

University Council for Academic Technologies (UCAT)
March 9, 2011, 3:00-4:00 pm
ITC, Room 226
Meeting MINUTES

Members:

Steve Corcelli—Science, Alan DeFrees—Architecture, Mike Hildreth – Science, Ted Mandell – A&L, Kevin Mueller – Grad Student

Members Absent:

Lance Askildson—A & L, Ed Bensman – Engineering, Casey Cockerham – UG Student, Mark Dehmlow – Library, Rob Easley – MCoB, Ed Edmonds – Law School, Patrick Flynn – Engineering, Michael Kirsch – Law School, Bill McDonald – MCoB

Ex-Officio Members:

Kevin Barry – Kaneb Ctr., Paul Brenner—CRC, Ron Kraemer—Chair & CIO, Jarek Nabrzyski—CRC, Harold Pace—Registrar, Carole Pilkinton—Library, Peggy Rowland—OIT, Mark Stadtherr – Engineering, Paul Turner—OIT

1. Welcome and approval of the minutes for the January 21, 2011 meeting:

Mr. Kraemer welcomed members and invited comments and corrections to the minutes of the January 21, 2011 meeting. The minutes stand as approved.

2. Committee Reports

Course Management Systems, Rob Easley, Chair

Paul Turner provided an update on the committee. Work continues with OIT to arrange a contract with Sakai to conduct a pilot project. This project would enable ND to make a full technical and functional evaluation of Sakai, in anticipation of a final decision on a CMS. Some contract questions remain; the subcommittee will produce a decision at its next meeting in early April. When UCAT next meets, there should be a firm plan of action. Mr. Kraemer noted that the pilot project will be hosted on the cloud rather than an internal hosting, which is a difference from the last process by which a CMS was chosen.

By Fall, 2011, the pilot should be up and running. 10-12 faculty and up to 20 courses will be included in the pilot. All colleges will be included in the pool for invitations; the committee will solicit specific types of courses, presenting particular problems for a CMS, such as large courses, cross listed courses, and multiple TAs in a large course. There are still two years left on the Blackboard contract, which runs through June, 2013. The pilot will run for a year, and there will be a year to ramp up and close down the new and old CMS.

The pilot will give ND an opportunity to see how this CMS works; some peer institutions are already using it, so ND is not 'blazing a new trail.' Among other elements, the

committee is focused on moving this process quickly. Turner noted that all appropriate due diligence is being done; the challenge is to get the right contract.

Learning Environment , Kevin Barry, Chair

Mr. Barry said the committee hasn't met since the last UCAT meeting; however, the subcommittee handling the renovation of the DeBartolo Hall lounge has met. The renovation is moving forward; furniture and carpeting has been selected, electricity has been installed, and the next step is final word on funding. Mr. Kraemer said that OIT has been given approval for funding for the next year; if the funds are needed now, he can move that forward. There was a brief discussion about moving a wall now rather than later, when the computer lab is renovated; contact will be made with Mr. Kraemer for final approval.

Software Acquisition and Distribution, Paul Brenner, Chair

Paul Brenner said he has met multiple times with Peggy Rowland since taking the chair of the subcommittee, although the committee has not met since the last UCAT meeting. Two issues are of immediate concern: 1. Getting expenditures and the budget in line with current budget and comparing budget allocations to peer institutions 2. Getting the most value out of each dollar spent. Brenner reviewed the numbers briefly. 3.5 million dollars is spent annually on software licenses. Of that, \$900,000 goes to 'academic and academic/administrative software.' \$400,000 is spent with Microsoft, and a large chunk is spent on Matlab. Thus, of funds currently spent, only a small increment is available for discretionary spending. The committee is currently scoping these figures. The remaining 2.5 million dollars is being spent on administrative applications (Banner) and licensing for core curriculum software. Brenner stressed that it is important to be careful and sensitive with numbers which are relatively rough. On the other hand, he supports a policy of transparency.

In comparison with peers, the Gartner report establishes as rough numbers that peer institutions spend 18% of budget on software; ND spends 14%, plus some additional spending on software related to projects that is in the process of being categorized.

