Liaison Committee on Academic Computing and Technology  
Meeting Minutes  
September 22, 2009

Meeting was called to order at 12:57 pm

In attendance:

- D. Cossey, M. Parlett-Sweeney, F. Davis, S. Sargent, R. Koopmann, A. Ramasubramanian, K. George, A. Major ’12, T. Shaikh ’11

Absent:

- T. McFadden

1) Introductions of new members: Ashok Ramasubramanian (Assistant Professor, Mechanical Engineering; Division 4 representative) and Ken George (Web Director, Office of Communications)

2) Faculty members of the committee will select the new co-chair (outside the committee meeting). Mary confirmed with each faculty member the date of their term expiration; there is some confusion as to whether or not Prof. Koopmann is in the last year of her first term or the first year of her second term. Mary will confirm the term for Prof. Koopmann.

3) Minutes from 6/2/09 were reviewed and approved.

4) Dave Cossey gave the committee an update on the ongoing network problems. The problems have been ongoing for more than two weeks (since the start of the term). Cisco (the network vendor) has been actively involved in the troubleshooting process; they have replaced equipment that they felt was defective as well as re-routing network traffic. They feel that the issues have been narrowed down to 2-3 buildings and the troubleshooting is continuing. Symptoms of the problem include slowness and/or dropping of network connections especially any persistent connection to servers; administrative/enterprise applications have been severely impacted.

Dave informed the committee that, once the problems have been resolved, a consultant would be brought in to do an analysis and possible redesign of the network. In addition, the campus backbone would be upgraded.

5) Update on IT projects completed during the summer:

a) Postini spam filtering – Mary informed the committee that the service was implemented in early June 2009 as planned. There has been very little feedback about the service; the majority of the questions received by ITS have been related to frequency of the notification message.

b) Email archiving – Email archiving was turned on August 25. The system will archive message for one (1) year. The archive will be accessed only for legal reasons; at the moment, Dave Cossey (Chief Information Officer) is the only person authorized to access the archive. Dave gave a brief description of “e-discovery” for the new members of the committee. Questions about the email archiving system followed.
(1) Ashok asked whether we are required by law to do email archiving. Dave explained that once an institution believes that there is a possibility of a lawsuit, they are required to do due diligence and retain the email. An email archiving system makes that process easier and less time consuming.

(2) Ashok asked if the archiving system could be turned on and off as needed. Dave stated that the archiving system is pre-emptive and as such cannot be turned on and off.

(3) Felmon wondered if there was a PR problem for ITS with how the message from Dean McCarty went out to the community. He has been included on several email messages to Dave Cossey asking questions about the archiving system. Dave explained that he and Chuck Assini (the College’s attorney) have been working on an FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions) about the archiving system. Once it is completed it will be posted on the ITS website.

(4) Ashok asked about the costs of the system especially in light of the current economic situation. Dave stated that the approximate cost of the archiving system is $12/mailbox/year; the spam filtering system is approximately $4/mailbox/year.

c) Exchange 2007 Evaluation – The faculty members who participated in the Exchange 2007 evaluation met in late June to discuss the features of Exchange 2007. The general consensus was that the new features were very beneficial; however, the faculty felt that the web interface for Macintosh users is still lacking. The new version of Exchange (Exchange 2010) is expected to be released in late 2009 or the first half of 2010. The faculty in the evaluation felt that it would make sense to hold off on upgrading the faculty until Exchange 2010 had been implemented.

As a follow up to the Exchange 2007 question, Steve asked what ITS’ policy on Snow Leopard (the newest version of the Macintosh operating system) will be. ITS will provide upgrades to Snow Leopard for the faculty who request it. Currently there are still some incompatibilities with certain applications in use on campus; once those are resolved, there will be an announcement to faculty about Snow Leopard.

6) Listserv Policy – The committee reviewed the current draft of the Listserv policy which incorporated the suggestions made in meetings during the Spring 2009 term. Felmon asked for a clarification on why it is required that users subscribe to listservs using their Union College email address. Dave explained that this prevented users from being anonymous on the list. After that clarification, the committee approved the policy.

7) Union’s Website Reboot – Ken George explained the College’s website “reboot” project to the committee; the project can be followed on the Reboot blog at http://unionreboot.org. The firm of mStoner has been hired to do the redesign with a launch of the new site hopefully in January 2010. Part of the College’s digital strategy will be a significant use of social media such as Twitter, Facebook, Flickr, etc. Steve asked how the website redesign was going to impact faculty and other users of the CMS; did this mean that people who just had to learn how to use the CMS were going to have to learn another new system? Ken discussed the fact that the new website would still be utilizing the CMS and that content currently in the site would not (in general) be affected by the redesign; it would simply be reformatted to fit into the new site.
8) Outstanding Agenda items – The status of outsourcing student email was quickly discussed before the meeting was adjourned. It will be discussed more fully at the next meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:57 pm

Reminder: LCACT website: http://minerva.union.edu/accsc