

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGIES COMMITTEE  
MINUTES OF MEETING  
DECEMBER 4, 2001

[In these minutes:

Welcome, Approval of November 6, 2001 Minutes, Prioritize what Committee should address this year, Security Issues, Multi-College Student Survey: Experiences with Instructional Technology Report, Telephone Upgrade Project Update]

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

PRESENT:

Phil Goodrich, Chair, Jeff Johnson, Linda Jorn, Mark Bellcourt, Josephine Crawford, Robert McMaster, Thomas McRoberts, William Peterson, April Schwartz, Jacob Elo, Ryan Osero

REGRETS: Yosef Cohen, Nancy Herther

ABSENT: Stephen Crawley, Stephen Downing, Haesun Park, Ashutosh Jaiswal

OTHER(S):

Eric Celeste, Tim Fitzpatrick, John Fuller, Bernard Gulachek, Ken Hanna, Nancy McGlynn, John Miller, Scott Ruud, Shih-Pau Yen

I). Professor Goodrich called the meeting to order and asked those present to introduce themselves.

II). The full Committee unanimously approved the November 6, 2001 minutes.

III). Professor Goodrich called on the Committee to prioritize what it would like to accomplish this year. The following topics were mentioned at the first meeting in October:

- Accessibility of Information Technology Policy
- Portfolio which is a student advising tool
- Network Cost Recovery also known as headcount charges
- Update on Planning and Budgeting for the Data Network Upgrade Project
- Update on new Library system
- Update on status of contracts signed for high speed DSL and cable access
- Updates on telephone installation project
- Web CT update
- Update on Distance Education surveys
- Classroom Technology Upgrade Project
- Academic Health Center Research Computing Supercomputer Center
- Discussion of pros and cons of wireless networking
- Internet Usage Survey
- Voiceover IP
- Data Security

Suggestions for future meetings:

1. January - Invite Mr. Steve Fitzgerald from Classroom Management to update the Committee on the Classroom Technology Upgrade Plan.  
It was suggested that his presentation be held in a newly renovated classroom and there be an attempt to incorporate a discussion of related topics including the pros and cons of wireless networking, a web CT update and a short report on Portfolio.
2. February - Conduct a "theme" meeting of related topics. For example, a meeting that would address the Network Cost Recovery or headcount issue, the Data Network Upgrade Project and high speed DSL and cable access.  
Eric Celeste volunteered to check on whether a conference room in the newly renovated Walter Library would be available for the February meeting.
3. March – To be determined.
4. April – A presentation on projects being undertaken by the University of Minnesota Libraries.  
Specifically focusing on projects that are moving the Libraries in a digital direction and those that have network impact.

IV). Security Issues at the University of Minnesota: Ken Hanna from the Office of Information Technology distributed a handout entitled "Security Trends and Issues" and walked the Committee through an overview of its contents. Security typically is defined by the following three factors:

- Confidentiality-information that is supposed to be secret is kept secret; and,
- Integrity-information or messages are not changed; and,
- Availability-having the systems with the necessary information available upon demand. The opposite of this is non-availability or the denial of service.

Risk is a large component of security. There is always an on-going attempt to manage risk. The various types of risk include:

- Internal versus external
- Theoretical versus real
- Individual versus institutional
- Acceptable versus unacceptable

Risk can be reduced.

In an on-going effort to reduce risk for everyone at the University the following approaches are used:

- Best practices and guidelines
- Use of a commercial scanning tool that scans systems and tries to look for vulnerabilities
- On-going consultation with the collegiate technical staff
- Use of an incident response person
- Increase awareness by making people aware that security is an on-going issue
- Provide security information on the University of Minnesota's Office of Information Technology website: <http://www1.umn.edu/oit/security/>
- Conduct presentations
- Arrange for site visits as necessary

Next, Mr. Hanna addressed the trends of computing:

- The desktop computers of today are very powerful computers and can be thought of in terms of the servers of yesterday.  
Although this is positive, it is important to make sure that these computers are not taken over and used inappropriately.
- Increased dependency on computers by staff, faculty and students. In light of this, if someone attempted to do something on a systematic basis the results could be catastrophic.
- A wide dissemination of vulnerabilities makes it difficult to keep up with protection.
- Complex operating systems with more and more features.
- Market concentration of vendors i.e. Microsoft. Hacks tend to attack products/vendors that have a significant market concentration.
- Automation of exploits i.e. scripts, worms, viruses, e-mail delivery etc.

As a result of these trends, what can be done to counter them? OIT recommends and does the following:

- Provides users with education to make them aware of security risks and issues
- Use of anti-virus software
- Installation of personal firewall software
- Installation of vendor patches
- Uses system testing software to look for vulnerabilities
- Uses system hardening techniques
- Being informed by accessing the University of Minnesota's security website at:  
<http://www1.umn.edu/oit/security/>
- The University scans over 400 critical systems quarterly
- The University scans the Enterprise systems monthly
- Provides information on the OIT website for setting up servers properly
- Recommends accessing information on the OIT website covering desktop best practices
- The University has an incident response capability
- Takes initiatives in higher risk areas

A brief discussion followed Mr. Hanna's presentation. It was suggested that rather than OIT just offering security strategies to colleges, departments and end-users there should be a policy from central administration requiring certain guidelines be followed when accessing sensitive data. Moreover, going beyond the realm of policy and good citizenship is the idea of securing specific applications so that an insecure connection would not be possible.

V).

Linda Jorn of the Digital Media Center (DMC) provided the Committee with history on the Multi-College Student Survey Experience with Instructional Technology Report. In the spring of 2001 the Digital Media Center (DMC) worked in conjunction with the College of Human Ecology (CHE), College of Liberal Arts (CLA), College of Education and Human Development (CEHD) and the College of Veterinary Medicine (CVM) to evaluate the ways in which students in these four colleges experience instructional technology. The purpose of the survey was to assist administrators, faculty and instructional technology staff as they decide to:

1. Improve instructional technology student services; and,
2. Effectively distribute student technology fees; and,
3. Longitudinally track student use of and attitudes towards instructional technology.

This was a web-based survey. Of the 1100 students surveyed, 290 responded. The results represent a 26.4% return rate.

The goal, with the assistance of OIT, is to invite other colleges to participate in the survey in an attempt to collect more University-wide results.

It is hoped that OIT will agree to provide project management for the survey process.

Ms. Jorn fielded questions from Committee members concerning specific survey questions and results.

VI).

John Miller of Networking and Telecommunications provided the Committee with a very brief update on the Telephone Upgrade Project.

Overall things are moving forward, however, there have been a few complaints in the following areas:

- 10% error rate in cutovers which are attributable to people working over 24 hours per day.
  - Complaints on how the new phones work i.e. the unassigned line selection button.
- Telecommunications is working with the phone vendor to correct this problem.

VII). With no further business, Professor Goodrich adjourned the meeting.

Renee Dempsey  
University Senate