Minutes of Meetings:
September 19, 2000
Olin 102, 3:30 pm

Present: Boyer, Cossey, Keller, Klein, McFadden, Sener, Smith, Traver

Review of last meeting's minutes

The meeting was called to order at 3:40.

We welcome two new members: Fuat Sener, Assistant Professor of Economics, Division II representative; and Tom Smith, Union College webmaster.

This will be an organizational meeting for the year at which we will discuss our goals for the year, and review current developments.

College Website - Tom Smith reported on the launch of the newly redesigned Union web site in late August. He will be making available graphics and templates for others to use. Working on a new faculty, staff, student e-mail directories; working on internal front pages for use by faculty, students, staff on campus.

U*STAR - Diane Keller reported that the Union Student Technology Assistant Resource program is undergoing major changes this year. The program has just received a 2-year extension of its funding from AT&T. Shaker Choudhury is the student manager of the program, presiding over a student steering committee, and will be working with Val Kania, OCS's newest staff member. U*STAR has arranged for space in the High Tech Learning Center of Olin, pending resolving access issues.

U*STAR students helped with Resnet installations this
Fall, and will be developing short training sessions to help faculty who want to make technology-intensive assignments.

**Distance Learning** - GMI is in the process of developing courses for its online MA program in Bioethics. OCS has ordered the hardware and software (Blackboard 5) to support this effort. Blackboard is scheduled to be installed and tested this Fall, with training to begin in December. Members of the GMI team will attend a Blackboard conference in November.

This committee will want to take up several issues related to distance learning:
- Develop an Intellectual Property Rights policy for Union.
- Reconsider the College's policy for awarding credit for distance courses taken by our students, based on input from the AAC. See our memo to the AAC from last Spring.

**Web advising** - The Advisor's Advisor web site is up and running. A detailed budget and timetable for a phased implementation of web advising has been given to the Administration.

**OCS activities** - Dave Cossey reported on recent OCS activities:

Wireless networks and other network plans - OCS has installed a pilot wireless network in Steinmetz Hall and the Peschel Computer Center. This term the network will be extended to the Olin Building and the Library.

Reorganization. Greg Roth's responsibilities have been redefined, and focus more on web support. Val Kania has been hired to take over some of Greg's old responsibilities, including Division IV contact person, and will be provide staff oversight of the U*STAR program. OCS has carved up the machine room to create new office space.

Greg Roth and Bob Babb as the network specialists, report directly to Dave Cossey; Kesheng Yu and Val Kania will join Diane Keller's Academic group.
Humanities 008 was converted over the summer into a new electronic classroom, and Science and Engineering room N210 opened as a computer classroom (15 computers). The Classnet system was moved out of Olin 110 in anticipation of new IVDS remote collaboration workrooms, and into Olin 106.

Based on OCS's survey, about 90% of Union students now own their own computer, and 49% of students who own a computer own a notebook computer. This is a substantial increase in notebook ownership, up from only about 15% last year.

5 new houses on Seward/Huron on campus network, and the Kenney Community Center will be on Time-Warner cable; there will be seven new computers there. Opens September 26th.

OCS is negotiating contracts for increasing the bandwidth of our Internet connection. This should be concluded soon, pending ironing out differences of opinion in the contract wording.

OCS will be replacing idol, probably over Thanksgiving break.

Over 800 current students have already registered for Resnet (network access from dorm rooms), including 80% of freshmen.

OCS is in the process of installing a firewall for increased security. It will take some time to assess exactly what effects that installation will have on our online activities.


**Budget procedure changes** - The College has adopted new object codes to be used in the purchase of any information technology-related items. Please be sure these numbers are used consistently to aid in tracking our IT expenses. Doug Klein handed out copies of the new budget codes, to be distributed to Department Secretaries.
The codes to be used for IT purchases are as follows:

8417  Software purchases and licenses
8418  Computer and printer supplies
8551  Computer training & conference expense
8553  Computer memberships and subscriptions
8567  Computer repairs
8569  Computer equipment & software maintenance contracts
8655  Computer and technology equipment (> $1,000)
8685  Computer and technology equipment (< $1,000)

In addition, the College is developing new capital budget process. It is essential that all budget requests, even those from Departments and offices which do not now have capital budgets, include anticipated technology needs. This does not guarantee that all such needs will be met, but we need to develop a central clearing-house to consider these requests. Do not simply assume that OCS will provide needed equipment without asking for it.

John Boyer recommended that the Committee re-assert its historic role in establishing priorities for the expenditure of computer replacement funds.

Dave Cossey reminded the group that even as the computer replacement budget grows, the demands grow also. For example, the 100+ computers in the Olin Building will need to be replaced by the end of this year.

Doug Klein noted that the benefits of lower desktop computer prices will disappear when and if faculty begin to want notebook computers, which are both more expensive and shorter-lived.

**Current and future construction** - In addition to the IT component of construction projects such as Admissions, Becker Hall, and the Seward-West initiative, there are several academic issues needing attention:

- IVDS rooms - as noted in our last meeting, the Keck grant gives money to develop up to 10 more IVDS rooms, but we need to establish a program for those rooms.

- Electronic Classrooms - Demand for electronic
classrooms outstrips now supply. We need to develop a realistic program to convert all remaining classrooms on campus.

**Campus computing guidelines** - Chuck Assini, the College's legal council, has informed us that aspects of our campus computing guidelines, web policy, and Resnet policies need to be overhauled. In addition, the College needs to have a Copyright policy that reflects the digital age. Tom Smith, Tom McFadden, and Dave Cossey are working with Chuck on these documents, which will be presented to this committee for review before they are finalized.

**Technical Literacy** - The College remains committed to establishing some technical literacy standards for students. A [draft proposal](http://www.nercomp.org/nercomp/annual2000/taylor/) was released by the Technical Literacy Working Group last spring. The group will continue to meet this year to finalize a plan.

**Agenda for next meeting:**

Finish list of announcements

Overview of assessment software being piloted by Division IV (Traver will present)

Establish priorities

Discuss how Union College can and should respond to the threats and opportunities posed to Union College, and liberal arts colleges in general, by the internet and distance education. This relates to the Mark Taylor article referred to by President Hull. The article can be viewed (using Acrobat Reader) at: [http://www.educause.edu/pub/er/erm00/articles004/taylor.pdf](http://www.educause.edu/pub/er/erm00/articles004/taylor.pdf) The same content was given as a talk at the Northeast Regional Computing Program at its April, 2000 conference. The remarks (as regular web pages) are at: [http://www.nercomp.org/nercomp/annual2000/taylor/](http://www.nercomp.org/nercomp/annual2000/taylor/)

Doug Klein also handed out "The Practical Path, Too, Can Be High-Minded," by Richard M. Freeland, President of Northeastern University. This article appeared in the Chronicle of Higher Education, September 15, 2000, and
addresses some of the same issues as the Taylor article.

The meeting adjourned at 4:45 pm.

Next meeting:  Tuesday, September 26, 2000, 3:30 pm, Olin 102.