

CLASSROOM ADVISORY SUBCOMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING

April 2, 2012

Morrill Hall Room 300

[In these minutes: classroom virtualization project; spring 2012 final exam survey; fall faculty classroom survey; OCM summer update]

[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: Susan Wick (Chair), Corey Andrus, Brad Cohen, John Comazzi, Gordon Duke, Keya Ganguly, Barbara Jensen, Roberta Juarez, Jeff Lindgren, Peggy McCarthy, Jed Overmann, Patricia Schaber, Kevin Smith, Jeremy Todd

GUESTS: Mark Hove, manager, OIT Active Directory Services; Sarah Kussow, scheduling coordinator, Office of Classroom Management (OCM); Toni Pangborn, classroom support manager, OCM

Professor Susan Wick called the meeting to order and welcomed those present. She asked the committee members to introduce themselves.

Classroom Virtualization Project

Mark Hove, manager, Office of Information Technologies (OIT) Active Directory Services, updated the Classroom Advisory Subcommittee (CAS) on the progress of the classroom virtualization project. First he provided the committee with background on the project. He stated that in September 2009, the OIT desktop support unit was charged with co-leading a system-wide effort to propose a Desktop Virtualization Strategy that included:

- Evaluating user needs
- Evaluating products and programs
- Defining pilot projects
- Focusing to find an academic use case
- Scoping of work and timeline

The potential benefits of the project were to reduce support costs by centrally managing the system. Instead of each workstation having a unique environment, the software would be centrally managed. For instance, in a classroom situation software packages would only need to be updated one-time rather than on each workstation.

Professor Schaber asked if this project standardized software packages to the departments based on their needs. Mr. Hove indicated this was a good explanation of the project, and gave the example of how the project worked with the College of Design to deliver the Adobe Software suite so that every student would have the same version of the software.

Professor John Comazzi commented that the project is cloud-based within the Twin Cities campus.

Next, Mr. Hove showed an illustration demonstrating how individuals log on and the system constantly refreshes the software. He then discussed the three different pilot projects and their outcomes.

- In the June 2010 public computing lab pilot the applications were successful but the capacity was untested, and the audience was limited.
- In the Spring 2011 ARCH 2281 Design Fundamentals II course, the applications were successful, but the capacity was untested. He noted further that Adobe Design Studio was an intense expensive application and there was low usage because many of the students had already purchased the software, and brought their own workstations. Professor Comazzi, who taught the course, added that the network was not reliable.
- Mr. Hove stated the Spring 2011, BIOL 2002 Foundations of Biological Science pilot failed at both the network layer and the core layer because the load overwhelmed the core environment.

He stated that since completion of the spring pilot projects, the virtualization project has been on hold due to attrition in key staff. He went on to discuss the lessons learned from the pilot projects.

- June is the wrong time of year to conduct a pilot testing capacity
- Proactive measures (such as pre-tests, exercises) are required to engage a large number of students to embrace a new course technology
- It is difficult to introduce a new technology midway through a semester when students have established patterns and ways of accessing their data and doing their homework
- –It is difficult to build an additional service with reduced staff in FY 2010-2011
- Student demand for Public Computing Facilities is still strong
- Technical procedures and support capabilities vary among units
- Strategic partners and sponsors are needed at the collegiate level including the IT director, support staff and the service owner
- It is necessary to improve the ability to deliver applications to students

He next noted the impact of consumer trends on classroom virtualization. He stated students who have workstations typically do not bring them to campus. However, students and faculty are bringing multiple wireless devices to the University and this impacts the University's wireless infrastructure requirements. Additionally, there is an expectation that applications will always be available. He stated this leads to two options: either 1) provide a virtual, (kiosk-like) desktop with applications from a server

across a network to a workstation or 2) provide only the application to the consumer's personal device. Mr. Hove stated the recommendation is to move to the bring-your-own device option, so that there is only a single image to maintain for purposes of patching and replacing. However, he stated this would require a shift from a distributed model to data centers.

Mr. Hove next discussed the "roadmap" forward. Since fall 2011, the focus has been on enterprise applications such as R25 and ImageNow document management scanning system, he stated. The next step will be to discuss funding with the new Chief Information Officer, and whether bring-your-own device will be the new standard for the University. Mr. Hove noted it would be important to consider how this standard would impact classrooms and the infrastructure.

