HyFlex / Remote Working Groups FINAL report – 7/2/2020

Workgroup Goal:

The goal of this work group is to develop and implement plans for the Fall 2020 Term in a HyFlex and remote environments.

Team/Meeting:

The group has come together multiple times the past week and everyone in the group is fully committed to the success of the 2020 fall term. They are all a credit to the university.

Method:

We continued to pool the resources of both the Remote and Hybrid working groups. The group identified 8 tasks that were necessary for a successful fall term. We then broke the group into subgroups and assigned a lead person for each subgroup. The subgroups were charged with developing a plan to complete the task, assess the time to implement the individual steps and assign duties to appropriate persons. The group has also been in contact with other work groups to coordinate tasks and reduce duplication of work. For example, many groups are suggesting a “chatbot / virtual office” solution, the technical work group is developing a plan to meet that need for the beginning of the fall 2020 term. Below are subgroups’ plans and a summary of the status, timeline, and list of immediate approvals/needs.

1. Closing the Tech Gap for Faculty and Staff for remote and on campus.

   **Summary:** The subgroup is working on identifying the technical needs for faculty and staff for the Fall term in a HyFlex or Remote environment. HR has sent a survey to department heads to identify the needs. We are also beginning looking at procuring webcams, laptops, docking station and headphones. Finally, we are developing a plan to deploy the technology.

   **Timeline:** 6/26 - 7/15

   **Immediate approvals/needs/risks:**
   
   - Need the results form HR survey.
   - Funding to close the gap.
   - Supply chain issues.
   - Increase ability for technology drop off/pickups/repairs.

2. Technical requirement for Students to have access to technology and internet.

   **Summary:** For a student to be successful in the fall term they need to have technology (laptop/Chromebook) and internet. The group realized that we did not have time to assess the correct need for each major and there are supply chain issues with procuring Chromebooks. There was an order placed for 746 laptops for students. Developing a plan to announce laptop loaner/ hotspot program and working with Fin Aid and Circle of Care to assess the students, need. Develop a deployment and care and feeding for the program. Hotspots

   **Timeline:** June 26 – August 15.
Immediate approvals/needs/risks:

- Does ExCom approve Fin Aid and Circle of Care to assess the student need?
- Supply chain issue with the 746 laptops.
- Develop loaner program process (sign off, billing of lost computers, etc.).
- Develop software needed to be installed and image configuration.

3. ChatBot and Office Hours Solutions.

Summary:

Chatbot

The implementation of a chatbot for high-traffic web sites will provide students with a 24/7 means of getting answers to the most commonly asked questions. The chatbot could be enabled for high-volume departments including Admissions, Registrar, Financial Aid, Bursar, Student Wellness Services, and Information Technology. Additionally, the chatbot will be programmed to answer basic questions for smaller student services and academic departments. An immediate value of the chatbot will be to provide answers to university-based COVID-19 operational questions to help parents and students maintain confidence in our institutional response. Given the number of questions asked repeatedly, a chatbot will automate most of those standard responses. Questions that are not able to be answered by the chatbot are escalated to staff member. The chatbot also allows departments to engage in texting campaigns with students – usage examples include reminders of important deadlines, reminders to register or pay their bill. The chatbot and texting campaigns become an additional channel or message distribution point that complements our existing tools.

Virtual Office Hours

With reduced staff on-campus, virtual office hours will provide students with the ability to meet with faculty and staff using online meetings tools. Scheduled appointments may be managed using Microsoft Bookings, where students go to a centralized calendar and register for an appointment for services offered by a department. Faculty may also use Bookings to allow students to meet with them for virtual office hours and advising appointments. Bookings integrates with Microsoft Teams to create the online virtual meeting.

Microsoft Teams can also be used to offer virtual drop-in hours. An open Microsoft Teams drop-in meeting can be advertised on a department’s web site. When a student joins the drop-in meeting, they are placed in a virtual lobby until a staff member is ready to assist them.

Virtual office hours and drop-in hours will allow us to maintain standard operations and provide students with the services they need even when faculty and staff are not physically on campus.

Timeline: July 1 – August 15

Immediate approvals/needs/risks:

- Approve the solution and procurement.
- Building project team.
- Designing solution for virtual office.

