Implementing a Blended/Online Learning Policy on a Face-to-Face Campus: Perspectives of Administrators and Implications for Change

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Abstract: Many universities are currently exploring the factors that impact implementation of blended learning policies and institutions. In the Caribbean this is particularly important as financial support by governments in the region has dwindled in the context of a global recession, and universities are seeking ways to reduce costs and increase access. The vision for blended learning on one campus of a multi-campus, higher education institution in the Caribbean, was to enhance teaching and learning by offering students and staff greater flexibility, more opportunities for engagement and wider choices consistent with varying teaching and learning styles and needs. As this multi-campus university moves toward a re-engineered online policy and greater collaboration among the campuses, some administrators have expressed the view that they have been left out of the implementation strategies and are not clear on the status of the blended learning policy on their campus, nor their roles and responsibilities. This is a qualitative case study, focusing on the stage of blended learning implementation and the perceptions of deans and administrative officers at a specific higher education institution. The methods used were review of the use of the Learning Management System, and interviews conducted with deans and administrative officers. Thick descriptions of perceptions of administrators are provided. The implications of their perceptions for implementation are discussed and recommendations to close gaps where they exist are made. Findings confirm that change management strategies are required, such as establishing a sense of urgency, forming a powerful guiding coalition and creating a vision. Administrators need to provide clear direction on who should lead the initiative and senior management has a role in ensuring there is additional team support to increase programme development. Findings also indicate that while blended learning has the potential to reduce costs to higher education institutions, initial investments in software, hardware, appropriate staff and training require additional financial investments. Administrators have a role to play in sourcing funds for the implementation of blended learning and also in performing audits, which can help in providing information on the existing technical skills, hardware and software available on the campus and how they are being used.

Keywords: blended learning implementation, online learning, change management for administrators

Introduction

Blended learning has been a point of focus for administrators and faculty at traditional, or brick and mortar, universities for some time. Academic journals are replete with articles that seek to define blended learning, and that interrogate the capacity of blended learning to enhance teaching and learning, and to reduce operating costs for tertiary institutions. Researchers such as Twigg (2003) and Benson and Anderson (2010) hold the view that universities have not begun to realise the power of Information Communication Technologies (ICTs) in higher education and that the right blended

learning model can improve teaching and learning and reduce costs. In this regard, many universities are exploring the implementation of blended learning models and institutions in the Caribbean are no exception. As financial support by governments in the region has continued to dwindle in the context of a global recession, universities have been seeking ways to reduce costs and increase access.

The University of the West Indies, a regional tertiary level institution in the Caribbean with four campuses catering to 17 countries, has been engaged in open and distance learning for more than three decades. Moreover, one of the strategies identified in The University of the West Indies's (UWIs) strategic plan 2007-2012 was to "promote the use of ICTs to enhance teaching" (UWI n.d., p 14). More recently, the UWIs 2017-2022 strategic plan has placed emphasis on the potential of open and distance learning, including online and blended learning via the goal of increased access to UWI programmes, which is identified as part of the university's "Triple A" strategy of *Access, Alignment* and *Agility.* (The University Office of Planning, 2017). Notwithstanding this, while the institution boasts three traditional, brick and mortar campuses, namely, the St. Augustine campus in Trinidad and Tobago; Mona in Jamaica; and Cave Hill Campus in Barbados; and one virtual campus, the Open Campus, the implementation of blended learning has faced varying challenges on each of the traditional, face-to-face campuses, and has not met the level of success anticipated by the university.

With the birth of the UWI Open Campus in 2007, movement away from the faculty-driven model to one driven by adjunct staff, impacted the nature of the relationship between the Open Campus and the traditional campuses. In May 2008, the University's Finance and General Purposes Committee approved A *Policy for Online, Distance and Multimode Learning* intended "to facilitate a coordinated, university-wide approach to the expansion of on-line and distance education and the access of all UWI students to the opportunity to learn via multiple learning modalities." https://bit.ly/2KfXAJI Although the 2008 policy was intended to encourage coordination and collaboration, the traditional campuses continued to independently work towards the development of blended programmes.

