

Academic Technology Committee

MINUTES OF MEETING: 11/4/05 APPROVED BY COMMITTEE: _____
Submitted Exec. Committee: _____ Approved by Exec. Committee: _____
Submitted Academic Senate: _____ Approved by Academic Senate: _____

POLICY ITEMS: _____

Members Present: John Adams, Kimberly Embleton, Xiyi Hang, John (Jay) Holden, Mingfang Li, Gloria Melara, Robert Moulton, John Noga, Jacek Polewczak, and Ashley Skylar.

Minutes: Stacey Schaaf

Excused: Larry Chu and Daniel Hosken.

Guests: Al Arboleda, Randal Cummings, Steven Fitzgerald, Bill Hardy, and Jerry Shutte.

1. Approval of Minutes – The minutes of the meeting of October 7, 2005 were approved.
2. Audio Taping - The committee was asked if it would be okay for Stacey Schaaf to audio tape the meetings in the future, solely for the purpose of transcribing minutes. The committee had no objections. Gloria Melara specified that Schaaf be the only person allowed to tape, the only person to have access to the audio tape, and that the tape be recorded over at each subsequent meeting.
3. Introductions - John Noga introduced Bob Moulton the Interim CIO. Bob said that he will remain the “Interim” CIO and is not planning to take on the role of CIO permanently. He described his professional experience in technology and higher education through his employment with IBM. He is hoping to make some changes and to have the opportunity to mentor others.
4. Announcements - Noga was not feeling well and announced he needed to leave the meeting before its completion. Melara agreed to act in his place if Noga needed to leave.
5. LMS Summit – Randal Cummings reported on the Chancellor’s Learning Management and Open Source Summits. The purpose of the summit was to determine the technology needs and wants in common among the CSU campuses. It is hoped that a consensus within the CSU will create a large client base and leverage a reduction in costs. The assumption is that every CSU campus will have at the enterprise level, tools to manage course content, track and assess students, deliver course material, handouts, assessments, readings, etc., ePortfolio and career placement.

Cummings stated that during the conference WebCT was acquired by Blackboard. WebCT is a set of teaching and learning tools for course preparation, delivery, and management. WebCT/-Vista is the e-learning platform to support enterprise deployment of the virtual course environment. WebCT Campus Edition (the low-end WebCT product) is currently being used on campus. The College of Extended Learning uses Blackboard. Blackboard does not have a good reputation for user support and has an inclination to price gouge.

Sakai and Moodle were the only two companies being considered at the Open Source Summit. The attempt to save costs is difficult because full time technical support is needed to answer questions and make changes for functionality. Cummings described the technical benefits of Moodle and discussed specific examples. An alternative company, Desire2Learn is a web-based learning platform (LMS/CMS), and learning object repository. It is a small, growing company which Cummings finds worth consideration. Dr. Li emphasized the important role the CSU might play in negotiation with the vendors and suggested favoring open source rather than WebCT or Blackboard.

Jacek Polewczak asked for an idea of the costs involved. Support for Moodle might require at least two full time high-level programmers. Currently WebCT costs about \$40,000/year compared to having on-staff programmers at a cost from \$120,000 to as much as \$300,000/year. A perpetual license for Vista was quoted at \$400,000, which Cummings believed Blackboard would have to honor. The company openly announced that rather than acquire new customers, it could increase profits by “up pricing” current customers. Blackboard works best in a hosted environment, which would also increase costs.

Other factors to consider are the effects on the university infrastructure, servers required by ITR, usability, ADA compliance, comparison of tools needed with tools offered, open source, interface with PeopleSoft SOLAR, and communication between faculty and student via an official email form.

6. CIO's Report – Moulton described his 25 year history in Management, including work in higher education, sales and consulting. He said that he finds the environment on campus exciting. He sees one aspect of his role as facilitating some of the suggestions in the Moran Technology report. He is well acquainted with Charlie Moran and hopes to work to break down some of the traditional boundaries, referred to in the report as silos, to promote cooperation, beneficial movement, and collaboration. He is open to suggestions and looking for input from others.

7. Help Desk – Bill Hardy, Director of User Support Services returned to discuss improvements and challenges with the university help desk. One of the difficulties faced was the tracking the requests received. The staff was not using the tracking software because they found it slow and cumbersome. Currently, they are using a short term screen system to capture information and identify categories of service in an effort to analyze service effectiveness. Hardy described his “Liaison Effort.” There are 23 people across campus involved. They receive a questionnaire and are requested to provide feedback regarding improvement of the system. Training and certification of staff has improved. Improvement in the ICD system this year will increase the number of calls the help desk can receive and route. The culture of staff has been improved to promote employee assessment and willingness to accept suggestions for improvement. In mid-January and walk-in center will be made available from 7:00 AM to 7:00 PM in the Oviatt

Garden Level. Students will have priority attention as will wireless support as a result of the allocation of funding by ITR per Bob Moulton. The Help Desk website will be made to be more useful to assist students. Hardy distributed a copy of metrics. Fitzgerald pointed out the problem of students forgetting passwords and the volume of assistance it requires of the Help Desk.

8. Security – Al Arboleda, Information Security Officer returned to review drafts of the Security Breach Notification Plan, the Change Management Policies & Procedures, and Protected Information Classification Guidelines documents. He requested that these documents be reviewed prior to the December 2, 2005 meeting and committee members be prepared to give feedback at that time. Members requested that copies of the documents be sent prior to the meeting. Moulton described the role of ITR and of Information Security to guide, advise and protect other campus units. He described a process of collaboration where ITR would influence and help departments and colleges regarding technology but said the effort would not be pedantic. Fitzgerald said that the Change Management Policy says there has to be a process in place, but does not dictate what the process would be. Dr. Li remarked that the systems are interdependent.

9. New Business – There was no new business to discuss.