Summary: The subgroup is working on identifying the technical needs for classrooms and labs with computers for the Fall term in a HyFlex or remote environment. A survey was sent out to Academic Chairs asking for software needs for instructional use. A significant amount of time and resources will be required to prepare for the fall semester in classrooms and labs being used that have computers in them. Having good information regarding software needed and locations is critical.

Timeline: June 26 – August 15.

Immediate approvals/needs/risks:

- Review software needs identified through the survey (feedback is due July 3rd unfortunately as of 7/1 only 25% of departments have provided feedback).
- Verify software licensing agreements to determine if each application is allowed to be installed in a virtual environment.
  - Will need additional funding for software (eg. 100 named Adobe CC Users = $18,700, to provide Matlab virtually, $9,750).
- Need a decision on which classrooms will be used in the fall so they can be prepared (Hyflex plus labs) in terms of hardware and software.
- Package all software for instructional use (SCCM/JAMF).
- Consolidate licensing server(s) to a single domain in preparation for virtual environment(s).
- Determine virtualization platform(s)
  - VDA/Citrix - expand to 350 concurrent users. May relocate to other area(s) on campus. Install UPS devices, may need to rack some computers, depending on 3rd bullet decision.
  - Apporto – virtual pilot in progress. If unsuccessful may need to look at other options especially for Apple computers.
- Collaborate with Academic Technology to support Lecture Capture configurations in classrooms and mobile carts.
- Disable access to computers that will not be used during the fall semester.

5. Electronic forms and workflows

Summary: Create a paperless work environment which leads to a more efficient system to share forms and workflows. CCSU is in a process of implementing Hyland OnBase Unity Forms which will enable us to create efficiencies, increase productivity and streamline business processes.

Timeline: July 1 – August 30.

Immediate approvals/needs/risks:

- Identify paper forms to be converted
- Prioritize forms that need to be converted to electronic version:
  - Need feedback from academic and administrative departments
- Implement workflows
- Risks – time and resources

Summary: Identify the tools licensed and supported by CCSU for faculty, staff and students. Work with the Academic working group for verification and approval. Promote, train and advise University population on use of identified tools.

Timeline: June 26 – August 15.

Immediate approvals/needs/risks:

- Introduction of new software tools such as Blackboard Collaborate
- Approval of identified standardized tools
- Training – Faculty, staff and students
- Challenge: promotion and buy-in/support from faculty and staff

7. Technical Solutions for Physical/Specialized Labs

Summary: This subgroup has been reaching out to departments across campus. They have reached out the Academic working group for HyFlex and Remote. They are currently building a list of all the affected spaces on campus. They are also identifying the hardware and software needed in each lab. Need to make sure all on campus spaces support HyFlex.

Timeline: June 26 – August 15.

Immediate approvals/needs/risks:

- Need the list of spaces being used in HyFlex. Also, the list of small lab spaces.
- Need to understand the rules/policies for lab spaces on campus. (Cleaning requirements, capacity and social distance guidelines.)
- Group is concerned with passing the cost of Adobe on to students.
- Nursing labs. NC 232 and 236 are already slated to be Hyflex rooms and won't be available for NRSE lab courses.
- Posting student privacy notice for class recording in the Hyflex classrooms.
- Approval: Syllabus to include privacy notice.
- Student Conduct develop a plan if there are violations.

8. Training of Tools and HyFlex Training.

Summary: The subgroup is working on identifying training needs for all audiences; students, faculty and staff; based on the standardized tools that will be identified in #7. IT and the IDTRC are collaborating weekly on this effort with input from the Student Services workgroup who is also identifying training needs. A website will be created to serve as a training portal. Videos and documentation will be created as well as a Blackboard Learn course for each group.

Timeline: June 26 – August 15.

Immediate approvals/needs/risks:
• Need to request funds in order to incentivize training for all three audiences.
• Need to create a website to serve as a training portal.
• Need to develop training videos and documentation.
• Need to develop training delivery methods, there will be more than 1 for each audience.
• Need to market training options and availability.
• Need to develop a communication plan, particularly around updates (for example, moving from Webex “Meetings” to Webex “Training.”)