Brenner also spoke about the software request process. There have been no real revisions to the process since 2007. It is a challenge both to acquire new software and maintain old in the climate of a fixed budget; there is no new money to fund new requests. This means that some software must be eliminated in order to make way for new purchases, in any given year. The current software request process is being reviewed and updated and will be presented to the full UCAT. The number one software use is Microsoft, which fits with expenditure figures. Brenner said it would be wonderful to be able to 'ok' all new requests, but that is impossible. An important goal, then, is to keep communication with faculty open, so that procedures are clear.

Brenner reported that there has been one request since he took over the committee, for Origin Lab. Research is in process on this request as well as the pending request for JPM,

from Engineering.

Mr. Kraemer noted that unless there are vendor confidentiality requirements, OIT is willing to share data on expenditures. 1.7 million dollars are tied up in supporting Microsoft, Sungard and Oracle (the latter are mainly 'back office' items); thus, half the budget goes to these three companies. Two occurrences have caused this. There are yearly cost escalations connected with maintenance, and the methods of licensing of software are in flux. There is no recourse to these escalations. On the huge software contracts, one option is to renegotiate, using whatever leverage is available.

In response to a question, Mr. Brenner said he could not yet speak about the expenditures for software at the college and departmental levels. This kind of data will be solicited in the next survey. It has been suggested that data be solicited from the department chairs as a way of keeping priorities clearer.

Mr. Kraemer noted that the 3.5 million dollars spent on software only covers OIT expenditures. It does not include pro-cards, for instance. Prof. Stadtherr agreed that there is a lot of spending by departments, colleges and individuals. Members discussed whether there is sufficient capture of the data on software purchases throughout the institution. Peggy Rowland said the committee has a much better handle on the data than previously; there has been a lot of diligence in tracking down purchases at the different purchase points. Where things are still weak are the processes of making and fulfilling requests.

Brenner reported that procurement continues to work diligently at improving speed; the caution from the general counsel's office will prevent, for the time being, any 'blank checks' about purchases. Mr. Kraemer added that the relationship between OIT and the general counsel's office is strong; the office understands that speed is a campus issue, and the office is working hard to meet OIT needs. He noted that UCAT is a good contact on this topic; there are numerous voices to support the statement of need.

CRC Faculty Advisory Committee, Mark Stadtherr, chair

Prof. Stadtherr announced a set of ten goals recently formulated by the committee:

1. To help ND be among the world's leaders in conducting, developing, and evolving visionary, multidisciplinary research through the application of cyber infrastructure.
2. To develop and strengthen research partnerships with all academic departments, institutes and centers at ND.
3. To increase external funding for research.
4. To develop and strengthen research partnerships with external organizations.
5. To increase the number of quality publications in top journals and conferences.
6. To provide reliable advanced computational architectures, software solutions and multidisciplinary collaborative lab spaces to invigorate computational-based research on the ND campus.
7. To develop a customer service strategy, improving support for current CRC

- customers while attracting new customers.
8. To increase awareness and understanding of CRC services on ND campus.
 9. To promote and cultivate a computational science culture and community on campus.
 10. To facilitate technology transfer and accelerate innovation through partnership with Innovation Park and other commercial partners.

The committee was in strong agreement about the goals. Mr. Nabrzyski reported that the 2011 objectives were also discussed, with faculty contributing. He noted that applications are still being taken for the REU Site in Computational Science; this is targeted to undergraduates, and the deadline is March 18, 2011.

Prof. Stadtherr reported that the CRC is sponsoring an award for graduate students, administered through the Graduate School. The deadline is March 25, 2011, and three awards of \$1000.00 will be given for computational research projects.

3. Student Updates

Kevin Mueller, graduate student representative

Graduate students are requesting that the printer which was removed when the Galvin Building library was closed be returned to service for the graduate students, as promised. Peggy Rowland offered to investigate this issue.

Post meeting report: Graduate Cluster printer moved to the 10th floor Hesburgh Library. Implementing a space allocation request from the Library, the Graduate Student Union (GSU) cluster formerly located on the 11th floor was relocated to the 10th floor in early December. The printer was relocated with the cluster to the 10th floor GSU study space. The printer is operational and recorded 7,166 pages printed in February.

