

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGIES COMMITTEE  
MINUTES OF MEETING  
DECEMBER 7, 2010  
Morrill Hall Room 238A

[In these minutes: OIT compact; strategic sourcing program; committee business]

[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: Ted Higman (Chair), Judd Dudgeon, Pam Solvie, Billie Wahlstrom, Craig Hohn, John Miller, Mary Vavrus, Paul Rubenis, Allison Jacobsen, Sue Van Voorhis, David Arendale, Benton Schnabel, John Butler, James MacDonald, Yuk Sham,

REGRETS: Bonnie Westra, Stephen Cawley

ABSENT: Aaron Doering Micah Haber, Brent Larson

OTHERS ATTENDING: Bernard Gulachek (Senior Director of Strategy Management OIT), Ann Hill Duin (Associate Vice President of OIT) Simin Hickman (Director of OIT Outreach and Vendor Management), Larry Storey (Supervisor Chemical Engineering and Materials Science), Tim Bray (Associate Director of Purchasing Services)

Professor Ted Higman called the meeting to order and welcomed those present. He asked the committee members to introduce themselves.

**OIT Compact**

Ann Hill Duin, Associate Vice President of the Office of Information Technology (OIT), and Bernard Gulachek, Senior Director of Strategy Management OIT, provided the Senate Committee on (SCIT) with an overview of the OIT compact. Associate Vice President Hill Duin explained that the compact is a two-year planning process. It is intended to be transactional, to share strategic directions, and to provide updates on previous work. She noted that during the time OIT has used the compact process, there has been increased emphasis on partnership, collaboration, and alignment of OIT goals with the University's strategic academic directions.

Mr. Gulachek explained that the compact incorporates information brought to OIT through the governance process. The governance process is the process OIT uses to seek advice, input, and consultation. For instance, OIT looks to SCIT as a key governance group representative of the faculty and staff. Input from SCIT plays a role in the sequencing and prioritization of OIT's strategic direction.

Associate Vice President Hill Duin noted that the strategic directions outlined in the handout *Strategic Directions for FY 2011*, are a framework for those in the FY2012

compact. The directions fall into three broad categories: advancing excellence in leadership, collaboration, and optimization. Specifically they include:

- Advancing Excellence in IT at the University of Minnesota
- Business Intelligence/Academic Analytics
- Collaborative Environments
- Infrastructure
- OIT Outreach
- Research Computing

Advancing Excellence in IT at the University of Minnesota – OIT is working to advance excellence in IT by building leadership capacity throughout the University. It is designed to provide greater efficiency, service, and innovation, and to strengthen collaboration. It includes initiatives such as an eight-month IT Leadership Program for all IT directors and the OIT cohort, reestablishing the Academic Technology Advisory Committee, and aligning the OIT service desk.

Business Intelligence / Academic Analytics - With regard to business intelligence and academic analytics, Associate Vice President Hill Duin noted that there is a plethora of data at the University of Minnesota but the challenge is to make the data meaningful so that units and individuals can utilize it. OIT is partnering with Peter Radcliffe the Director of Planning and Analysis to further this goal.

Collaborative Environments - The theme in each of the topics under collaborative environments is software as a service. The topics include:

- Transition of all UMN campuses to Google by June 30, 2011
- Major changes to computer lab environments
- Increase capacity and migrate Web Vista courses to Moodle
- Upgrading all Interactive Television rooms to self service
- Doing a Request for Proposal for Software as a Service external support of streaming media directions.
- Establishing the Collaborative for Academic Technology Innovation – OIT works in partnership at the request of the collegiate unit
- Partnering with the College of Education and Human Development to support the iPads initiative
- Conducting research on specific mobile device initiatives.

Associate Vice President Hill Duin noted that on one-day last year 200,000 wireless connections were made versus only 40,000 last year. She stated this demonstrates increased demand for the University to be a flexible mobile and integrated whole.

