

Adventist Virtual Learning Network (AVLN) Conference

HIGHER EDUCATION BRAINSTORMING SESSION

Southern Adventist University

28 June 2002

Background: Individuals attending the AVLN meeting at Southern Adventist University with interests in higher education met for a brainstorming session on 28 June 2002. The session was facilitated by Dick Osborn, President of Pacific Union College, with notes taken by Shirley Freed of Andrews University. Rather than just talking, the group, which is a volunteer think tank, decided to direct motions to various groups for further study so that the impact of the conference would be longer lasting. The following recommendations represent the consensus of the group of around 15 individuals who met.

Recommendation #1 – Professional Gatherings -- Directed to Joseph Gurubatham, Executive Director, Association of Adventist Colleges & Universities

Seventh-Day Adventist faculty from various disciplines currently meeting at their professional meetings should be commended for this collaboration. However, for those currently not meeting, including the computer science (IT people) who used to meet, it is recommended that Joseph Gurubatham, through the newly formed Association, reinstate such meetings. It would be particularly helpful to coordinate regular, system wide, interdisciplinary gatherings of faculty who are doing major innovation in online education. This recommendation would also apply to academic Computer Science departments.

Recommendation #2 – Collaboration on Degree Offerings – Directed to Garland Dulan and Werner Vyhmeister, General Conference Commission on Higher Education and Joseph Gurubatham, Acting Chair, Adventist Distance Education Consortium

The world church and the North American Division have needs for graduates from specific degrees that are currently not offered in any Adventist university or college. Collaborations across institutions should be established so that such degree programs are available. The following degrees should be explored immediately:

- PhD, DBA – Business Administration (see attached proposal)
- MA – Instructional Technology (recommended by the NAD technology committee in conversations with AVLN board members on June 21, 2002)
- MA – Computer Information Systems
- MA – Management of Information Technology

Recommendation #3 – Communication System for Course Development – Directed to Joseph Gurubatham, Acting Chair, Adventist Distance Education Consortium

ADEC is commended for its plans for a website listing all online classes available in the Adventist system of education, for a seamless registration process and its agreement not to duplicate online classes. We also recommend that a communication system be put in place so that the following may be clearly articulated:

- courses that are currently available (already in process)
- courses that are currently being developed and a projected date of availability
- courses that could be developed (faculty resources are available for development but money be lacking)
- courses that are needed in order to keep current programming available.

Recommendation #4 – Faculty Compensation – Directed to Joseph Gurubatham, Acting Chair, Adventist Distance Education Consortium

Issues of faculty load and compensation regarding online education are evolving. It is recommended that ADEC discuss the possibility of nontraditional remuneration structures that will foster innovation. These may include: treating the offering of online courses as venture capital initiatives; paying faculty from monies generated from the initiatives; paying faculty beyond the normal load; and paying for course development through release time or some dollar amount.

The intent of this recommendation is to separate income and expenses of online education in such a way that the financial viability of such programs is clear and financial incentives are provided for innovation, thus taking away the fear that energy put into innovations will simply be absorbed in operating costs.

Recommendation #5 – Course Management System – Directed to Garland Dulan and Werner Vyhmeister, General Conference Commission on Higher Education and Education Department and Joseph Gurubatham, Acting Chair, Adventist Distance Education Consortium

The increasing costs of commercial course management packages such as WebCT and Blackboard are making it almost impossible for smaller North American Division and world colleges and universities to use them. Adventist entities such as Southwestern University and Montemorelos Univeristy have produced their own course management systems. It is recommended that ADEC and the General Conference Commission on Higher Education explore the following possibilities/issues:

- evaluation of system wide needs
- saleability of inhouse products and other issues of viability
- use of open source software
- a single license with a group rate
- courseware served from a neutral site (HSI, Griggs University, Tagnet)

PROPOSAL FOR JOINT PhD/DBA PROGRAM

Need:

All SDA institutions lack qualified faculty with terminal degrees. It is becoming increasingly difficult to get faculty into graduate programs. Some degree-granting institutions are reducing/dropping their PhD programs because of cost, etc. which will only exacerbate the problem.

Looking to the future, we should consider an alternate source of developing qualified faculty – from within our own resources.

Proposal:

Explore ways to collaborate among our institutions of higher education to provide resources to develop and operate a rigorous PhD/DBA program that provides qualified and competent faculty with terminal degrees.

Program:

Consists of a mixture of online teaching and face-to-face teaching.

Online teaching of each course during year and meet on site for four weeks each year for exams, evaluations, etc.

Requirements:

Prerequisites MBA core (to be developed) consisting of a minimum of 30 graduate unites in business of which 24 units somewhat specified areas (management, finance, MIS, etc)

Major and minor in two areas so that faculty qualified to teach at least two areas or two majors.

Offer four majors of which student picks two – management, non-profit management, MIS, accounting

Ten classes in business + two research = Twelve classes

Three modules of four weeks each offering four classes each over three years plus dissertation

Module I – Research and writing and core basics

Module II – core basics

Module III – emphasis courses

PhD - dissertation

DBA - project

Total program approximately four years maximum

Faculty:

Four for each specialization

Other:

Location - modules could be taught in different locations each year – North America, Asia, Africa, etc

Tuition rate – 20% of wage factor of sending country (consider travel issue)

Possible degree grantors:

AIIAS has charter and is GC institution (will U.S. recognize degrees?)

Several U.S. institutions gain approval to offer in conjunction with AIIAS

Other?????