Graduate students are inquiring about the software programs provided free for use by graduate students. Every department has its own popular software; would it be possible to designate these as the allocated software? Matlab is an example of an allotted software program which is widely needed. There are many allotted to graduate students which they will never make use of, while some they need are unavailable except if paid for by the student. For instance, the Stata software program, at \$110.00, is expensive for graduate students, many of whom need it for teaching and research; it is not on the allotted list.

Mr. Kraemer said that use rate relative to license cost would need to be assessed to make such a determination. Ms. Rowland also noted that the use of private machines complicates the assessment. She added that very good deals, (SPSS and MAPLE) have been negotiated for student-owned machines. Mr. Mueller noted that most of the roadblocks are encountered in the social sciences. Mr. Brenner added that his committee is aware of this problem and working to control licensure by departments. He said that he will continue to assess where to scale back and/or grow licenses. It is helpful to hear from users, as that can highlight problem areas.

Post meeting update: Stata software program licensing research is in process.

Prof. Stadtherr said that the ability to install these kinds of programs on student-owned machines is a 'gigantic step forward.' Mr. Kraemer reported that many research universities are closing computer labs on campus as students bring more and more powerful machines to campus. This will impact licensing, which may improve pricing.

Casey Cockerham, undergraduate student representative

Ms. Rowland reported that the undergraduates are pleased with the new university calendar website for students, which they publicized throughout the campus. In addition, the undergraduates continue to work with Paul Turner to develop a mobile tracking system for the Transpo bus.

4. Printing quotas for students

Ms. Rowland reported that installation of 36 printers in the residence halls/clusters was successful and reports from students are positive (see January 21, 2011 meeting minutes). Printing costs continue to climb here at ND and at institutions across the country. Student printing in Fall, 2010 showed an increase of 50% from Spring, 2010. This increase in print volume appears to be largely related to a move away from bound course packets being sold in the bookstore, and a move instead to course material being offered 'free' to students on Concourse or other electronic reserve systems.

One element of printing on campus is the printing quotas provided to each student at the beginning of each academic year. Undergraduates are allocated 1000 'clicks' of black and white printing; graduate students are allocated 3000 'clicks.' The print management system presents this quota to the students in monetary terms. Currently each 'click' is valued arbitrarily at 10 cents, making the undergraduate print quota equivalent to \$100.00. This print quota system was introduced to reduce waste and has never been run on a cost recovery basis. The actual cost to the University for a black and white 'click' is approximately 3 cents.

Ms. Rowland that currently when students run low on print quota, they request a faculty member initiate the process of increasing the print quota. Typically, a faculty member will do so for an entire class, as this is more efficient. The process includes compiling a spreadsheet with students' netids. From August 2010 through March 4, 2011, the Learning Spaces group processed over 250 faculty print quota requests. Over 5,000 quota increases were made to more than 3,800 student netids. The practice of giving away additional quota if a faculty member requests it on behalf of students has effectively invalidated the print quota that was put in place about ten years ago.

The OIT has honored faculty requests for additional quota to their students on an at-need basis. The process for faculty to make this request is a nuisance for faculty. And the process for granting quota for each faculty request has created a significant amount of

overhead for the Learning Spaces group. The net result is that the process has increased 'busy work' without adding value.

The proposed change is to raise the number of 'clicks' for each student category; undergraduate 'clicks' would increase to 1,500 and graduate 'clicks' would increase to 3,500. This will reduce overhead for both the faculty who request quota increases on behalf of their students and for the OIT staff who process the increases. Ms. Rowland noted that in February 2011 there were 1.6 million 'clicks' in all facilities on campus; in February 2010, the figure was 900,000 'clicks.'

Along with this proposed change, OIT also proposes to reset the value associated with a black and white 'click' to 3 cents, from the arbitrarily assigned 10 cents. This will result in the students' print quota appearing as a value of \$45.00 for 1,500 'clicks' as opposed to the \$100.00 quota for 1,000 'clicks' previously. However, students receive information on their print quota exclusively as a dollar amount. Therefore an intensive communication campaign will be needed to alert students to the *positive* change they will be experiencing. The quota will increase, but the value will appear to be lower. Ms. Rowland stressed that no money ever changes hands on this transaction; the university awards the printing quota, absorbs the cost, and provides the service. The proposed changes will lower overhead for Learning Spaces and also lead to more accurate record keeping. The results for students will be an increase in print quota, and faculty will not need to perform the unnecessary step of filing a quota increase request. Should a student exceed the new print quota, that student will purchase additional quota, as had been the practice in the past, before the print quota increase process became so well known.