Infrastructure:

- Virtualize 75% of University servers; consolidate to four locations
- Begin production of desktop virtualization environment
- Award and execute PS scoping and planning project
- Complete Information-Display-Matrix requirements and planning project

- Implement an enterprise service bus framework that will provide a consistent, uniform platform for system-to-system integration
- Complete purchase of containerized Data Center
- Continue shift from wired to wireless environments

Associate Vice President Hill Duin asked Simin Hickman, Director of OIT Outreach and Vendor Management, to discuss OIT's collaboration with the Libraries and other units to evaluate students' computer workspaces. Ms. Hickman stated they are evaluating existing computer spaces and configuring them to create areas where students have access to the latest technologies, can work in groups, and can receive services such as tech stops and learning bytes. The Walter Library space will become a collaborative learning environment. OIT is also looking at the STEM corridor as an area for enhanced services. James MacDonald commented that collaborative learning spaces are valuable, but they cut down on the number of seats available for students. Ms. Hickman noted she would be meeting with Mr. MacDonald about this issue. She went on to state that OIT is considering ways that virtualization might compensate for reduced seating. With new methods of software delivery, students would not have to be at a particular location to receive the software they need.

Associate Vice President Hill Duin noted that server virtualization and desktop virtualization are both key strategic initiatives in the area of infrastructure. Mr. Gulachek added that the IT leadership is working on understanding targets for virtualizing and consolidating the server plant. This may reduce the technology footprint and allow the redeployment of resources. This initiative will be ongoing for the next two or three years. Mr. Gulachek also pointed out that the containerized data center would allow increased availability. It would be a "lights out" data center and provide the redundancy the University is seeking.

#### OIT Outreach

- Leverage OIT resources in support of University outreach
- University's urban outreach and global food collaboration initiatives -
- Increase state/regional connectivity to advance national data networks.

Associate Vice President Hill Duin stated that OIT is supporting the University's urban outreach efforts at eleven community centers in low-income neighborhoods. It is also working to align the infrastructure in support of the Global Food Initiative. Associate Vice President Hill Duin next asked Mr. John Miller to update the committee on regional connectivity. Mr. Miller commented that there was an RFP in review to provide fiber optics to the coordinate campuses. He said this ties into efforts with the North East Service Cooperative in Northern Minnesota and the work of the Broadband Optical Research, Education and Sciences Network (Boreas), a collaboration of Iowa State University, the University of Iowa, the University of Minnesota, and the University of Wisconsin-Madison to build and operate a multi-state fiber optic network.

#### Research Computing

- Define an institutional low-tier research storage solution
- Complete fiber to University of Minnesota at Crookston and Duluth –Increase high-performance network utilization

- Enhance network connectivity to all research locations in the state.

Associate Vice President Hill Duin stated OIT is committed to the investments in its compact, but there are financial challenges. OIT has been asked to model three and five percent budget reductions for FY2012, and launched a voluntary departure program for OIT employees. But she noted that the financial challenges also provide opportunities for collaboration. The University of Minnesota OIT is viewed as a national leader for moving toward implementation of a containerized data center and for its iPad initiative. Professor David Arendale commented that OIT's customer service for the CEHD iPad program was extraordinary.

Vice Provost Billie Wahlstrom asked Mr. Gulachek to discuss the Software as a Service (SaaS) approach to purchasing software. Mr. Gulachek stated that when OIT approaches the need to provide technology services, it is no longer jumping to the conclusion that they should "build it" or "run it." Instead, it is making a deliberate decision about how a service will be consumed and using SaaS approach to reduce the technology footprint.

Larry Storey noted the OIT strategic directions call for the virtualization of 75% of the University servers, and asked where that percentage came from. Mr. Gulachek responded that the IT leadership performed an analysis and a count of the University's 4000 servers, and determined that 16% of these were for research. 75% of the non-research servers were targeted to be virtualized into professionally managed data centers. The project has begun and OIT is talking to collegiate leaders about how to implement it.

