

Technology committee meeting, September 28, 2011

Members Present

Jessica Alexander, Division of Social Sciences

Jamie Boggs, Computer Center

Kevin Bennington, Division of Fine Arts

Andrea Campbell, Division of Education and Human Performance

Susan Cheek, Beckley Center

Sid Hatfield, Computer Center

David Hill, Division of Natural Sciences

Cindi Khanlarian, Division of Business

Christy Lamb, Admissions

Susie Lusk, Registrar

Terry Phillpott, Student Support Services

Amy Pitzer, Advancement

John Spencer, Computer Center

George Towers, Associate Dean's Office

Approval of the Sept. 14 minutes were Tabled to the next meeting.

Formation of Academic Web subcommittee

Purpose:

To give direction and guidance to the Webmaster (J. Boggs) into the migration procedure of Concord's Academic Internet pages/profiles.

Membership:

K. Bennington was nominated with J. Alexander and T. Philpott volunteering.

The faculty senate has been made aware of the desire to create this subcommittee.

“Start up” questions/concerns were voiced from members per the constituents.

Governance and reporting structure of the CU IT committee.

Currently the CU IT committee reports on an advisory role to the Deans' office and serves as an ad hoc committee. G Towers recommended and volunteered to drafting membership, charge, purpose and other necessary documentation to be submitted to the Faculty Senate for official status in CU governance.

Online class evaluations

We recommend the creation of a pilot project for undergraduate faculty evaluation that will mirror the system currently used by graduate courses and an analysis be done to compare the results and response rate with the traditional paper based system.

Existing issues with Paper based evaluations: The process is VERY labor intensive, this requires many hours of work from division academic support staff and IT services. Accuracy due to students not following directions on the evaluations make some results void.

Recommendations, suggestions and general comments on implementation: Various methods were discussed for valid statistical evaluations and the creation of a control group. J Alexander suggest using a faculty member who teaches two sections of a course using one as a control (paper) and the second section using online for evaluations.

Response Rates: J Spencer reported that currently CU IT is seeing a 34-36% response rate on paper based and 31% response rate on online evaluations. The paper version having the higher of the two. Various methods were discussed in order to increase the response rate from students. Methods discussed include "Early" release of grades if evaluation completed or entrance to win Pizza, Flex Dollars, Book Awards etc.

Concerns: Students MUST be assured of anonymity of their submissions. Since students have to login to do the evaluation they may think the professor can "track back" their responses. D Hill expressed concern over monetary "reward" for completion of evaluation.

Preparation Work: It is recommended that an email to students be crafted explaining the process and guaranteeing the security and anonymity of the evaluations. T. Philpot suggested having faculty reinforce the anonymous nature of evaluations. G. Towers volunteered to craft email and asked for volunteers from divisions to participate in the pilot.

Phone System

The historical and feature sparseness of the existing PBX was briefly discussed. Greenbrier Communications has requested permission to address this committee to provide a technological overview of current technologies in unified communication. Greenbrier is a Shortel vendor. They are scheduled to present to this committee on October 26.

Reports

State Computer Center Directors Meeting J. Spencer attended the recent meeting and viewed presentations on Applications streaming from VMWare and the report writing software Cognose. Fairmont State has implemented Application streaming in 45 computer labs utilizing 1000 licenses and 3 servers. This technology is an implementation of “smart terminals.” J. Spencer, S. Hatfield and S. Meadows will be attending a demonstration of the technology at the University of Charleston on the 19th of this month.

Data Portal: J. Spencer reported on the functional level of the ODS (Sungard Operational Data Store) that was recommended by this committee two years ago. With the recommendation of this committee CU purchased and the Computer Center installed the ODS. The ODS has limited end user functionality due to its complexity and lack of “sharing” reports. ODS purchase price was \$30,000. For full functionality and usability Cognos would have to be purchased for an additional \$40,000.

Future: WVNET and the State of West Virginia is looking at the purchase of Argos, a reporting tool that would allow user-friendly report generation, public information, and shared reporting among WV state institutions. J. Spencer has volunteered CU as the test site for the state of WV. The cost of Argos will be split among the institutions. Argos allows the saving and sharing of reports among users and comes with around 5,000 community (ie customers of Argos) created Sungard Banner reports. It is very GUI driven and does not require the end user to be aware of Tables, fields or any of the underlying database schema to produce accurate and timely reports. WVNET is working on the installation instance that would support the state. Installation takes approximately 1 hour. CU has the wish to have this operational before Christmas. This would eliminate printouts from IT services, allow users to make their own ad hoc queries, and have role and user level security.

Exchange

S. Hatfield reported exchange has been installed and that the new spam filter has been delivered. IT services will be configuring it and installing it on Thursday Oct. 6 (estimating 1 hour of work that may cause some delays in email processing). Spam volume to users mailboxes may increase during the “break-in” time. User migration will commence after the spam box has been certified as functional. Migration will take time due to the number of devices, computers and phones that will need to be migrated. It is IT services wish that we methodically migrate functional units instead of random users. Exchange does work with Macintosh Computers.

Emergency preparedness G. Towers asked the impact on the Internet outage on users and their functional units. J Alexander commented that her class was unable to download data from the Internet to complete an SPSS assignment. Administrative offices reported little to no impact. Future issues were discussed such as How can we prepare for this type of event? How do we communicate? With the recent drops in bandwidth pricing CU is investigating a redundant Internet connection. Costs were discussed but not listed in this public document.

General Comments/Concerns:

J. Alexander commented that some faculty were concerned that Smart Thinking was not working with Windows 7.

S. Cheeks reported BHEC continues to be an issue.

J. Alexander reported faculty unable to find SPSS in BHEC lab since it does not have a shortcut on the desktop.

A. Campbell reported Education would like a demo of Blackboard 9 accounts

Adjournment.

Minutes prepared by Steve Meadows.

Minutes approved at the Oct. 26, 2011 meeting.