Minutes of Meetings:
January 12, 2001; ME conference room; 10 am

Present: Batson, Boyer, Cossey, Keller, Klein, Sener, Traver, Wolf

Review of last meeting’s minutes

Announcements:

We upgraded our internet connection from 2 to 4 T1 lines in December, and have switched to Verizon as our carrier. Unfortunately, they have had some problems with load balancing which are being resolved.

OCS has announced its Winter term training schedule, available at:
http://www.union.edu/RESOURCES/OCS/SEMINAR/UNION/winter.htm

AAC has formed a subcommittee to address the entire issue of transfer credits, included credits earned by taking distance learning courses from other institutions. Charles Batson is on the committee.

OCS had a dramatically successful upgrade from Datatel Colleague 13 to Colleague 16 in early December. They had blocked out a full nine days for the conversion, but finished in less than six. This lays the groundwork for online advising, as well as many other online transactions. This committee will soon begin helping plan for the roll-out of online advising for all faculty.

OCS sponsored two 2-day training sessions for the new Blackboard 5 online course management system in December. While the system has been purchased to
support GMI's new online Bioethics Masters program, it will be available for all faculty to use. About eight faculty are using it this term in a "beta test" mode.

Work will soon begin in Olin 110 to convert the room to three IVDS (international virtual design studio) rooms. Retractable walls will be installed, as well as computer and storage facilities. The project is funded by the College's Keck grant. One non-engineering project (a collaborative economics project between Union and students from a confederation of colleges in Bombay, India. It is planned that the results of this collaboration will be presented at the Steinmetz Symposium in May.

Doug Klein announced that he is continuing to put commonly used academic and administrative forms online. The latest are the Staples requisition form, the check request form, and the departmental course pre-scheduling form. These and other forms are available from the Advisor's Advisor web site.

Online Faculty Directory. Tom Smith has posted a sample faculty directory page for our evaluation. We have the opportunity to offer recommendations.

Minutes:

1. Online Advising. With the successful conversion to Datatel v.16, the College is ready to begin implementing online advising. In preparation we began to discuss what sorts of access to student records would be desirable. For example, the Division of Engineering study would like to be able to better track its ability to attract and retain students. Prof. Carol Weisse, the pre-health professions advisor has also made it known that she would like to be able to better track her advisees.

The next steps are to assess the capabilities of Datatel's web advising software on the one hand, and faculty, student, and administration needs on the other, working toward an optimal system.

A student who serves on the Union Web Board offered these suggestions:
There are a few things that I would like to ask about the Union web page in general. From my perspective, being a student, there are a few things that I've noticed about other campus web pages. They are equipped with such features as online grade retrieval, scheduling, prescheduling, and so forth. I am personally most interested in getting my grades quickly and efficiently after a particular term, and being able to see with ease all classes I have taken, credits I have accumulated, perhaps my school balance, my valedine, and maybe even my phone bill! Online transcripts. Just for ease ... we have all this wonderful technology and it seems like these features would be a great addition to the web pages.

I guess these things have come up before ... I'm sure I'm not the only one who has thought of them. Just wanted to know if there was a plan to implement these features or if the security hazards were too much!

2. **Central scheduling software**; the Web office has been evaluating new software to manage room scheduling, and this committee should help ensure that the new system best serves the needs of the campus. During the week, a related point was raised. Student Forum would like permission to do mass campus-wide e-mails to alert students to upcoming events. Can this be accomplished with an online calendar?

3. **Acceptable Use.** Dave Cossey distributed a draft of a new campus computing acceptable policy. Our current policies are linked here. Dave has sent the new draft to the college attorney, and we will await his response. We have had to incorporate language internet service provider and our internet line carrier contracts (Genuity and Verizon).

We want to make sure that we can craft an acceptable use policy that also protects academic freedom. After the policy has been approved by the College lawyer and the administration, it will be posted online. Fuat Sener urged that we find a way to make students fully aware of the policy, particularly the prohibition on excessive traffic. Students might be told that the College can and
does monitor excessive traffic.

As soon as the acceptable use guidelines are finalized, the Committee needs to address the issues of a copyright policy, and an intellectual property rights policy. Dave Cossey, Tom McFadden, and Doug Klein have begun collecting information, some of which is linked here.

4. Faculty Computers. Christie Sorum has made available results of a survey on schools' policies regarding notebook computers for faculty. This is becoming an issue at Union, and we need to recommend a policy. This will be a topic for the January 19 meeting.

A related issue was raised by Fuat: how can faculty be offered more options both when ordering a new computer, and for upgrading existing computers. We will also address this question.

Note that next week's meeting will begin at 9:45 in order to accommodate faculty with 10:55 classes.

The meeting adjourned at 11:10.

Next meeting: January 19, 2001  9:45am