### **Strategic Sourcing Program**

Tim Bray, Associate Director of Purchasing Services, provided SCIT with a power point presentation on the University's Strategic Sourcing Program (SSP). He stated the University of Minnesota's annual expenditure with external suppliers for services, supplies, and equipment, excluding construction, is over \$700 million. President Bruininks initiated the Strategic Procurement Advisory Committee (SPAC) to identify ways to consolidate sources and identify opportunities for collaboration. The challenge was to reduce spending without impacting the mission of the University. As of September 2010, SSP implemented \$4.7 million of annual savings. SSP worked with OIT to determine opportunities for cost reduction and drive savings to colleges and business units. In the last year, it met with every college to examine its spending. The SSP shared "spend analysis" reports with the colleges, campuses, and administrative units and is currently identifying a second wave of targeted savings opportunities.

Mr. Bray next discussed the Strategic Sourcing Dashboard that shows where and how much savings were put into place and the tasks for the next reporting period. Mr. Bray noted reductions in OIT, office supplies, lab supplies, travel, property insurance and facilities. He stated the desktop/laptop standards and improved pricing were identified as initial targets for savings in OIT.

Mr. Bray discussed the Strategic Sourcing Assessment of the University of Minnesota's practices regarding IT Hardware. He noted Dell was the major supplier of PC desktop

and notebooks. The pricing schedule was based on a 2007 RFP response and State of Minnesota pricing. Purchasing Services negotiated additional pricing concessions for bulk purchases greater than \$50,000. There were no formal campus wide processes or standards regarding supplier utilization. This resulted in 47 laptop/desktop standards created by individual departments and the State of Minnesota.

The collegiate IT directors and OIT developed University wide desktop and laptop standards intended to meet the needs of the majority of end-users. They are flexible and configurable and enable additional savings through the implementation of improved support processes. The 47 laptop and desktop standards were reduced to five or six and lower pricing was negotiated with Dell. Mr. Bray stated having fewer models results in savings on upgrades. Part of the process is the management of suppliers. So IT leaders meet with suppliers monthly to determine if the University is buying the standard units and if any changes need to be made.

Ms. Hickman commented that the research shows that the major cost of owning a computer is support. OIT provides computer support for faculty and staff. OIT can better meet faculty and staff needs for updates, patches, imaging and data security when there is a limited number of computer models. This results in major savings in technical support.

Mr. Bray next discussed the Sourcing Assessment. He noted that the SSP looked at industry trends, comparisons with other Universities and University of Minnesota practices for IT hardware. SSP used this information in collaboration with IT leaders to make determinations about the new standards and to insure pricing was reflective of the University's total volume. The pricing is now less than state OET pricing and less than the University was previously paying. The pricing is available on UMart. Mr. Bray noted the challenge is to keep it from going up over time. Mr. Bray also noted that the University orders 93% of its desktops from Dell and 56% of its laptops.

Mr. Bray commented two additional IT issues. He stated SSP is working on are an RFP to create an easier path for hiring temporary IT staff, and on server standardization. Mr. Bray asked Ms. Hickman for further comment and she emphasized that the process has involved the IT directors who represent their colleges and the IT directors make the decisions in selecting standards. She invited communication of any unique computer needs and feedback on whether OIT is meeting its goals.

Mr. Bray stated the FY 2010 budget detail by colleges is being sent to deans to help them understand how the money is being spent.

### **Old Business**

Professor Higman noted that at the November meeting the committee discussed the proposed merger of SCIT and the Senate Library Committee (SLC). He stated he has received no further information on this issue. But he wanted to raise it again to obtain input from John Butler, Associate University Librarian for Information Technology, who was not able to attend the November meeting. Mr. Butler stated he did not believe there

was much interest in a combined committee, but he did not have any direct knowledge of the SLC's views on the issue. Professor Higman stated he would follow up with Professor Kate VandenBosch, the Senate Consultative Committee chair, and Professor , the SLC chair.

**New Business**

Professor Higman informed the committee he spoke with Vice President Steve Cawley about drafting a resolution to speed the University's transition to Google Apps and Vice President Cawley was supportive of the resolution. The committee agreed that work on the resolution could occur via e-mail in order to bring it to the February 3 University Senate meeting.

Hearing no further business, Professor Higman adjourned the meeting.

Dawn Zugay  
University Senate Office