EDUCAUSE Board Meeting

February 29, 2012
Washington DC

Attending:

• Board Members: David Lassner (Chair), Diana Oblinger (President and CEO), Debra Allison (Treasurer), Joel Cooper, Ted Dodds, Kara Freeman, Susan Metros, Richard Northam (Secretary), Pattie Orr, Vernon Smith, Randy Stiles, Brian Voss, Brad Wheeler (Vice Chair).
• Staff: Joanne Dehoney, Susan Grajek, Greg Jackson, Garth Jordan, Julie Little, Michelle McIrvin (on phone for the financial report).

Call to Order

• Lassner called the meeting to order at 8:34 Eastern Time (ET) and asked for comments on the consent agenda, including the October 2011 board meeting minutes and the following investment resolution:

Resolved that Diana Oblinger, president and CEO of EDUCAUSE, and Garth Jordan, vice president of operations of EDUCAUSE, are authorized to sell, assign, and transfer EDUCAUSE investments held and managed by Wells Fargo Investment Advisory Services and to execute any and all instruments necessary, proper or desirable, for this purpose. All transactions must be executed in accordance with EDUCAUSE investment policies and procedures.

  o Oblinger explained that the resolution is necessary because the EDUCAUSE investment advisors moved from their previous firm, which dissolved, to Wells Fargo.
  o Wheeler asked if we have ever benchmarked our investment strategy against the strategies of peer associations. Oblinger agreed to check with association peers informally to see if our investment strategy is comparable.

• The minutes were approved by unanimous consent at approximately 8:40 a.m. ET.
• The investment resolution was approved by unanimous consent at approximately 8:42 a.m. ET.

President’s Report

• Oblinger noted that the nominations committee is in process and that everything is on track to bring forward a slate in June.
• In reference to data indicating satisfaction with the annual conference by age group, Oblinger noted that EDUCAUSE has an opportunity to improve its appeal to younger cohorts.
  o Orr pointed out the importance of a mobile app to appeal to this demographic.
• Oblinger reviewed participation in the ELI annual conference, noting that participation continues to grow.
• Oblinger reported on the Center for American Progress (CAP) session in January 2012 and observed that the discussion highlighted issues similar to those arising in NGLC: competency-based programs, informed decision-making, open educational resources. She reported that the second round of NGLC Wave III funding is in the proposal review stage.
• Oblinger provided an update on the Frye program, informing the board EDUCAUSE is withdrawing from the partnership. 2012 will be the last class in the program. EDUCAUSE will partner with CLIR to develop a new leadership program.
  o Metros observed that the communication plan will be important.
  o Orr noted that the opportunity to improve the curriculum is a positive outcome. She also observed that follow-up, face-to-face networking opportunities associated with Frye have not come to fruition as she expected.
  o In response to an inquiry about using the Frye name post hoc, Oblinger said that she did not anticipate a problem, for example, with the listserv.
• Oblinger reviewed the state of .edu management and reported that EDUCAUSE is putting forward proposals to Department of Commerce that will improve the quality of .edu domains and better meet campus .edu requirements. Jackson observed that any changes will take months to implement and that Commerce may reject them.
  o In response to a question about providing community feedback to EDUCAUSE about .edu requirements, Jackson mentioned that he frequently receives and considers feedback from those in and outside the EDUCAUSE community.
• Oblinger highlighted the upcoming Campus IT Policy Workshop in July, which is the first in a new event for the IT policy community.
• Oblinger provided an update on international. She reviewed the development and status of the Coalition of Higher Education IT Associations (CHEITA) and reviewed other international activities that EDUCAUSE has been supporting in Chile, Japan, New Zealand, Puerto Rico, and Qatar.
• Oblinger reviewed two organizational development activities: one about values and behaviors; the other about priorities, key projects and activities.
  o Dodds noted that promoting a culture based on the idea that “we appreciate effort but reward outcomes” is difficult but important work.
  o Wheeler inquired about turn-over. Oblinger noted that there is turn-over, but that it has not been problematic.
• Jordan showed pictures of the new office space in Colorado and described the move.
• Oblinger reviewed the new web design and the flagship redesign to general positive response from the board.

Financial Report

• Oblinger reviewed the financial status of the organization from un-audited 2011 numbers, noting that overall our assets are up by $1.9 M.
She compared income and expense by cost-center.

Jordan noted that one strength we have compared to many associations is diversity in the revenue stream: dues, conferences, etc.

In response to a question, Oblinger noted that EDUCAUSE participates in the American Society of Association Executives (ASAE) and uses its resources.

