

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGIES COMMITTEE
MINUTES OF MEETING
DECEMBER 4, 2007

[In these minutes:

November 15, 2007 Senate Consultative Committee Update, OIT's Video Commons Efforts, ADCS & NTS 2.0 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:

Mark Sanders, chair, John Crow, Dale Swanson, Sue Van Voorhis, John Butler, Danielle Tisinger, Billie Wahlstrom, Alan Ek, Michael Korth, Brent Larson, Stuart Speedie, Jim Waddell, Bonnie Westra, Briana Clark, Mahmoud Sadrai, Parker Schultz

REGRETS: Deanette Schmidt, Myron Lowe

ABSENT: Stephen Cawley, Greg Laden

OTHERS ATTENDING:

Kris Adelmann, Ann Hill Duin, Bernard Gulachek, Louis Hammond, Simin Hickman, Linda Jorn, Phil Kachelmyer, John H. Miller, Melissa Wagner

I). Mark Sanders called the meeting to order.

II). Members unanimously approved the November 6, 2007 minutes.

III).

Mr. Sanders reported that he had been invited to attend the November 15th Senate Consultative Committee (SCC) meeting to update that committee on topics SCIT is taking up. Once the minutes from this meeting are completed they will be distributed to SCIT members for review. Briefly, Mr. Sanders noted that the SCC:

- Strongly supported the position that SCIT took on the technology fee issue.
- Is interested in having faculty IT support and guidelines established. A subcommittee to explore this issue is being discussed.
- Is very appreciative of the work of SCIT, which Mr. Sanders conveyed to the committee. They expressed their gratitude to SCIT for taking up the technology fee issue, and, during spring semester 2008, for taking up technology and emergency preparedness at the University.

IV).

As a segue into the next agenda item, OIT's video commons effort, Mr. Sanders noted that the SCC also believes that video conferencing should be used more often for not only student instructional purposes but for Senate committee meetings and Senate meetings themselves.

Mr. Sanders asked John Miller to provide the committee with an update on OIT's video commons effort. Mr. Miller began by noting that Ann Hill Duin, associate vice president and deputy CIO in the Office of Information Technology, charged a small group from within OIT (Simin Hickman, Linda Jorn, Melissa Martyr-Wagner and John Miller) in August 2007 with looking at how OIT supports video on campus and what can be done to improve upon these efforts.

Mr. Miller outlined the trends that were uncovered as part of their investigation into video usage on campus:

- Increased need for video storage, archiving and retrieval.
- Desire for on-the-fly and easy conversion to different video formats.
- Need for room-based video conferencing services that accommodate one to several people, support a variety of group activities and are easy to use and accessible.
- Strong demand for centralized support for training, consulting, and assisting faculty in creating content and using video to support active learning.
- Need for more readily available studio space for video production.
- Request for video production services.
- Lack of knowledge by many on campus regarding how advanced networks such as Internet 2 and National Lambda Rail (NLR) can support their work.

Next steps include:

- Hire a video coordinator.
This coordinator would spearhead OIT video projects and be responsible for implementing the short-term recommendations that came out of the working group.
- Continue to obtain feedback from peers and survey and interview students.
- Share information on the OIT video commons effort with the University community at various meetings and councils, e.g., ATAC, SCIT, CUD.
- Review current OIT organizational video support structure and determine the best structure for moving recommendations forward.

At the conclusion of this presentation, clickers were distributed to members who were invited to respond to a series of survey questions having to do with the University's video services. Responses to these questions were shared with the committee.

Questions/comments from members included:

- Is the University considering using a product other than UMConnect, which has quality and connectivity issues? OIT can look into this stated Ann Hill Duin.
- Will Quality of Service (QoS) be an underlying assumption when implementing video services on the network?

