California State University
Northridge

Academic Technology Committee

MINUTES OF MEETING: 10/7/05   APPROVED BY COMMITTEE:_____
Submitted Exec. Committee:_____   Approved by Exec. Committee:_____
Submitted Academic Senate: _____   Approved by Academic Senate:_____

POLICY ITEMS:_____

Members Present: John Adams, Spero Bowman, Larry Chu, Kimberly Embleton, Xiyi Hang, John (Jay) Holden, Daniel Hosken, Gloria Melara, John Noga, Jacek Polewczak and Ashley Skylar.
Minutes: Stacey Schaaf

Excused: Mingfang Li.

Guests: Steven Fitzgerald, Harry Hellenbrand and Jeff Wiegley.

1. Approval of Minutes – The minutes of the meeting of September 2, 2005 were approved.

2. Chair's Report - John Noga reminded the committee of the upcoming Learning Management Summit Tuesday October 11 and Wednesday October 12, 2005 offered through the Chancellor's office. Noga is unable to attend and asked other committee members to provide representation. Spero Bowman, Steven Fitzgerald and Ashley Skylar said they would attend.

Noga distributed a draft of the Open Standards Policy, and a draft of the Resolution on Open Standards. He requested that committee members read both and provide comments at the next meeting. The committee was also asked to review an updated draft of the definition of "cheating" under the Academic Dishonesty section of the Schedule of Classes which includes examples of electronic devices as external assistance.

Announcements - Noga went around the table to solicit announcements. Daniel Hosken said that the College of Arts, Media and Communication has posted a position for an IT person.

CIO's Report – Spero Bowman provided an Agenda for the upcoming Learning Management Summit. There should be five to ten people from each CSU campus in attendance to discuss the use of technology to support instruction and develop a strategic planning process for determining the kinds of computer applications and technical support that will best support faculty needs. Currently we have Blackboard in the College of Extended Learning, WebCT campus-wide, and Eluminate. One of the issues to consider is the cost of license contracts.

Discussion Topics –

Fitzgerald discussed security issues and access. A number of Network jacks in classrooms were shut off due to student computers being infected with viruses. To address this problem, ITR is working on 802.1 x, which will allow us to restrict access more precisely. A pre-pilot project is currently underway within ITR, and we are discussing a production pilot with housing. It has been tested on Mac and Windows. There is no timeframe for roll-out yet. Deploying 802.1x will introduce a behavioral change, therefore we need to move cautiously.

Noga continued the discussion regarding Math Software costs being shared with other academic units and how the committee might develop a process to determine support and funding. Bowman explained some of the issues related to Windows' support of servers and applications at the enterprise level. Currently, we have one full time person for each of the 17 servers ITR supports. There are servers on campus for faculty, paid for with funds from a grant or the academic department. When considering whether or not to move those to the Data Center, a process needs to be developed to engage ITR support. The CIO would approach the Cabinet to determine the appropriate university level support. Noga asked if the Moran Technology Consultants' Report recommended one set of servers? Bowman responded that there will always be a distribution of desktops. The directory, email, calendaring, and webmail would likely be a centralized enterprise. Fitzgerald added that specific needs for Colleges would not be centralized; such as specialized software - applicable to a specific academic subject - like CAD (Computer Aided Design).

Hosken of CAMC asked for clarification about these policies. He said that a list of specific support available or not would be most helpful to those in the Colleges.

Bowman announced that the new Interim CIO, Bob Moulton is to start October 10, 2005. The regular position requires a Section 600 personnel search. He suggested a member of the ATC committee serve on the search committee.

ITR is not in a position to decide which academic applications should be supported. Such decisions would be vetted through the appropriate process. Dr. Hellenbrand is currently exploring appropriate structures to support academic technology decisions.

There are information flow problems. It should be the responsibility of committee members to educate those in the departments and colleges. The information needs to move out of the meeting to faculty via members.

It was discussed that it is easier for departments to buy hardware than to purchase support. The nature of the budgeting process makes it easier to buy goods than pay a technical support person.

Polewczak asked about the policy for opening SSH ports. More SSH ports result in more holes in the firewall, which leaves us more vulnerable. VPN software allows us to reduce the number of holes, and provides appropriate functionality.

Harry Hellenbrand, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs joined the meeting. He told the committee that he is working with Milten Garia to draft a Survey of Users in consideration of the acquisition of a collaborative software suite, and a Help ticketing suite, as suggested by the Moran Report. The types of applications being considered for standardization are email, calendaring, instant messaging and web browser. The Survey is intended to be the first step in

identifying clusters of commonality and developing a broad sense of how to best meet the needs of the campus community, without placing overwhelming demands on the campus infrastructure, ITR, and budget support. Once needs are articulated then vendors will be considered.

Polewczak asked Hellenbrand to give examples of collaborative software. Hellenbrand said that Cal Poly used Oracle which had good integrated email and calendaring, but not instant messaging. Hewlett Packard used to offer a collaborative suite and in about a year and a half Mozilla will offer one. Noga expressed concerns regarding cost, in the event that a proprietary vendor solution is implemented. Hellenbrand replied that the Survey should indicate the size of the User group for such a suite, or at least identify trends or "belts" of need and use. Once needs are identified, then the costs can be analyzed.

Noga wondered whether campus personnel will be forced to use certain applications, and if software-use would be dictated to the campus community as the names of buildings were. Hellenbrand stated that determining campus computing policy will be an ongoing process. The Learning Management Summit will address the issues of open standards, open source, and on-line teaching from a centralized CSU point of view. The LMS outcomes may cause CSUN to move in the direction of open source. Then the issues of vendor reliability, licensing costs, and open standards can be addressed. He personally prefers an open, consultative environment. Noga encouraged committee members to take an active role in the decision making process.

Noga returned to a discussion of the Open Standards Policy, and Resolution on Open Standards which had been distributed earlier. He encouraged members to consider open standards and provide feedback. He will bring a revised copy to the next meeting. If the committee supports it, then a resolution can move to the Faculty Senate or a policy can be submitted to the Provosts' Council. Hosken said that it would be helpful for policies and resolutions to include clear definitions and instructions for applying the decisions to academic and classroom use. Polewczak requested that the meeting minutes be provided in PDF format rather than as a Microsoft Word document. Noga reported the possibility that Microsoft will no longer support Mac users, and reiterated the usefulness of open standards. The committee considered more rigorous standards.

Bowman announced the formation of a Web Management Group in University Advancement, and suggested that ATC members consider writing standards to submit to Joseph O'Connor, the manager or web services in university advancement. He suggested a policy on open standards to help avoid commitments to particular vendors. Vendor support needs to be considered, for instance, OpenLDAP only costs $10,000/year but relies on ITR and outside campus support.

Noga returned to the committee's review of the definition of "cheating" under the Academic Dishonesty section of the Schedule of Classes which includes examples of electronic devices as external assistance. There were no further concerns voiced.

New Business – The committee discussed the current status of revision to the ADA policy. It was decided that the information will be brought to the next meeting, the discussion and review will continue at that time.