Professor Schaber asked Professor Wick how many students had participated in the pilot project in her Biology class last spring. Professor Wick indicated that between 42 and 100 students were simultaneously using the application. Mr. Hove noted that other Universities have managed capacity issues. For instance, at the University of Indiana there are 200 applications available in a catalogue that students can access.

Professor Wick asked whether the applications are downloaded onto the users' computers, or if they are only on the computer while it is being used in the classroom. Mr. Hove responded that it works similarly to Google Docs. Professor Schaber noted some problems she has experienced with Google Docs. Mr. Hove stated that these result from multiple servers overloading the wireless network.

Professor Schaber asked how the applications are paid for. Mr. Hove stated that during the pilot, the software is free. Professor Comazzi commented that one incentive for virtualization is that it would eliminate problems with students having different versions of the software.

A discussion ensued about how the applications would be paid for and if they would result in hidden costs for students. Professor Wick asked if students would be charged course fees or if it would be part of a technology fee. Professor Comazzi noted that students in his design class are required to individually purchase the software. Mr. Hove explained that the software vendors are moving to a subscription model for purchasing their products and this is geared more towards institutional purchasers rather than individuals. Professor Schaber questioned whether Library Services might purchase a subscription for the applications. Professor Gordon Duke explained that the vendors' income model is to tighten their control over delivery of the software, and there is designed obsolescence.

Spring 2012 Final Exams Survey

Sarah Kussow, scheduling coordinator, OCM, updated CAS on the results of the fall final exam survey. Ms. Kussow first reminded the committee of the current method of scheduling exams. She stated OCM schedules approximately 3000 exams per semester. The scheduling is done manually and takes two staff people four to five weeks. The exams are scheduled for all undergraduate courses that meet in general classroom space

unless the department notifies the scheduling unit ahead of time that an exam will not be taking place. Ms. Kussow stated OCM believes that approximately one-third of the classrooms that are scheduled for exams actually sit vacant. OCM would like to find a method to more efficiently schedule exams and eliminate scheduling classroom space for exams that do not take place, and brought this issue to CAS last spring. CAS subsequently made a recommendation to the Senate Committee on Educational Policy (SCEP), and SCEP directed OCM to gather information, from instructors who are not giving final exams, about how they are assessing their students' performance in lieu of giving a final exam.

This year when OCM e-mailed the department schedulers, it asked which courses would need classrooms for final exams, and also sent reminders. OCM received only 900 responses, and still scheduled space for all the course sections about which they did not receive a response. Ms. Kussow stated the e-mail and reminders resulted in very small gains, and noted that overall more time was likely spent on scheduling because of the extra burden of tracking responses.

Professor Wick encouraged OCM to continue polling department schedulers because it would take time for faculty to adjust to the new process. Several committee members suggested that OCM should have a more strongly worded poll. Ms. Kussow stated OCM considered asking classroom instructors how they are assessing their students if they are not giving final exams, but she explained this could be a sensitive subject. Barbara Jensen commented that eventually rooms should not be scheduled if instructors do not request them. Professor Smith suggested a carefully worded poll that asked if classroom space is needed during the final exam period, and Professor Wick suggested letting faculty know that a lot of time is wasted in scheduling exam rooms, and that there are no penalties assessed for informing OCM that a final exam is not being offered.

Committee discussion followed about why faculty might be hesitant to admit that they are not giving final exams. Professor Kevin Smith noted that the final exam policy had been read to require that final exams be given, and that CAS had brought this issue to SCEP's attention last spring.

Professor Comazzi noted that there are likely courses that never need a final exam, and suggested departments could provide OCM with this information. Ms. Kussow responded that this question is asked in ECAS but the information received is not always accurate because the question is not asked at the individual course section level.

Professor Wick stated it would be important to determine what the policy means by capstone projects, cumulative projects, and final exams. But, when she brought the issue to SCEP, it had just completed a review of numerous educational policies and was not ready to consider the issue. She stated there should be some flexibility for how assessments are done, and it would be important to consider requirements for final exams that are fair to students and meet the pedagogical needs of professors. Committee members agreed that CAS should follow up on this issue with SCEP.

Fall Faculty-Classroom Survey

Toni Pangborn, classroom support manager, OCM provided CAS with an overview of the fall-faculty-classroom survey. First, she provided CAS with statistics on OCM Tech System Usage in all rooms from spring and fall 2009 to spring and fall 2011. This data showed an increase in laptop/computer use and decreases in the use of DVDs and VHS players. The number of rooms equipped with document cameras increased by 30 in 2011 and their use has also increased.