QoS and reliable linkages (off-campus) will be critical to the success of the University's video services. Mr. Miller stated that the Internet does not currently support QoS, but Internet 2 does. He added that QoS, a set of software parameters, will give the University the ability to provide different priority to different applications, users, and data flows, and to guarantee a certain level of performance to a data flow.

Dr. Hill-Duin stated that beyond examining what technology should be made available through OIT, how this technology is to be delivered is equally important.

- How does OIT plan to address the connection reliability issue? Mr. Miller stated that OIT plans to address this issue from the ground up.
For example, there are over 900 closets at the University with active electronics, and furnishing each location with uninterruptible power presents a large capital investment for the University. OIT is presently researching best practices for implementation of UPS' for these applications including life cycle maintenance and associated costs.
Presently power represents the largest single service disruption for the University's data connections. Without stabilizing this important basic requirement, it is difficult to address other reliability concerns.
- In terms of video usage, what are the intellectual property implications for faculty who use others video work?

Linda Jorn stated that the Libraries have wonderful copyright resources that guide faculty in this decision-making process - <http://www.lib.umn.edu/copyright/policylib.phtml>

- How does OIT intend to prioritize projects related to its video initiative? Mr. Miller and Dr. Hill-Duin noted that survey and interview results would be used to move forward this initiative. Naturally, other considerations such as cost, infrastructure alignment and partnerships with other departments will need to be factored into the equation.
- Has thought been given to what type of organizational structure should be put in place to assure cross-unit discussions around video support at the University? It was noted that the video coordinator, once hired, would be involved in these discussions. Mr. Sanders suggested inviting this new hire to a future meeting so the committee can share its thoughts on this subject.

For more information concerning this project, members were referred to:

<http://www1.umn.edu/oit/projects/video/index.htm>

Mr. Sanders thanked Mr. Miller and his colleagues for today's update on this project.

IV).

The next item on the agenda noted Mr. Sanders is an Academic and Distributed Computing Services (ADCS) and Networking and Telecommunication Services (NTS) 2.0 update. Ann Hill Duin, associate vice president and deputy CIO in the Office of Information Technology, began by stating that ADCS and NTS staff are using scenario development to evolve the services they offer so that these services are in strategic alignment with other units on campus.

The mission of ADCS and NTS 2.0 is to "serve as a catalyst for innovatively leveraging technology to advance and support extraordinary education, breakthrough research, and dynamic public engagement."

In addition to its video commons effort, OIT is using scenario development to inform its decision-making process in the following areas:

1. Customer education.
2. Mobile/global learning.
3. Enhanced "field" work.

Dr. Hill Duin stated that scenarios are often used to help inform decision-making in situations of high uncertainty.

When used properly, scenario development helps people think more systematically about different circumstances they may encounter in the future and, thus, facilitate making decisions in the present.

In light of time, members were provided a brief synopsis of each of the three initiatives noted above. Their ideas/input for enhancing these services was sought.

To conclude, Dr. Hill Duin noted that OIT looks forward to not only University but also national collaboration in its efforts to leverage technology enhancements at the University.

V). Other business:

a).

Mr. Sanders noted that the SCC is interested in learning more about the work of the Subcommittee on IT Faculty Guidelines.

Mr. Sanders reminded members that the charge to this subcommittee is to put forward a policy that would outline what incoming and existing faculty can expect in terms of IT support.

Also, the

Campus-wide Activities/Research/Expert Database Subcommittee continues to meet to explore and discuss issues associated with the creation of new databases on campus. Examples of issues that are being looked at include but are not limited to database development, security, data access.

Additional information concerning the work of these subcommittees will be sent to members via email.

b). Mr. Sanders asked the committee for nominations for a SCIT chair for next year. He requested that nominations be forwarded to him or Renee Dempsey, Senate staff.

c). Mr. Sanders noted that the committee's next meeting is on February 5, 2008. He wished members an enjoyable, safe and technology-rich holiday season.

VI). Hearing no further business, Mr. Sanders adjourned the meeting.

Renee Dempsey
University Senate