The UWI Pro-Vice Chancellors have been discussing a re-engineered online policy and greater collaboration among the four campuses. As The UWI moves toward greater collaboration and more focus on multimode programmes, which The UWI considers blended programmes, administrators at the levels of deans, heads of departments and senior administrative officers on the St Augustine campus, have expressed the view informally, at various campus level meetings, that they have been left out of the implementation strategies. They felt they were not part of the decision-making process for the move towards blended learning and they are not clear on their roles and responsibilities. It is also noteworthy that while the blended learning initiative was supported by the Campus Principal at St Augustine, reports from the Blended Learning Team at the Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL) indicate that there was only moderate awareness and adoption. (Zephyrine, 2015; Thurab-Nkhosi& Zephyrine, 2017)

The purpose of this study is to better understand the issues related to implementation of a blended learning policy at the UWI's St Augustine Campus (UWISTA) and by extension the wider university. Usually in blended learning policy implementation, the focus is on implementation by teaching staff. From a change management perspective, however, it is critical to understand the perspectives of administrators, who have a responsibility for advocacy, resource management and effectiveness of policy implementation. This study has delimited "administrators" to deans and administrative officers in the faculties and the University of the West Indies St Augustine (UWISTA) is the focus of

this study, since this was the first traditional campus to approve a blended learning policy (AB P. 27 Extract Minutes of a Meeting of Academic Board held on Thursday 19th January 2012 at 13.00 hours in the Conference Room, New Student Administration Building 2012). The author was also involved in the process as a member of the Blended Learning Team of the CETL.

Background

Blended Learning at UWISTA

The UWI's teaching and learning environment is being transformed, as there is increasing demand for programmes and courses, complicated by a lack of resources regionally. Along with the increasing demand for higher education, there is more aggressive competition from universities outside the region, students are becoming more discerning in their higher education choices and the university has become more aware of the need to focus on quality assurance. The university has recognized the potential of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) to meet the needs for programme expansion, and to enhance teaching and learning. In this regard in 2007 the UWI arrived at a consensus on a policy for online, distance and multi-mode education (The University of the West Indies, 2007). Between 2005 and 2011, enthusiastic and innovative members of teaching staff at UWISTA engaged in several blended learning projects and online courses, which for the most part were not initiated, coordinated or monitored by the campus. (Edwards-Henry, Thurab-Nkhosi & Wood Jackson, 2005).

Efforts to provide a framework for the implementation of blended learning activities, in keeping with the university's strategic plan 2007-2012 to "promote the use of ICTs to enhance teaching" (UWI n.d., p 14), resulted in a Blended Learning Policy being drafted by a small committee, comprising representatives of the Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL), faculties, the library and the Bursary, on the St Augustine Campus. The UWISTA's Academic Board, approved the Blended Learning Policy in 2012 and an action plan was developed by the blended learning committee, chaired by the Campus Principal. This action plan along with the policy framework, was termed the Blended Learning Initiative. The Blended Learning Team of the Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL) comprising a Faculty Development Specialist and an eLearning Support Specialist had a lead role in the implementation of the Blended Learning Policy of the St. Augustine campus. The main goal of the initiative in the 2012 action plan was that by September 2015, each faculty must offer at least one blended programme, in keeping with the definition of blended learning provided in the policy. A review of the achievements of the initiative in 2015 revealed that three out of the seven faculties did not develop blended programmes within the implementation time frame. The blended learning context at St Augustine, therefore, was one in which there were pockets of responses to the Blended Learning Initiative and some level of compliance with the policy, however, there was still room for improvement. The Blended Learning Support Specialist at the Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning, in *The UWI BL Needs and Impact Assessment Report 2016: Assessment of Faculty Training Initiatives in Teaching and Learning,* found that some staff and students were averse to changing traditional ways of teaching and learning; they did not feel confident in the use of web-based tools or ICTs, and they saw the change as an add-on to their already overwhelming workload (Zephyrine, 2016). This resulted in resistance to change for use of technology. One of the conclusions of the report was that ensuring a shared philosophy and buy-in by staff and students would help in avoiding resistance and an appropriate change management

strategy was needed. While Zephyrine's report highlighted the perceptions of teaching staff and served to validate challenges highlighted in the existing literature, to date there has been no exploration of the perceptions of administrators, and in particular with regard to the conclusion related to change management. Administrators in this higher education context refer to persons "engaged in leading and administering activities, programmes, human, physical or financial resources, student services, academic or infrastructural support services within the university" (The Association of Higher Education Administrators, 2016, http://www.acheacaribbean.org/membership). They are, therefore, key in driving policy implementation through advocacy, resource allocation, monitoring and sustaining. For the purposes of this study this group has been delimited to those directly involved in implementation of the blended learning policy at the level of the faculties, namely, deans, and administrative officers and/or administrative assistants in the faculties. Deans are specifically responsible for providing academic leadership, advocacy, financial management and representation on campus and university boards and committees. Administrative officers work with the deans to operationalize policy. While they are not responsible for academic leadership, they have a role in communicating policy to all levels of staff, financial management, representation on campus committees as required, and advocacy.