Next she provided CAS members with the graphs demonstrating satisfaction rates with overall OCM services, general-purpose classrooms, presentation technology, and overall physical attributes. She noted the results over the past four semesters have remained relatively consistent. She stated the satisfaction ratings in each of the categories were between 70% and 80%. Since fall 2008, the only notable exception was a decline in satisfaction with the overall physical attributes. Ms. Pangborn also stated that the response rate to the survey fell from approximately 25% to 18.56%. Ms. Pangborn then discussed a sampling of comments received in the survey. Some of the comments she noted were:

- VHS upkeep is no longer a high priority for OCM
- The need for more mobile furniture
- More and better-located whiteboards
- The disconnect between the information received at the time of room scheduling and what faculty actually want when they enter a room.

Roberta Juarez asked if OCM had received any comments about the size of furniture and accommodation for pregnant students. Ms. Pangborn responded that she had not seen any individual comments in the survey regarding the size of the classroom seating. She noted that there are marked tables for those with disabilities.

Brad Cohen asked how OCM is managing the different types of classroom space such as active learning classrooms to ensure that faculty are teaching in rooms that meet their teaching needs. Ms. Pangborn stated that OCM makes adjustments based on feedback received from faculty. Mr. Todd stated that OCM is meeting with department and faculty to have a larger discussion about how to have the correct feature sets in rooms for the departments utilizing them.

Professor Wick noted that the area of the physical attributes section of the survey indicated the most dissatisfaction, and asked Ms. Pangborn to discuss this. Ms. Pangborn responded that the dissatisfaction is often a result of the inability to control the temperature in individual rooms, and that there has been an increase in the length of time it takes to respond to issues of room temperature and facility component repair.

OCM Summer Update

Jeremy Todd updated CAS on OCM's summer 2012 projects. Mr. Todd began by discussing the impact of the Light Rail Transit construction on OCM. He noted the road closures would make it challenging to bring furniture and equipment to campus for

summer room updates. Next he discussed the room upgrades and closures:

- Over summer semester, OCM will be updating classroom equipment in more than 50 rooms.
- Amundson Hall will be off-line due to light rail construction
- Technology upgrades will occur over summer semester involving Amundson, Kolthoff and Ruttan classrooms
- The nine classrooms in Kolthoff Hall will get new furniture, carpet and paint
- The former Forestry Library in Skok Hall will be renovated and converted into student study space. This is a partnership with CFANS, Libraries and Dean of Undergraduate Education
- Ruttan/Magrath Plaza project: vacates Magrath 6 & 8, uses Ruttan classrooms for storage
- Additional seating will be installed in the Willey Hall atrium, bringing the capacity from 81 to 139
- More class room projects:
<http://www.classroom.umn.edu/projects/classproj/index.php>

Mr. Todd also informed CAS that at the end of March the Budget Office notified OCM that it would receive a nonrecurring post-budget O&M transfer of \$500,000 in FY13 to be used for the highest priority maintenance and renewal needs of classrooms and study spaces. OCM will also receive a \$2 million internal loan in FY13 for the upgrades in Keller, Borlaug and Vincent and for improvement of study space in Willey and Wilson Library. While this will assist with current maintenance and lifecycle replacement priorities, the loan will generate an annual payment obligation of \$277,000 beginning in FY14, further reducing available operating funds in FY14 and beyond. He thanked CAS for bringing attention to the issue of funding for OCM.

Next, Mr. Todd noted that OCM is receiving funding to support a scheduling system upgrade. Professor Schaber asked if this was replacing the electronic course authorization system (ECAS). Mr. Todd explained that ECAS was separate from the scheduling upgrade.

Mr. Todd also discussed building a new active learning classroom on the St. Paul campus in partnership with the College of Biological Sciences. He indicated that OCM has not yet received confirmation that it can be completed in summer 2012.

Old Business

Professor Wick noted that she would be speaking at the Finance and Planning and SCEP meetings regarding CAS's resolutions on faculty development and recurring funding for OCM. She stated she would update the committee on the results of these meetings via e-mail.

She then thanked CAS members for their service on the committee.

Hearing no further business, Professor Wick adjourned the meeting.

Dawn Zugay
University Senate Office

Follow Up

Following the CAS meeting, Mr. Todd reported that there would not be summer construction on the active learning classroom on the St. Paul campus. Planning efforts will continue by finding a suitable classroom locations for Fall 2013 classes.