Stiles asked about the overall trend in financial health. Oblinger responded by noting that over the last few years we have improved control, visibility, and attention to profitability. In areas that were previously allowed to operate at a loss.

Oblinger demonstrated that we exceeded budgeted revenues.

Oblinger reviewed the structure and status of the reserves, noting that we have improved our operational reserves position inline with reserves policy. In response to a question, McIrvin noted that capital equipment is fully funded. Oblinger noted that the reserves will be drawn down for website redesign and analytics in 2012.

Smith asked what the upcoming risks to financials might be. Oblinger responded that two areas of risk are, 1) we are seriously under-invested in IT and must correct this gap to stay current with member needs; 2) the annual conference this year conflicts with the election, so could fail to hit targeted revenues. In response to a question about whether the IT investment will improve the conference experience with technology, Jordan responded that we are planning for it. Voss inquired about the logic of moving the location of the meeting annually. Jordan responded that we are trying to establish a rotation pattern among standard western, central and eastern sites.

Business Meeting

Online/Hybrid (OL/HY) Planning

- Little gave the history of EDUCAUSE’s online / hybrid programming and proposed four models to consider: conference/event, course, collaboration/ aggregation (the community creates content together), and social models.
- Little explained that EDUCAUSE is embarking on strategic planning for OL/HY, and asked the group what OL/HY programs in EDUCAUSE look like in 3 to 5 years.
- Smith envisioned the “EDUCAUSE Roku” channel, in which content mastery is paired with badging.
- Dodds highlighted the connection between the level of satisfaction among younger cohorts with EDUCAUSE and the nature and quality of OL/HY offerings, and suggested that market stratification could be explored as part of strategic planning.
- Northam proposed connecting a collaboration environment to the training or learning management environment.
- Metros suggested seriously looking at credentialing, noting that EDUCAUSE content could be used to help people’s careers if it was part of an authoritative credentialing structure. Voss followed by suggesting a certification process. Metros also noted the
importance of quality assurance. Smith noted the requirement for instructional design and assessment.

- Allison proposed a collaboration environment that would allow her to pull people together synchronously for point-of-need conversations instead of relying on the CIO list.
- Orr highlighted the fit between virtual certification and the needs of distributed IT staff. She also noted that it makes sense to develop a fee structure.
- Stiles noted the importance of diversity in higher education and suggested that planning should address the need for different models; he cited Siemens massively open course on analytics as an interesting model.
- Wheeler suggested that three years is the furthest time horizon that is useful to plan. He cautioned that planning should be focusing on outcomes and quality, not specific technologies like social media.
- Freeman noted the opportunity to build awareness and recruit younger members to connect them to EDUCAUSE for succession purposes. She further suggested social networking is useful for building interpersonal connections before face-to-face conference experiences.
- Metros advised that planning explore partnership possibilities, for example, with the New York Times, noting that partners can add value beyond just replacing internal production.
- Northam cited a possible role of EDUCAUSE “Linked-in” style functionality.
- Dodds cited the importance of “what.” He used the example of building mobility projects on campus and unsuccessfully looking to the Sprint archives for planning guidance. He suggested that in planning we keep the question in mind: “What do our members do with the outcomes of . . .”
- Northam recommended that in planning, EDUCAUSE consider whether an overarching strategy will be most useful or if examining the OL/HY needs of each sector (conferences, professional development, etc.) would serve us best. He cited the value of modeling best practice so that members can replicate the practices in their own context.
- Stiles commented that two key questions are can you save money and can you assess the results.
- Metros suggested that we should define our needs first then design the solution that meets them, without being constrained by cost. She further observed that members of the younger demographic often do not realize that they lack the required skill set, so targeting their professional development is important. Little concurred, saying that the messaging and communication to the demographic has to stress the PD path.
- Orr suggested that planning should evaluate the role of multi-point video.
- Oblinger opened a quick brainstorm to identify needs.
  - Orr: provide access for people who cannot travel.
  - Freeman: open doors for people who don’t know they should be members, get past the usual suspects.
  - Cooper: reach people early in their careers.
  - Orr: expand the impact of our leadership institutes.
2012 Annual Conference

• Jordan briefly described proposed changes to the receptions and party at the annual conference due to the conference overlapping with the election, including an enhanced, conference-wide reception Wednesday night in the exhibit hall that would replace both the Thursday night party and the Tuesday exhibit hall opening. He noted that less than half of conferees attend the Thursday party and that it consistently receives lower ratings compared to other aspects of the conference.