Literature Review

Writers such as Bates (2017), Poon (2013), and Twigg (2003), to name a few, provide definitions of blended learning that range from a combination of learning experiences that integrate some use of educational technology, to approaches that focus on a specific percentage combination of online instruction and face-to-face experiences. The St Augustine Campus of The UWI has documented its own definition of blended learning as:

> … an integrated and planned approach to teaching and learning that appropriately combines face-to-face and online strategies and technologies to advance student-centered learning. (Blended learning Committee, July 2011 p. 1).

This definition specifically emphasizes the role of online strategies and technologies to advance teaching and learning to remove the focus from using technology to cater to increasing numbers. Blended learning on the St Augustine campus therefore pays attention to access as well as alignment with teaching and learning goals and agility in responding to needs of society, as reflected in the Triple A strategy of the current strategic plan.

With regard to implementation of blended learning, researchers such as Duarte (2016) and Graham et al (2013) are of the view that implementation strategies require clear institutional direction and policy, since this ultimately provides the framework within which teaching staff must operate. Several factors have been identified in the literature as influencing or impacting the adoption and implementation of blended learning. Graham et. al (2013) identify pedagogical and technological support, advocacy, definitions, and incentives. Other factors identified are strong advocacy by administrators, faculty and other institutional personnel (Porter, 2014).

With regard to structure and governance issues, Porter (2014) points out that institutions seeking to implement blended learning must provide the core technological infrastructure required including appropriate Learning Management Systems, web conferencing systems, if required, and sufficient bandwidth to enable the increased online activity that accompanies blended learning coursework.

There are also considerations of governance, i.e., who will be responsible for monitoring the implementation and assuring quality, as well as pedagogical issues.

Although recognition of the critical factors that impact blended learning and planning to address these factors are key to success, it is also important for institutions to be cognizant of the need for change management strategies. More importantly, organisations need to be clear on the type of change being sought and the related requirements. UWISTA is seeking transformational change, which Crew & Crew (2018) describe as "a change that is deep in that it has the capacity to profoundly alter one or more of the HEP's mission, values, culture, and ingrained practices" (p. 2). This transformational change already has the support at the level of Campus Principal and The University Council through the approval of the most recent Strategic Plan. While administrators at the highest level are supporting the vision, for change to take place there must be administrators who can ensure implementation (Boone, 2015).

With regard to blended learning policy implementation, therefore, institutions should consider what factors can result in change that is deep. Since administrators on the campus, in particular deans and administrative officers in the faculties, play a major role in driving policy implementation "on the ground", through advocacy, resource allocation, monitoring and sustaining, it is critical to solicit their views and support. These are the individuals who operate between the teaching staff and students, key stakeholders in the implementation and their role in providing input and feedback, clarifying, supporting, monitoring and sustaining any policies impacting these stakeholders is critical.

Graham, Woodfield and Harrison, (2013) looked at six US institutions of higher education at various stages of blended learning adoption. Porter (2014), building on the work of Graham et al in her study, provides a lucid description of the framework as follows:

- **Stage 1,** awareness/exploration, is characterized by no institutional strategy regarding blended learning, but an institutional awareness of and limited support for individual faculty exploring ways in which they may employ blended learning techniques in their classes.
- **Stage 2,** adoption/early implementation, is characterized by institutional adoption of blended learning strategy and experimentation with new policies and practices to support its implementation.
- **Stage 3,** mature implementation/growth, is characterized by well-established blended learning strategies, structure, and support that are integral to university operations ". (p. 14).

Based on this framework, Porter summarized three broad implementation categories, namely, Strategy, Structure and Support. Strategy encompasses sub-themes, such as definition adopted, forms of advocacy, and policy. Structure and Support address issues related to governance models, technical, pedagogical and administrative issues.

