University Senate Committee on Computing and Communications

Meeting minutes of Dec. 16th, 2005. Third meeting of 2005/6 Academic year.

The meeting came to order at 2:15 in the European Languages, Literatures, and Cultures Conference Room. Present: Lin, Rohlf, , Lagos, Torres, Sutherland, Ledgerwood and special guest: Gary Van Sise, Head of Educational Technologies. Two other special guests were unable to attend. Two other members phoned/wrote in questions for the meeting. We began with the refreshments Ledgerwood provided and then started discussing.

The Committee welcomed Gary and then proceeded to work its way through the minutes of the second meeting, getting comments from members, guest, and the Chair on each item the committee addressed at that meeting.

1) The first item was the PR 109. Little new was presented. Essentially this was informative only for new members. However, the question of whether we could ask for comments from outside the committee was asked. It appears that we can.

2) HSC ARCAN network. It is in the last stages of being created. The first department to be on the network will be pharmacology by the end of this year.

3) The first meeting of the Search Committee for the new Director of Instructional Computing has been held. Rolhf and Ledgerwood attended as members. At that meeting the SBU CIO presented a sample job description for this post. The committee discussed this position and the sample description at some length. The committee was very interested in understanding this position since it will affect many of us in crucial ways. Some of the key points were that the person selected for this position would be in charge of Educational Technologies and the Center for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT) as well as Instructional Computing. The person would have around 19 fulltime staff reporting to him/her and be in charge of around 140 student workers and be responsible for managing a budget close to $6 million dollars a year. While the committee did think that one person could fill all those jobs and perform all the duties associated with them, it did worry about some aspects of the proposed job description. First of all, it was uncomfortable with the fact that this person would be reporting to two bosses, the CIO and the Provost. While dual reporting is not unknown, it can be fraught with difficulties. Secondly the committee was concerned with the proposed salary (which is around 100K$). It believed that this amount would likely be too little to attract stellar candidates from both inside and outside of SBU. Thirdly, the committee was concerned that DoIT might be taking too commanding a role in the selection, supervision, and direction of this position. Finally, there was some concern about the timeline for hiring this person. Some felt it was rushed. While the Instructional Computing aspect of this position would certainly fall under DoIT's purview, the Educational Technologies and CELT part are not quite so clear cut. The Chair of this committee agreed to express these concerns to the search committee for this position, DoIT, and the Provost's Office.

4) Lin brought up the topic of the East Campus/West Campus divide over computer support, especially Notes support. Ledgerwood was supposed to have sent Dennis Proul, CIO for East Campus the previous minutes, but did not until just before this meeting. This topic will come up again in February.

5) No news on wireless except to note SBU now has a sign up at Flowerfield proclaiming its ownership of that area.

6) The next stages of making authentication an better prcess are almost complete. Nancy Duffrin from Instructional Computing has just sent out a note about this.

7) Maria Doelger from the Provost's Office told the Chair that the Univ. had paid for a trial subscription of "Turn it In" and were discouraged by the cost of this and how few faculty used it. Many faculty appear to use Google to look for paper plagarism only. However the Chair mentioned that Google and especially Google Scholar is insufficient for Humanities faculty. Torres said the Library had volunteered to look into this and look for more cost effective services that served a broad need. The Chair gladly accepted this offer of help.

8) The Committee agreed to invite Charlie Bowman to a future meeting to discuss the Power Users group and other items.

9) No news about changes to the faculty addendum.

10 and 11) Nothing to report on the UMass PeopleSoft report or the Privacy bill.

The Committee then took up new business.

The first item involves the library, privacy issues, and records purging. The Chair read from e-mails he received from the President of the Senate and the Head of the Libraries. Torres then commented on them. Essentially, it appears that there is little to worry about in this area and that privacy is securely protected in records on West Campus and that this type of record is not kept at all on East Campus.

The second is the reinvigoration of the Provost's Task Force on Technology and whom we should nominate for that committee. One of its first topics will be classroom technology at all three campuses, here, Manhattan, and Southampton. Sutherland and Van Sise both had a great deal to say on this topic. The main question from this discussion is how classrooms need to be configured for best usage by the greatest number of disciplines at the least cost. In addition questions about the "portability" of this equipment also need to be answered. We will certainly discuss this issue again and talk about the taskforce, too.

The third item was the fact that mail relay servers now need to be used to scan outgoing mail for viruses, spam, and other indicators that a computer is doing "bad things". A trial took place over Thanksgiving for Math as guinea pigs. It was not a complete success.

Various suggestions were made to explain why. The committee also looked at an explanatory document of Charlie Bowman about this. This is obviously a tough issue. The faculty will expect as close to perfection in screening messages as possible and warning about any messages that are screened out. To be discussed again in February.

Respectfully submitted to the committee,

Mike Ledgerwood, Chair.