• Jordan opened the discussion, asking for the board to address the best way to communicate the changes to membership.
  o In response to a question, Jordan noted that corporations would be able to take advantage of the open night.
  o Stiles concurred that given the numbers, making a change is appropriate.
  o Dodds suggested that we have an opportunity to try something else so should capitalize on it.
  o Wheeler suggested that these changes fit the model of making change to every annual conference. He noted the importance of being sensitive to younger, less networked colleagues and suggested BOF dinners as a way of both providing a leadership opportunity for volunteer leaders and place for people to network. He suggested that sun-setting the party could be considered “a feature not a bug.”
  o Dodds concurred that it is low risk to sunset the party and suggested that from the business and benefit perspectives, there is nothing to conceal.
  o Lassner suggested that there may be sensitivity to cancelling the party instead of cancelling the reception on the trade show floor.
Orr noted that if we let the collaborative groups have advance notice, they might want to form their own groups or dinners on Tuesday or Thursday.

In response to a question about the awards reception, Jordan said that the day and time of the business, newcomers, and awards receptions will not change.

Orr recommended improving the quality of food and beverages, adding distributed stations and providing good group seating.

Lassner cautioned that we might not want to message the change as being too closely tied to the election, since the change may be permanent.

Wheeler suggested that we should let groups know soon that Tuesday will be available for ancillary meetings.

• Oblinger asked the group whether EDUCAUSE needs a visible new event to offset the lack of party.
  o Allison suggested focusing on new features of the conference generically, including the enhanced reception on Wednesday.
  o Dodd suggested language such as, “Based on member feedback we are eliminating X and adding Y, and we will check back with you to see if the changes were effective.”
  o Lassner suggested improving the quality of the lunch experience, both food and logistics.
  o Orr suggested designing a message that stresses that we are continuing to upgrade, have made changes, and that it is more important than ever to get member feedback.
  o Dodds asked how we could invest in the quality of sessions themselves as opposed to investing in entertainment items. Northam cited CAUDIT speaker mentoring and Oblinger referenced the Speaker Concierge service as an example.
• Oblinger noted the board’s support for the proposed changes and that staff will plan accordingly for the 2012 conference.

Oblinger added an agenda item at lunch to discuss a potential national eText pilot.

eTexts
• Jackson provided an introduction to the state of eText collaborations with EDUCAUSE, Internet2 Net+ and to the idea of a nationwide eTExt pilot in Fall 2012 based on IUPUI’s model. He opened the floor for comments.
  o Smith suggested that etexts may replicate current form factors and that going past etexts might be worth considering. Wheeler responded that for the purposes of the work in Indiana, the term encompasses “digital things” of many kinds that do go past what we might think of as a digitized book.
  o Orr noted that a common software platform is essential. She also cited the opportunity for EDUCAUSE to bring together the lessons from the pilot activities.
  o Dodds suggested that the real motivator for campuses will be the possibility for quick speed to market at scale. His approach in selling the concept with Cornell deans was about reducing the total cost of instruction.
- Allison commented that the project is compelling because we so rarely have the chance to directly reduce the cost of instruction.
- Voss responded by noting that it may be difficult to demonstrate reduced costs of instruction and added a second caution, that many campus bookstore contracts would preclude participation.
- Allison identified the fact that politically the project plays well at the state legislature level.
- Metros cited sustainability, rather than cost, as a driver for interest and participation.
- Stiles cited modularity, interactivity, and mobile apps as motivations for participation in addition to cost.
- Smith cited learner requirements, noting that there is tremendous value in creating a standard for ereader annotation.
- Wheeler described the pilot at Indiana, noting that any faculty member can order an eText and that so far, the technical support requirements for faculty and students have been minimal. Everything has a print option.
- Orr concurred with Smith, saying that the value is in defining what are the important features and functions of eTexts.
  - Smith reiterated that while the cost argument is compelling, we should not lose sight of the case for learning effectiveness, which will be the argument that compels in the long term.
  - Oblinger extended Jackson’s point by noting that it is a pilot activity, which, if it works, will open up additional avenues of activity.
  - Metros responded to Smith by cautioning that effectiveness can be hard to demonstrate, but that satisfaction metrics are more easily obtainable.
  - Dodds observed that EDUCAUSE’s engagement in the pilot activity is itself a pilot with lessons to learn about supporting future pilot activities.
  - Metros paraphrased a Gartner recommendation: don’t have pilots--have experiments, because pilots fail and experiments have findings.
  - Lassner followed up noting that the cost containment objective of texts is one of a variety of strategies that we could be looking at to help the broader agenda of reducing higher education costs.
  - Wheeler reported that IU’s goal has always been that the eTexts be perceived as a good deal by students, compared to buying and selling back a used book, and that average savings are about $25 per book. He noted that at the same time, this model is revenue positive to authors and publishers.
  - Allison observed that as another benefit, eTexts simplify the book buying process for students.
  - In response to a role call by Oblinger, the board unanimously agreed to support an EDUCAUSE managed experiment.
    - Orr recommended that EDUCAUSE plan a wrap-up activity that brings together diverse players, including industry, to talk about what was learned with the experiment.
Wheeler clarified the origins and relationship between IU and Courseload, which was chosen after a competitive bid. Courseload independently received a loan from the state to support innovation.