The UWI St Augustine has a blended learning policy with an action plan but it is not clear the extent to which the associated practices are well established. This suggests the St Augustine Campus is currently in Stage 2 of its Blended Learning Implementation, i.e., adoption/early implementation, and, thus, it is important to determine what is required to move to Stage 3, mature implementation and growth. Conclusions in *The UWI Blended Learning Needs and Impact Assessment Report 2016: Assessment of Faculty Training Initiatives in Teaching and Learning* highlight change management as key for

implementation and growth. Kotter's 8-Step Change Model (1996, p. 99), which proposes i) Establishing a Sense of Urgency; ii) Forming a Powerful Guiding Coalition, iii) Creating a Vision; iv) Communicating the Vision; v) Empowering Others to Act on the Vision; vi) Planning for and Creating Short-Term Wins; vii) Consolidating Improvements and Producing Still More Change; and viii) Institutionalizing New Approaches. The higher education context in the region is complex. Crew & Crew (2018) suggest that institutions may need to build change capability by fostering a culture that embraces change and which can create a more flexible, responsive organizational mind-set.

Research Purpose

It is apparent that blended learning has not been presented to the university community at The UWISTA with a sufficient sense of urgency. The UWISTA has attempted to stretch existing resources to meet the needs of a changing environment. Thus, as noted by Zephyrine (2016), few lecturers are even aware of a blended learning policy, thus suggesting that the vision was not sufficiently communicated but, not being able to ascertain where the communication gaps lie, many feel that it is a burden or add-on to their already heavy workload.

The establishment of a sense of urgency and clear communication of institutional vision requires the support of administrators such as deans who can act as advocators, communicators and leaders to drive the sense of urgency for implementation. The role of the administrators also extend to working with teaching staff to remove the barriers they have identified at the institutional level, with regard to infrastructural, workload, and pedagogical issues impacted by professional development. There is also a key role in ensuring that implementation is monitored and supported.

Drawing on the work of Graham et al (2013) and Kotter (1996), this study sought to answer the following questions:

1) What is the stage of development of the blended learning initiative on the St Augustine Campus?
2) What is the perception of administrative staff (deans and administrative officers) on their role in the implementation of a blended learning approach on the St Augustine Campus?
3) What are the implications of the perceptions of deans and administrative officers for change management and ultimately moving blended learning to Stage 3 of mature implementation?

Methodology

The study was a qualitative one, focusing on the stage of blended learning implementation and the perceptions of deans and administrative officers. The methods adopted were:

1) Review of the use of the Learning Management System, which is the virtual classroom that allowed making resources, online communication and collaborative and other online activities for engaging students and lecturers. The Learning Management System in use at UWISTA is MOODLE, which has been branded myeLearning at UWISTA. The review was done by obtaining reports generated from the MOODLE software by Campus Information and Technology Services (CITS). This allowed for identification of the number of courses in MOODLE that were actively used by lecturers and students per year; and

2) Interviews conducted with deans and administrative officers representing the Faculties of Humanities and Education, Law, Medical Sciences, Science and Technology, Social Sciences, Engineering and Food and Agriculture. A total of 11 interviews were conducted. These interviews were guided by an interview protocol based on the framework proposed by Graham et al (2013) and sought feedback on areas identified as factors impacting the implementation of Blended Learning, namely Strategy, Structure and Support (see Appendix 1).

Analysis of Interview Data

Interviews were recorded, and transcribed. Line-by-line analysis of the transcripts was done and themes and patterns were identified regarding the various issues. Three main themes, namely Strategy, Structure and Support, drawn from the framework developed by Graham et al (2013) were used and several subthemes were generated based on these themes indicated in Table 1:

Table 1: Themes and Sub-Themes based on Interviews with Administrators

Theme	Sub-themes
Strategy	Awareness, definition and advocacy;
Structure	Governance, Infrastructure
Support	Pedagogical, technical

Findings and Discussion

Status of Blended Learning

On the St Augustine Campus there has been an increase in the overall use of MOODLE since the implementation of the Blended Learning Initiative in 2012. As indicated in Table 2, there was an increase in the percentage of courses with content and activities in myeLearning from 25% in the 2011/2012 academic year to 34% in the 2016/17 academic year.

Lecturers were encouraged to use the Learning Management System (MyeLearning) to provide resources for their students, such as course outlines and readings at UWISTA, as part of the initiative. This included encouraging lecturers to use resources to supplement face-to-face classes (the Supplementary model as opposed to the Replacement Model).

