SENATE COMMITTEE ON INFORMATION TECHNOLOGIES (SCIT)
MINUTES OF MEETING
October 8, 2013

[In these minutes: Moodle Update; Portal Prototype Demo; z.umn.edu Discussion.]

[These minutes reflect discussion and debate at a meeting of a committee of the University of Minnesota Senate; none of the comments, conclusions or actions reported in these minutes represent the views of, nor are they binding on, the Senate, the Administration or the Board of Regents.]

PRESENT: Jim MacDonald (chair), Angela Bonilla, Bradley Cohen, Sean Conner, Lara Friedman-Shedlov, Bernard Gulachek, Ted Higman, Yiwen Li, Karen Monson, Robert Rubinyi, Zachary Shartiag, Benton Schnabel, Yuk Sham, Tom Shield, Scott Studham, Eric Watkins

OTHERS ATTENDING: Bernard Gulachek

GUESTS: Christopher Ament, Scott Barnard, Mark McKay, Cynthia Murdoch

REGRETS: John Butler, Noel Schumacher, Mary Vavrus

ABSENT: Stephen Levin, Tisha Turk

WELCOME

Mr. MacDonald called the meeting to order and welcomed those present.

MOODLE UPDATE

Christopher Ament, Senior Director, IT, and Mark McKay, Business/Systems Analyst, IT, provided members with an update on Moodle. They used a PowerPoint presentation to highlight the following topics:
- Moodle AY 2013-2014
    - 7,100 Course Sites
    - 77,000 Active Users
- Current University Staff Members
    - 5 business Analysts
    - 4 Developers
    - 4 Tier 2 Support Staff
- Academic Technology – Formal Community of Practice (fCoP) was charged to:
    - Improve usability and effectiveness of our current tools, expand hype-cycle exploration, and advance mobile services.
    - Improve Moodle.
    - Use the hype-cycle to guide future investment in academic technology tools.
    - Improve mobile services.

- o Mr. Ament encouraged members to get involved by joining the community and visiting: z.umn.edu/atfcop.
- Moodle Development
  - o Moodle was upgraded at the end of May, will be upgraded to Moodle 2.6 at the end of November, and will be launched in March.
- Moodle Instance Model
  - o Goal is to keep a 5 year course history.
  - o Instructors choose if they will allow students access to archived course information.
- Moodle Kiosk
  - o Displays instructor's previous Moodle courses in a searchable format.

Discussion followed the presentation:
- Mr. Ament explained that the Moodle Team has an efficient process for upgrades, but testing requires more investment.
- Mr. Rubinyi asked about the changes in Moodle 2.6 that would enable instructors to map learning outcomes to assessments.
  - o The seven learning outcomes for undergraduate student education were plugged into Moodle and will allow outcomes to be mapped to individual quiz questions. Professor Conner noted that this would require faculty to track these outcomes within the grading process of the assessment.
- Mr. McKay viewed the grade book function that was enhanced by LSU and is exploring those options. It is a difficult process because each faculty member has different grading needs.
- Mr. Cohen emphasized that the development of Moodle is cautious because the goal is for it to be sustainable to prevent future upgrade issues.
- Mr. Ament responded to a question regarding how changes are made to Moodle. He stated that the first step is submitting a suggestion to the AT fCoP. Mr. McKay added that there is an informal CoP that meets and is another option for submitting suggestions.
- The AT fCoP will use the hype-cycle to anticipate future trends and help the University explore innovations meaningfully and ensure that support can be developed to assist in this progress.
- Mr. Ament described the challenges associated with interacting with the Moodle Core Team and other service providers. The University does not directly contribute to Moodle development. If the University provided the Core Team with funding, they could potentially see requested changes developed. The University would have to identify common issues within the Moodle user community. For example, the needs of grade book users are so diverse that it is difficult to identify common requests.

Mr. Ament will return in the spring to report the outcome of the AT fCoP milestones.

ESUP PORTAL PROTOTYPE DEMO

Cynthia Murdoch, Analyst, Enterprise Portal Project, and Scott Barnard, Coordinator, HR, presented a PowerPoint and provided a demo of the Portal prototype. The following topics were covered in the PowerPoint:

- What is a portal?
  - Any website that shapes your online experience to your needs.
- MyU Portal will no longer be used after the implementation of the Portal.
  - Most of the functionality of MyU will be integrated and in some cases improved.
- Feedback can be emailed to esup@umn.edu and umportal@umn.edu.

Mr. Barnard displayed the prototype and cautioned that it is not currently connected to PeopleSoft and will change before it is officially launched in October 2014. The first display was a faculty view and discussion began:

- PeopleSoft roles are not yet defined. A user cannot self-select their role, but they can select attributes that will connect them to information they are interested in. There will be more roles than student, staff, and faculty. The Portal team is seeking input on this topic. How granular should the roles be? A setup "wizard" has been discussed as an option to help users choose attributes.
- Professor Sham suggested that users might want to export their toolbars as HTML files and create a customized Portal experience.
- Notifications:
  - Ms. Murdoch explained that notifications would be used more for time sensitive deadlines, not email notifications.
  - Members mentioned that integration with course deadlines would be helpful for academic success.
- Customization:
  - Pagelets and pagelet location will potentially be customizable.
- Authentication:
  - The goal is to have a single sign-in, but they will time-out at different times.
- Members noted that "hover" does not often function on mobile devices.
- Will "all courses" be available to view, not just "today's courses"?
- Mr. Barnard asked members: What should be integrated into the Portal display as opposed to just linked to the Portal?
  - Account balances.
  - University events that would not be on personal calendars. URelations is updating the events calendar and this could potentially be displayed on the Portal.
  - Ensure that the Portal does not duplicate the spaces that are already used, such as email and personal calendars.

Z.UMN.EDU DISCUSSION

"Z" links were initially started by CLA and was later opened for University use. It will be part of an enterprise architecture evaluation and could be offered as a centrally run

resource. Members discussed the issues that can occur without coherent policies governing the sites:

- Mr. Gulachek explained that a technical review would be necessary before this becomes an enterprise class service. The acceptable use policy should cover most of the issues.
- Mr. Cohen added that if the security standards suggest that it is necessary to limit it to University websites, this is an option.
- Issues arise when certain URLs are claimed that should serve a specific University purpose.

Mr. MacDonald closed the discussion by stating that this feedback would be important to the Enterprise Architecture Technology Review Board.

Hearing no further business, Mr. MacDonald adjourned the meeting.

Jeannine Rich
University Senate Office