

[In these minutes: 1. Discussion of Finance and Policy Subcommittee draft report on NTS rates changes, 2. Discussion of Enterprise Project]

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGIES COMMITTEE (SCIT)

MINUTES

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 1998

1:00 - 2:30

STUDIO C, RARIG CENTER

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

PRESENT: Gary Jahn (chair), Ron Anderson, Stephen Campbell, Steve Cawley, Andy Lopez, Kevin McDowell, Don Riley, William Peterson.

REGRETS: Roberta Armstrong, James Chelikowsky, Vicki Gaylord, Maria Gini, Harold Grotevant, Charlene Mason, Andy Rotering.

ABSENT: Joe Skupniewitz.

GUESTS: Jodie Berg-Combs, Tom Cook, Carole Fleck, Robert Kvavik, Myron Lowe, Carolyn Parnell.

1. Discussion of the Finance and Policy Subcommittee report on NTS Rate Changes

Professor Ron Anderson presented the Subcommittee on Finance and Policy's second draft of the Report on Proposed Rates for Networking and Telecommunication Services. He reported that Richard Pfitzenreuter, from Finance and Operations, wants to reach a decision by March 16, and has been working with Carolyn Parnell. He then asked for an update from OIT.

Don Riley said that there was a meeting early today to discuss the issue of charges in terms of federal requirements and IMG. There will be a net reduction of charges from NTS to the University of \$1.9 million, of which \$900,000 is centrally allocated. We need to look at each department to avoid making them the losers. Some areas though, such as CLA, will initially be losers, but will then collect net profits in the end. We want every area to overall be net winners. Now, it looks like IT and OIT will be the biggest losers. An overall surplus in central allocations of \$750,000 will then be used for new technology, but policy issues will still need to be worked out.

Carol Fleck, from the Budget Office, added that there is still approximately a \$2 million cost to fund emerging technology for the campus. We are reluctant to publicize the \$1.9 million savings because people will see these numbers and units that are winners will start spending. Instead, we want to create a balance in funding.

Don Riley said that certain items are separated out, such as ATM upgrades, links to the coordinate campuses, modem pool upgrade, video conferencing, and distance learning charges through Media Resources. We need to decide whether these items should be done at all, or if done, billed into rates and charged back to departments or centrally funded subsidies. This is an additional \$2.1 million.

Q: There have been past attempts to balance budgets, at which time it was seen that Deans are not always good at distributing funds to individual departments. What changes have been made to prevent this?

A: When the funds are sent to the Deans, information will also be included on individual department expenditures to help in fund distribution.

Q: Will O & M funds be available for NTS this year?

A: OIT has not been informed yet, but it looks like it will be a reduction from last year.

The committee then made the following comments:

- SCIT and its Subcommittee should participate in the strategic process

- University needs to have an ongoing commitment to be more proactive versus reactive
- Information needs to be kept up-to-date

Carolyn Parnell concluded by stating that NTS is developing a web page simulation that would allow departments to enter their area and org. and see how the rate changes would effect them.

2. Discussion of Enterprise Project

Professor Lopez started by describing a letter that he had forwarded to the committee regarding his concerns about faculty and student input as well as the benefits that they would receive. Also of concern is the faculty grade book being proposed.

Steve Cawley answered that this has been an inclusive consultation process on each of the campuses and faculty have had an impact on what decisions have been made. One issue that has been addressed by faculty is the on-line grade book. This was included in the original proposal, but no clear decisions have been made yet because of faculty concerns.

Robert Kvavik said that when PeopleSoft is in place, the first pieces to be brought up will be for Human Resources and Students Services. CUFS replacement was not included in the original proposal, but it is hoped that this can be completed in a few years. The change to PeopleSoft is also being coordinated with the year 2000 problem and the conversion to the semester system. He then distributed a diagram of the current administration process and how it will be redesigned. He pointed out that currently 75-90% of University operations are conducted manually. With PeopleSoft, that will switch to 75-90% being conducted automatically. Instead of specialists being needed throughout departments, individual users will be able to complete services for themselves.

Q: Many faculty members do not have the latest technology in their offices and do not want to go to the labs. What will they have to do?

A: All that is needed for access to PeopleSoft is the web. Only the people in central administration, who will be dealing with more maintenance of the system, will require more advanced equipment. Old equipment will be a problem though, and the University will need to plan for its replacement.

Q: Will a one size fits all approach be the best to foster diversity and innovation?

A: If different departments are all developing their own approach to the same problem, valuable resources are being wasted. With PeopleSoft we want to only build the minimal amount possible and give the central model a chance first. We do not think that this will inhibit innovation.

Q: With more users in the system, what are the security challenges?

A: We are looking into public key encryption for security purposes. We will need to consider costs and accessibility before it is approved. We will also need to break the culture of the people who currently are the custodians of the databases. Under the new system, all users will be certified for everything instead of the current system of a few specialists who have access.

The following comments were made in conclusion:

- Up-front equipment replacement costs will need to be made clear to departments
- Faculty should be surveyed to determine what equipment they currently have
- Flexibility and faculty consultation will be key to this conversion
- Standards will be maintained for changing or adding to the central system
- Criteria, such as ease of operation, has been put in place for delivery of the system
- There are differences between the arts and the sciences so flexibility will be needed
- Faculty will need to be re-engineered to adapt to the changes

Professor Jahn thanked the guests for attending and adjourned the meeting at 2:30.

Rebecca Hippert
University Senate