Table 2: Percentage of Courses in myeLearning with Content and Activities (2011-2017)

Acad. Year	Total myEl Courses	Courses without Content and Activities	Courses with Content and Activities	Percentage of Courses with Content and Activities
2016/2017**	4131**	2732**	1399**	34%
2015/2016	5078	3500	1578	31%
2014/2015	5032	3576	1456	29%
2013/2014	4680	3306	1374	29%
2012/2013	4652	3390	1262	27%
2011/2012	4303	3210	1093	25%

** Figures to date 8-Feb-2017 (Moodle 3)

What the Administrators Say/Perceive

Awareness

Only one respondent, an administrative officer, indicated a complete lack of awareness about the blended learning initiative on the St Augustine Campus. However, while there was some level of awareness among the other respondents, there was a distinct vagueness about the details among all administrators. One respondent indicated that he was aware but was focused on other priorities so he did not give it much attention. Another respondent felt that there was currently no interest at all. In most instances there was a perception that the initiative did not directly impact members of the administrative staff but was rather the concern of teaching staff. There was no recognition by administrative staff that they had a key role to play in creating a sense of urgency, communicating a vision or removing barriers. This was never communicated to them through the usual channels for such information, namely meetings of the Academic Board in the case of deans and Faculty Board Meetings in the case of administrative officers:

> My understanding is that BL is really an academic exercise, so was I supposed to have been directly informed? Or was this communicated to Deans/HODs so that they can disseminate accordingly? Perhaps that could be one reason that I was unaware of this formal initiative. (Respondent 03)

> The whole discussion of Blended Learning is dead in the faculty. It is a dead topic. People were interested but I am no longer hearing anything about it. I am not seeing new things coming out. Here they are doing it in pockets based on their own efforts. There is no coordinated efforts. (Respondent 08)

There is a perception by most respondents that the blended learning initiative was not sufficiently communicated. One dean expressed the view it was sufficiently communicated but that his priority was not blended learning at the time and so it was not given full attention.

Three deans felt that there was need for some level of mandatory involvement for faculties and the need for the campus to provide more incentives or awareness about the benefits for staff to get their involvement.

> We have to get Heads to make sure it happens …Unless a mandate comes with time lines it does not happen. Would be up to the heads to push it. (Respondent 05)

> Blended learning should be a mandate of the university. It is not happening. (Respondent 05)

Definition

The persons interviewed all defined blended learning as a mix of online learning and face-to-face learning. None were aware that the St Augustine Campus had a definition of blended learning that was part of a campus policy. Most in fact associated or equated blended learning with myeLearning (St Augustine Campus's branding for Moodle). This could be due to a lack of strategic marketing and communication of the Blended Learning Initiative and a dependence on information on the policy and strategies being communicated through Academic Board Meetings and Faculty Board Meetings.

> I imagine there is a definition but I don't know what it is. We use myeLearning but I imagine it is more than that. (Respondent 09)

Advocacy

Only one dean admitted actively advocating for blended learning. This respondent admitted having prior experience and training in open and distance learning and stated that this experience provided inspiration and motivation.

Other deans and administrative officers admitted they had not actively advocated for blended learning, with one dean emphasizing the need for more involvement by senior members of the wider university community, rather than the campus only:

> … (the drive) Has to come from Centre…people who are championing the initiative and even if it is coming from here we need Centre involved. You are dealing regionally… (Respondent 02)

Access

There is general agreement that blended learning can widen access and enrich the student experience but there are reservations:

> Absolutely … it can widen access … but getting to that point it hinges on a lot of things … you have to be given time off to convert your course into a blended course. Will the university allow us to do that? Why should I spend time doing that? (Respondent 08)

> Again, the simple answer here could be 'yes', indeed it can. But access for whom/for what? Is this access with respect to enrolment (i.e. as an incentive for persons applying to come into UWI and this could be part of marketing that applicants may not have to come to campus say e.g. each week); or access in terms of 'class time' (i.e., online activities for current students to engage in)? (Respondent 03)

Structure

Governance

(Responsibility for Implementation)

Most of the respondents felt that the Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL) should have some role but two deans felt that the responsibility lay squarely with the deans or deputy deans to drive implementation at the faculty level:

