

University Senate Committee on Computing and Communications, First meeting, October 14, 2005.

Present, Dinkins, Rohlf, Lago, Lin, Ledgerwood. Excused: essentially the rest of the committee membership.

The Committee met in the new Humanities Building in the European Languages Literatures, and Cultures Conference Room. The tour of the new technology classrooms was postponed due to lack of equipment in them.

The Chair began by discussing agenda items from last year, introducing the new committee members to the type of items that the committee has often discussed. During this discussion and presentation the committee also was able to present some of its successes that occurred during the past year. Finally the committee discussed possible new agenda items for this year. Rohlf suggested, and all agreed, that there were so many agenda items that the committee should decide which items to focus on this year. Thus part of the next meeting will be to discuss prioritizing such a list.

The first item discussed was meeting times. It seems that Friday afternoons will have to continue to be the day and time for future meetings.

We then mentioned the PR 109 policy on computing and privacy. We'll ask Rich Reeder for an update on where that stands.

3) We discussed the continuing need for more technology in teaching classrooms and how the way the Registrar's office assigns classrooms should take into account what rooms have tech. and which do not, but also realized that the campus needs many, many, more classrooms than it has which adds to the unwillingness of the Registrar's office to take tech. into account in assigning rooms. We talked about what Gary Vansise from Educational Technologies had told us about this and the new Humanities Building rooms as well as the fact that the Provost's taskforce on technology has gone inactive.

4) Lin brought up the topic of the East Campus/West Campus divide over computer support, especially Notes support. We all agreed that it would make sense for West Campus to take over Notes support for the entire campus. We will ask Rich Reeder if this is possible. We also discussed whether it would make sense to invite both Rich and Dennis Proul (CIO of East Campus) to a meeting together to get their take on the division of support. We went over the progress of the new network for East Campus researchers that would not be subject to patient privacy firewall restrictions and will ask White/Bremer for a report on this at the next meeting.

5) We agreed to talk to Rich about what is happening with wireless on campus, including the status of the new Humanities Building.

6) We wanted a report on the LDAP authentication implementation as well. We are still very interested in seeing that a single, simple authentication procedure will be implemented for all campus computer users.

7) Now for new agenda items, Rohlf mentioned that he had been sent to a conference on plagiarism. He learned a lot from the conference and its speakers and hopes some of the speakers will be brought to campus to talk to faculty and students about the issue and how technology facilitates it. Ledgerwood mentioned he would like the campus to subscribe to one of the sites that make finding plagiarized papers easier.

8) Lin brought up the fact that faculty like him and some of the rest of the committee (as well as others not on the committee) would really benefit from the creation of something like a "Power Users Group". This would be a discussion board/web site that would exist to give those of us who do support for other faculty/staff a "leg up" and make our support much easier by providing us essential information to do it properly. Rohlf suggested that there might be enough people in such a group as to have a type of "tech support union" that would have an official status on campus.

9) Dinkins brought up questions about the faculty addendum. She and others questioned why it had to be entered via Lotus Notes user name and password. Ledgerwood responded that it was partially because of the authentication problem. She questioned the interface and set up of the site to do the addendum. One huge problem with the interface is that the faculty member doesn't know if the completed addendum has actually been received by the Provost's office, nor does his/her dept. chair. Since the Provost has decided that merit pay raises will only be awarded to faculty who do addendums, this is a serious matter. Although the entire interface needs to be reexamined, a way to let a faculty member know that an addendum was submitted successfully is needed before next year's addendum is due, no matter.

10) Ledgerwood mentioned that he had been contacted by UMass Amherst concerning their difficulties with PeopleSoft and agreed to answer questions by their Senate Committee (equivalent to this committee).

11) Finally Ledgerwood read an article in the NY Times after the meeting where colleges are now going to be forced to do more to help the government be able to spy on Internet users and how colleges are resisting the cost of this new initiative as well as questioning its utility. The committee will ask Rich for his opinion on this.

Respectfully submitted to the committee,

Mike Ledgerwood, Chair.