

[In these minutes: Information Technologies on the Coordinate Campuses, MERLOT, Wireless]

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGIES COMMITTEE (SCIT)

MINUTES

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 3, 2000

11:15 - 12:45

BEHMLER CONFERENCE ROOM, MORRIS CAMPUS

[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 of, nor are they binding on the Senate or Assembly, the Administration, or the Board of Regents.]

PRESENT:

Andy Lopez (chair), Steve Cawley, Jerry Flattum, Linda Jorn, Thomas McRoberts, Shih-Pau Yen, William Peterson, April Schwartz.

REGRETS:

Mark Bellcourt, Jodie Berg-Combs, Stephen Downing, Tim Fitzpatrick, Bernard Gulachek, Phil Goodrich, Gary Hallman, Jeff Johnson, Myron Lowe, Charlene Mason, Haesun Park.

GUESTS: John Bowers, Kimberly Highland, Albert Matongo, Diane Moen.

1. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Professor Lopez announced that the Senate Finance and Planning Committee minutes from the September 19 meeting, where high speed internet access was discussed, were available on the web.

2. INFORMATION TECHNOLOGIES ON THE COORDINATE CAMPUSES

Professor Lopez noted that the Crookston and Morris initiatives would be discussed today and Duluth would be heard from at a later meeting.

CROOKSTON

Bill Peterson then gave the presentation for Crookston. In his handout he noted the new developments, problems, and faculty training and use. He then introduced Diane Moen as the new Crookston CIO.

Diane Moen added that her office has several issues to deal with. First is the upgrade of faculty laptops once more are available. Next is the modem pool. Currently there are 48 dial-in lines at 56K. but her office is looking for possible funding for a back-up pool. Other issues include a new server with increased space, recurring maintenance funds, and increased bandwidth and speed.

Bill Peterson said that from the instructional side there has been a smooth transition to Windows and Office 2000. Both products provide a more stable environment.

Web CT is also being highly used for online testing and quizzing. The program is easy enough even for faculty new to using technology. Currently, 26 faculty have been trained in Web CT, which is half of the Crookston faculty. 15 classes have been developed since May. Tutorials have been provided as reminders and a seminar series will be conducted to share what has been created.

Q: What is the Crookston bandwidth issue?

A: Crookston has a DS3 connection. Video-streaming uses some bandwidth, but the biggest users are the experiment station and Red River Trade Center. The center is part of the University but does not pay for this use. We are hoping that wireless will provide some help in this area.

Q: Will Web CT 3.0 be used at Crookston?

A: The conversion plan is being worked on so that conversion can occur at the beginning of November for use in spring classes.

MORRIS

John Bowers noted that Morris is a liberal arts institutions so technology is used in a different way. He stated that while all offices are now networked and over half of the classrooms have etherjacks, few buildings have a 10mb fiber and there is only a 30% utilization of the DS3 line. The modem pool has 52 56K lines with four back-up lines. There are 170 computers in campus labs and all lab computers are three years old or less. Students pay a \$52.50 per semester student technology fee and the money is allocated by the student association, MCSA. Last year a replacement cycle for faculty computers was started.

He continued by saying that 1999 was the first year for instructional staff support personnel. Morris is part of MNInstruct, a regional consortium with MnSCU to improve instructional technology efforts on campuses.

Other issues include:

- Currently, students receive free printing on dot matrix lab printers but the campus would like to move towards fee-based laser printing. The problem is that there is no infrastructure in place for stored value cards.
- When fiber lines are cut, Morris loses all links to the Twin Cities, which now includes everything covered by PeopleSoft. Coordinate campuses should have a second route as a back-up.
- The bookstores would like to provide on-line product sales but the campus has an exclusive credit card vendor so only that credit card can be used.
- A second website is being designed for prospective students and will be tailored to the information that they need.
- Voicemail has never been provided on campus but might be looked into when the PBX system is retired in three to five years.
- Web CT use on campus

Albert Matongo, a history professor, then spoke as the first user of Web CT from Morris. The program is easy to use and allows the instructor to manage the students. Threaded discussions help students and permits faculty to see what students are thinking and learning. Students can also check their grades at any time. He asked that the technology be provided for all Morris faculty.

3. MERLOT

Linda Jorn distributed a handout she presented at the Society for Academic Computing (SAC) on new and effective instructional technology.

She then described MERLOT (Multimedia Educational Resource for Learning and Online Teaching), which started in 1997. She noted that anyone can become a member and that institutions can join for \$25,000 per year. Currently there are 23 members, which includes five CIC members: Wisconsin, Michigan, Iowa, Indiana, and Illinois. These institutions commit eight faculty to be peer reviewers in one of 13 disciplines. The University is not currently a member, but the University will get feedback from the CIC members who have joined.

She explored the MERLOT web site for the committee noting where peer reviews are included and what other information is available for faculty.

4. WIRELESS COMMUNICATION

Shih-Pau Yen stated that wireless is being used as a solution to the classroom technology issue since central administration has no funds available but the campus kiosks are already in place. With funds from the CLA student technology fee, wireless hubs are being placed in the kiosks for laptop use in the classrooms or the hallways. The ultimate goal is for the 200 wireless kiosks and every classroom building to be covered by the end of the year. Pilot tests are being completed in Folwell Hall.

Additionally, ADCS is working with vendors to provide 50 rental laptops to students. Students can check them out from 8 a.m. - 5 p.m. at \$3.50, which is cheaper than parking. The fee will then cover rebooting and clean-up on the laptops.

Three wireless classroom pilot tests are also being conducted. The sites are HHH, CEHD in Peik Hall, and the Law

School. While wireless will not solve all problems, it is a good solution from a cost standpoint.

The one remaining issue is that wireless LAN standards do not provide for security and privacy. The University will need to draft standards and then ask the committee for comment.

Q: Is there a capacity issue for using wireless?

A: It depends on the number of laptops. If the price keeps dropping, more hubs can be installed to alleviate this problem.

With no further questions, Professor Lopez thanked all members for attending and adjourned the meeting. He then noted that lunch would be provided in the Student Center.

Rebecca Hippert
University Senate