> I don't think the initiative is being driven now. CETL was driving but I have not been hearing anything. CETL should be the ones driving it...giving the rationale for it. CETL would be able to explain it. (Respondent 08)

> I will be champion for that process… What you need is a person to report to me and I would give instruction as to what would happen. Let's say we take a phased approach. We take 1 programme and that individual will work with the distance people to take it through. I am not sure how the payment part operates and work through coming up with the modules. We may have to determine some of the modules. (Respondent 06)

Others felt that the School of Education or Deputy Principal should have responsibility or some role. The original intent of the Blended Learning Initiative envisaged the Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning as leading the initiative but with the support of the deans. This, perhaps, was not communicated explicitly enough to administrators.

There was general agreement that the administrative role was one of advocacy and support for students and staff. There was a responsibility to share information and to make persons in the faculty more aware. This required information trickling down or up as the case may be.

> My role as with all other policies to ensure they are disseminated support ad hoc committees, routing of information with BL though...in particular because it is a student policy I feel I must keep my ears to the ground with the students. (Respondent 01)

> To ensure that it works. To educate our students and let them know this is where the university is going. To be involved in a test period to show it can really work…To make sure that when it is in the environment the administrative part would be to make sure we have support e.g. technicians can fix immediately. I have a student support role for students (Respondent 07)

> Well actually I do not see it as my role to get involved it is to share the information we have in terms of policy and if there is any information to make available... (Respondent 02)

Support

Pedagogical

There was a general feeling that there was buy-in by some members of the teaching staff, however, it was recognized that there was a need to provide more awareness on the benefits of blended learning for staff. There was also a need for more incentives. This was recognized by CETL early on and the department has been advocating for a policy to have a blended course considered as a peer-reviewed academic paper, for assessment and promotion, which has not yet been approved. Three deans were aware of this policy.

> We need to value teaching and then see the importance of buying into a blended class. If they think it can help them. Teaching is valued for A& P. 2. The benefit of having a blended class. Right now it is just yet another burden… (Respondent 08)

> I got no resistance from Lecturers … (Respondent 02)

Technological

Generally, the feeling was that there is not enough technical support for faculties. This was unanimous and is supported by the CETL.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The interviews with administrators, and review of courses in myeLearning confirm several issues both internal to CETL, and to the wider UWI context, which militate against the successful implementation of blended/online learning on the campus. These issues were identified in the report, *Blended Learning at The UWI St Augustine (2012-2016) prepared by the CETL Blended Learning Team (2017).* Here, I will highlight the issues relevant to the role of administrators and to support change. It is apparent, however, that while the literature points to the key role of administrative staff in implementation of blended learning, this was not sufficiently communicated at UWISTA. The responsibility for communication of the Blended Learning policy and its accompanying strategies fall within several areas. From an academic perspective, the CETL has a role in ensuring the big picture is disseminated. Deans have a key role to play in filtering information down to heads of departments and administrative officers. Administrative officers have a responsibility for sharing information impacting resources and student support issues.

Role of the Administrators

Strategy – Providing Clear Direction, Ensuring a Shared Philosophy, Alignment

With regard to findings related to strategy, the St Augustine Campus developed a policy, with accompanying strategies, and a definition of blended learning, however, this was not clearly communicated to all deans and administrative officers, nor has their specific roles in implementing the policy been clarified. Porter (2014) notes that all stakeholders' objectives should be identified and addressed. Ensuring a shared philosophy and buy-in by all categories of staff and students will help in avoiding a lack of awareness as well as in facilitating the development of an appropriate change management strategy. This speaks directly to Steps 1, 2 and 3 of Kotter's (1995) change management strategy, namely, *establishing a sense of urgency, forming a powerful guiding coalition and creating a vision.*

Deans in particular have suggested a mandate for action from the Campus Principal, representing senior management. This suggests, perhaps, the need for clearer directives or guidance from the Principal and Deputy Principal with regard to expectations aligned with goals. This aligns with Kotter's suggested step of developing a sense of urgency. To avoid resistance, however, a model that involves on-going engagement from all levels is suggested as a transformational approach. This would be in keeping with efforts to foster a culture that embraces change and which can lead to a more flexible organizational mind-set.

