. Austin)
John King, Division of eLearning and Professional Studies
Linda Lucas, PhD, Provost
Jonathan McNair, Media Producer & Technologist, School of Business
Kathy Mergl, Division of eLearning and Professional Studies
Lisa Reburn, PhD, Division eLearning and Professional Studies

Meeting was called to order at 11:30 a.m. by Interim Director, eLearning and Professional Studies, Martha Bidez, PhD. Council members introduced themselves with comments on their experience with online education and motivations for participation in the Advisory Council.
Provost’s Charge
Provost Linda Lucas made a presentation to the council (Attachment 1) and charged the council with designated responsibilities. A motion to accept the charge was made by Karen Kennedy and seconded by Elizabeth Maples. Dr. Lucas answered questions about how this council will work with the Center for Teaching and Learning. She said there are similarities and differences. Input from both groups is needed. The UAB Online Academic Advisory Council will have broader representation and will deal with university-wide, overarching issues. There will be some overlap between the two groups as we move forward with what is best for UAB. Following discussion, motion carried with a unanimous vote in favor.

Later in the meeting, Dr. Jeffrey Claire made a motion to amend the written charge of the Provost for additional clarity by adding that the UAB Academic Advisory Council will advise the Director on institution-wide issues related to online education quality and enrollment growth, including academic opportunities, infrastructure needs and technology needs. Dr. Jackie Moss seconded the motion, which passed unanimously. (Attachment 2)

Online Quality Survey
A question was raised about the survey sent recently from the Division of eLPS. Dr. Bidez clarified that the survey was meant to serve as a measurable baseline for future quality improvement initiatives. There was discussion about the importance of two-way communication involving the Council and their respective schools.

Case Study Presentation – School of Business
Elizabeth Fisher, PhD and Jonathan McNair, MS presented a case study for improvement in online teaching conducted in the School of Business. (Attachment 3)

Dr. Fisher discussed challenges and successes experienced in The School of Business as they implemented changes to improve online learning. She discussed faculty & student survey results, steps taken to address needs, challenges encountered during implementation and successes experienced as a result of the effort. Some group discussion included issues around the negative consequences resulting from change of course management systems, the need for more Quality Matters’ peer reviewers, secure online testing, centralization vs. decentralization, the need for more responsive technical support, the need for academics to drive technology, and quality assurance. Jonathan McNair discussed the need for appropriate multimedia and how this supports different learning styles and Universal Design. He also discussed the need for an IT infrastructure that can support this sophisticated level of multimedia.

Some group discussion included issues about different systems and their capabilities, varying online learning fees, international concerns and possibilities, Quality Matters and peer review. Dr. Betty Nelson inquired about the possible reasons for a higher retention rate (>80%) in online students receiving technical support from Embanet compared to those business students who received only campus support. Additionally, best practices concerning student involvement, the future strategic plan and becoming consistent with the approach to quality were discussed.
More group discussion followed on the topics of enhanced overall quality, eLearning as a resource for quality, the need for a central structure, the importance of school-based, instructional designers, the need to develop innovative new programs, the potential for growth in offsite student numbers, and the need for mini trainings on issues important to faculty were entertained.

Martha Bidez, PhD spoke briefly about the ten added values offered by the Division of eLearning and Professional Studies during the first six months of its existence (Attachment 4). She also congratulated the Council on the candid and open discussion during the inaugural Council meeting. Dr. Bidez concluded with encouragement for each Council member to embrace their individual opportunity to be transformational change agents on the UAB campus in online education.

The meeting was adjourned by Martha Bidez at 1:00 p.m.

Submitted by:

Lisa Reburn, PhD
Project Director and ADA Coordinator
Division of eLearning and Professional Studies