Orr observed that if a pilot for the fall semester were not workable, the spring semester would suit as well or even better given the academic cycle. The pilot should include inter-library loan services and other resources. Wheeler added that the current pilot at Indiana includes course packs, where students saw significant savings.

**Licensing for Core Data**

- Grajek provided an overview of the issues and rationale for licensing core data and opened a general discussion.
  - Orr observed that influential reports are being generated using faulty data (e.g., Gartner) and noted that it would be an improvement if these reports were based on CDS data.
  - Northam noted that we are giving away a lot of data for free that corporations are using and valuing, suggesting that we reduce what we give away for free.
  - Stiles referenced the Council of Independent Colleges tools, some of which are free and others that are fee-based, noting that the model may be relevant.
  - Cooper asked if there are any entities that we might not sell to, and secondly suggested that EDUCAUSE should investigate pricing schemes based on factors such as the size of the contracting corporation.
  - Dodds asked what the change in the value proposition would be for institutions that are currently contributing their data to CDS. Grajek responded that this is an aspect to be explored in the business plan, such as access to extraction and visualization tools. Dodds commented that we should be clear about the value proposition for contributing institutions because it could be easier to write a check than to contribute data, thus reducing the value of the data asset.
  - Northam pointed out a potential beneficial consequence of licensing: that wider access could potentially create pressure to participate as leaders ask how their campus compares with others.
  - Wheeler suggested that in planning the product line, EDUCAUSE should engage “an MBA barracuda with a serpent mind” to help price the products. He observed that there may be a role generating customized reports for other associations. He cautioned that we have to retain the focus on what members receive for their subscription, distinguishing from the upsell.
  - Orr suggested that the timing is good with the CDS renovations complete. She speculated that licensing may enable EDUCAUSE to provide more value to average members and that the annual conference is an opportunity to provide training for core data. Grajek responded by noting that the CDS product owner, Leah Lang, is creating PD plans around the service. Smith noted the potential OL/HY opportunity for training.
  - Freeman cited the importance of deciding whether we are “HBO or PBS” as a metaphor that can be useful in messaging with the membership.
o Jordan observed that in planning, we have to also consider the value proposition for corporate members.

o Lassner recommended against offering an opt-out from DRA licensing for those contributing data to CDS. He suggested that only de-identified data should be made available to non-members, and that we communicate clearly that the purpose of data licensing is to improve the value of the service to members.

o Northam reported success using member success stories with benchmarking to promote CAUDIT data services.

o Wheeler suggested a “Core Data Challenge” at the annual conference, with questions that could be answered using CDS.

o Jackson suggested that the Google privacy situation increases the need for an opt-out in the fine print. Orr and Lassner responded that a consequence of allowing opt-outs would be that the reports contributing campuses generate would differ from the reports EDUCAUSE generated. Lassner suggested contacting institutional representatives to let them know about the initiative and that the board unanimously supported it. Orr suggested that we might communicate face-to-face at the annual conference rather than via email.

o Grajek clarified that users sign the acceptable use policy (AUP) when they extract, not add data, because currently its primary purpose is to govern how users protect the data.

o Orr stressed the need to communicate directly with leaders, who are sometimes not the same as institutional representatives.

- Oblinger summarized the discussion, saying that the board does not think the average member will object to licensing CDS information. Dodds responded saying that to be transparent, it would be best to present the AUP when the data is entered so that people can opt out if they don’t want their data in the mix.

- Oblinger asked what cases should be excluded from access, if any?
  o Orr suggested that competitors could be excluded.
  o Wheeler suggested that the license should specify citation requirements, similar to NSF rules.
  o Northam suggested that the license could specify that EDUCAUSE benefit from downstream revenue. Wheeler cautioned that this would entail a trade off with the upfront fee and could get very complicated.
  o Jackson cautioned against making distinctions based on competitive status.

- Oblinger noted that the details are yet to be worked out, but that EDUCAUSE staff will take the next steps to develop a comprehensive market analysis and business plan.

**Executive Session**

Executive session commenced at 2:25 p.m. ET.

The board meeting adjourned at 3:10 p.m. ET.