Structure - Administrators as Champions, Advocating for Blended Learning, Sharing Information

With regard to structure it is clear that deans and administrative officers perceive their roles as advocating for blended learning, sharing information, and ensuring that the faculties are ready and able to implement blended learning, albeit with differing areas of focus. In the case of the deans, academic leadership and operational strategy and in the case of administrative officers, more focus on operational strategies. There is a lack of clarity with regard to institutional responsibility for blended learning. Administrators see a role for the Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning. The Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning has a responsibility based on the initial Blended Learning Initiative, but this is not clearly understood by all. There is definitely a need to provide clear direction on who will lead the initiative and how deans and administrative officers within the faculties are expected to work with the relevant champions or leaders. This relates to Kotter's suggestions for forming a powerful coalition and empowering others to act.

Support - Resource Mobilization, Skills and Equipment Auditing, Encouraging Teaching Staff and Students

Implementing a blended learning strategy requires the necessary technical support for all categories of staff and students. This means not only the availability of hardware and software but also their ease of use, the maintenance of these and on-going guidance in their use, troubleshooting and maintenance (Zephyrine, 2016).

While blended learning has the potential to reduce costs to higher education institutions, initial investments in software, hardware, appropriate staff and training require financial resources. Financial support will be required and as such deans have a role to play in sourcing funds for implementation of blended learning and also in performing audits, which can help in providing information on existing technical skills, hardware and software available on the campus and how they are being used. Knowledge of existing skills and technology could result in cost savings.

Deans and heads of departments have a key role in encouraging staff. At the St Augustine Campus for example, teaching staff who graduate with the Certificate in University Teaching and Learning (CUTL), a mandatory professional development programme for all newly appointed teaching staff intended to enhance the quality of teaching, could be supported as blended learning leaders. From the faculty level, each CUTL graduate could be supported to actually implement courses, which he/she convert to blended courses as part of the CUTL assessment process.

The current faculty driven model at St Augustine requires additional support and encouragement for academic staff. The ratio of course development teams to programme development at the University of the South Pacific, for example, is one team of at least three persons, to five programmes per year, working full time on course development. Currently CETL has one team of two persons, partially assigned to course development for the entire campus, where the expectation was at least one programme to be completed for each of seven faculties. The UWI Open Campus currently has departments, which are dedicated to the design, development and delivery of programmes and courses. Greater collaboration between the Open Campus and the traditional campus would allow for access to required resources. In an effort to intensify the blended programme, Campus Principal, Deputy Principal, Campus Registrar and Campus Bursar have a role, as the senior management team,

in ensuring there is additional support to increase programme development, and consideration should be given to how the re-engineered online policy of the university can support this.

This study examined perceptions of administrators at the level of deans and administrative officers of the blended learning initiative at the St Augustine Campus of The University of the West Indies, a multi-campus university in the Caribbean. Views expressed by the administrators interviewed suggest that there is more need for greater recognition of and clarification of their role in blended learning information. More specifically in alignment with change management strategies, they have a key role in advocacy, information sharing and developing, monitoring and sustaining systems for greater awareness, more alignment with goals and more incentives for adoption.

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Appendix 1

QUESTIONS

Strategy (Vision/policy/definition)

1. Before my request for this interview were you aware that there was a blended learning initiative on the St Augustine campus? If yes, how were you made aware?

2. Are you aware that there is a definition of blended learning specific to the St Augustine campus?

3. Do you know what the definition is?

4. Are you aware there is a blended learning policy document?

5. If yes, were you asked to comment on this document?

6. From your perspective, who is driving, promoting the blended learning initiative on the campus?

7. Do you think that the Campus's Blended Learning initiative is sufficiently communicated?

8. Do you think that blended learning if done effectively can widen access?

9. What do you see as your role in advocating for blended learning on the campus?

Structure

10. Where do you think responsibility for implementing a blended learning approach should lie?

11. What specific technical support or student support in place in your faculty or the wider university for Blended Learning?

12. What should be in place?

13. What do you see as your role in having adequate support for blended learning?

14. Do you feel there is lecturer buy in/or will be or can be?

15. What is /was required for lecturer buy in?

16. Do you have lecturers reporting on blended learning initiatives at faculty board? Do you think this would be useful?

Support

17. Do you know of any support/technical or otherwise for lecturers who decide to teach in a blended format?

18. How do you treat with contact hours in a blended environment? Any faculty policy? Is there need for one?

19. What do you see as your role in providing support for blended learning?

20. Any other issues?