Academic Computing Steering Committee

Minutes of Meetings:
October 17, 2002

Present: Bauman, Cossey, Davis, Keller, Klein, Lesh, Smith

Review of last meeting’s minutes.

ANNOUNCEMENT: Friday, October 11, Dr. Susan Smith from the Biology Department at RPI will give a lunch talk on Bioinformatics: Life Sciences meets Information Technology”. Lunch at noon; talk at 12:30. Cosponsored by Biology and the Center for Converging Technologies.

1. Web Office. Tom Smith has prepared some information about activities in the Web office:
   http://www.union.edu/Resources/Technology/Web/Update/

   Among the highlights:

   - Overhaul of online Chronicle and news sites. Web-first edition of the Chronicle, but needed a print-friendly version also. Paper copies are provided by request. The "easy way" of making a print-friendly version was using cascading style sheets. There are different style sheets for web vs. print use. People are notified by e-mail. There have been only a few requests for paper copies.
   - Course catalogs are now in a database, back to 1998.
   - www.union.edu/departmentname should go directly to each department.
   - Dave and Tom announced that we will soon
support a small web server running Windows 2000 and supporting microsoft extensions. The college will have to establish some policies regarding this server, as its capacity is not large.

2. Library. Tom McFadden will update us on Schaffer Library IT activities soon, including a report on the Web Archiving project, [http://minerva.union.edu/kleind/wwwarchive/](http://minerva.union.edu/kleind/wwwarchive/) and from the ECURE conference [http://www.asu.edu/it/events/ecure/](http://www.asu.edu/it/events/ecure/). He will also give us an update on planning for the new library automation system.

3. EDUCAUSE. ITS staff have recently returned from the EDUCAUSE conference in Atlanta. Dave and Diane gave a powerpoint presentation on Educause, right down to the beefcake. You can re-live parts of the conference at: [http://www.educause.edu/conference/e2002/index.asp](http://www.educause.edu/conference/e2002/index.asp)


The presentation prompted a discussion of the proper role of technology in the classroom, and the proper role of us and ITS in promoting the use of technology. Kathryn raised the concern that faculty not be encouraged to use technology for its own sake. Doug repeated Neil Postman's phrase, "For what problem is this the solution?" It was this recorder's sense that there was consensus that technology should be used only where it contributes something that we could not otherwise do, and that faculty (and students) sometimes end up employing technology where it is not necessary. There was not consensus, however, on where technology did in fact add to teaching and learning. After further discussion, this committee may recommend to Kimmo Rosenthal that a topic related to "appropriate use of technology in teaching and learning" might be suggested for his "curricular conversations" series.

This subject is a cousin of the topic of what constitutes information, or technical literacy for
students. This group had a subcommittee several years ago addressing this issue, and it may be time to revisit that issue. The previous group's draft report and minutes are online.

4. e-Portfolios. The College has agreed to continue to participate in the Connecticut College ePortfolio project. We will be signing an agreement for the pilot phase within the next week or two. Two senior CS students, Grant Lanterman and Peter Shoemaker, are also working on a student advising and scheduling system which we may pilot along side the CC system.

Next meeting: October 24, 2002, 2:30 PM, Stmz. 106