**Resolution regarding Academic Publishers and Blackboard**

Background:

With the release of Blackboard 9.1 Learn, academic publishers have been working to partner with Blackboard in the integration of their resources and services. McGraw-Hill has been the first, of many, to establish formal partnerships with Blackboard. The list currently includes the following publishers: Pearson MyLab/Mastering, Cengage Learning Mind Links, McGraw-Hill Connect, and Wiley PLUS. Each of these vendors have deployed their content in a slightly different manner, but the results are similar. These vendors have supplied, in most cases, an e-textbook, assignments, presentations, and study materials for faculty and students to use. Several of these publishers have been to visit WCU’s campus over the past year and worked with faculty and instructional support (i.e. the Coulter Faculty Commons) regarding the possible implementation of these partnerships into our Blackboard environment.

Full integration of these publisher programs into Blackboard at WCU would make it easier for faculty and students to access these materials and to utilize them in the on-line environment. It is the nature of such partnerships, however, that if we chose to implement these publisher “building blocks”, the link to the publisher would be visible to all WCU Blackboard courses, not just those using material from that publisher. There are also multiple publishers pursuing such partnerships, and the final number that would be considered for integration remains unknown. Instructional materials provided through these publisher partnerships are a mixture of open-source/free resources and proprietary material that requires the purchase of an access card. If this building block is not activated, faculty and students would still be able to access the instructional materials being offered by these publishers, albeit in a more indirect manner.

WHEREAS the Academic Policy and Review Committee of the Faculty Senate is tasked with altering or reviewing academic policy and institutional governance as it pertains to academics, and

WHEREAS the Blackboard 9.1. Learn system is an integral part of instruction for the entire WCU campus, and

WHEREAS the integration of publisher-owned instructional materials would constitute a significant modification to the Blackboard environment for all faculty and students who use that system,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Faculty Senate will recommend that the Blackboard system at WCU *not* be modified to accommodate full integration of publisher building blocks at this time

The Faculty Senate does reserve the option of revisiting this issue at a later date as more information becomes available regarding the scale and scope of these publisher partnerships