Members discussed whether it would be possible to eliminate the dollar amount notification to students as the means of alerting them to the level of their print quota. It was suggested that the data be switched to number of 'clicks' remaining.

Post meeting update: According to the Pharos system administrators, it is not possible to represent the print quota as "click" counts instead of the dollar amount. We will begin a communication plan using student input emphasizing that quota **increases** of 500 clicks for both graduate and undergraduate students reflects a price **decrease** from 10 cents/page to 3 cents/page; a \$45 quota instead of \$100 at the beginning of the Fall semester.

5. Survey on UCAT issues to address

The survey has been closed; 17 respondents provided data, and the top issues indicated are as follows:

1. Wireless infrastructure (cell/wireless service)

2. Easier access to open source solutions
3. Improve/increase file storage/backup
4. Next-generation LMS
5. Communications improvements (OIT to UCAT and UCAT to campus)
6. Teaching and learning resources and support
7. Working with faculty to set academic support priorities
8. Cloud services (specifically Google apps)
9. Mobile technologies support and service

Mr. Kraemer will provide further details at the next meeting. Overall, OIT is well on the way to improving many of these issues. He spoke briefly about some of the underlying issues connected with the top 3 topics. On the first, he noted that all three of the companies which provide wireless service to campus are making substantial investments to improve service and coverage on campus. The distributed network is the medium for improvement. The next challenge here is identifying what the cellular world looks like relative to the normal wireless structure. In Summer, 2011, a large number of students will be hired to create a cellular signal map of the campus, which should provide a great deal of useful data. It is Mr. Kraemer's goal that this issue will soon be eliminated from the list.

Mr. Kraemer said that the question of easier access to open source solutions is being addressed through the general counsel's office. The problem of improving and/or increasing file storage and backup should be a solvable problem, although the solution is not yet available. The right people have been brought together to tackle this. Paul Turner noted that many users make use of external drop boxes for collaborative storage which are notoriously unsecured. Mr. Kraemer agreed that there needs to be both an internal ND solution created, as well as access to an external system. He is investigating Dropbox, a federated resource, which has extensive tools. Currently, users from every unit of campus—faculty, administrators and students—are using drop boxes on the cloud, which are too likely to lead to compromised materials. He anticipates discussing the strategy with UCAT and then developing some focus groups to test ideas.

Kevin Barry remarked that the occurrence of collaboration with colleagues not on the physical campus has increased to such an extent that it is mandatory that a solution be created so that work does not grind to a halt over this issue. Mr. Kraemer also noted that he hopes to draw on the skills of users to create a compelling argument to convince decision makers that this is a vital and necessary part of contemporary research.

Mr. Nabrzyski said the CRC receives a lot of Dropbox requests which cannot be processed quickly. This is a serious problem at CRC, where many researchers, with huge projects, have a

need to share data with others. He emphasized that beyond a discussion of policy and strategy, there is a serious need to find the resources to create a campus solution—on the order of \$50,000 to \$80,000. Mr. Kraemer noted that when UCAT identifies the priority, it is his job to locate the resources to address that priority.

Mr. Kraemer named the action item: solicit a group, ask for volunteers, and begin addressing this issue immediately.

Further discussion of the top UCAT issues will be held at the next meeting

6. IT Guidance/Advisory councils

Mr. Kraemer reported on the ongoing conversations with the Administrative Guidance Councils (he will provide a full presentation on this topic at an upcoming meeting). The councils are assisting OIT in identifying and addressing the demand for IT services and capabilities in three main domains: teaching and learning, research and scholarship, university operations and services. The Guidance Council is composed primarily of advisors outside of OIT. The council is looking critically at structures, and at the business end of OIT.

One question is how to form groups that more formally strategize priorities, which could then assist with the process of communications. He referred members to the OIT website for a document mapping processes. In answer to a question, Mr. Kraemer reported that he is the chair of the councils and extends invitations to prospective attendees, who represent a senior level of advisors.

7. Email

Mr. Kraemer reported that the email infrastructure is a problem that needed immediate attention. The plan is to rebuild the infrastructure. To do this, two external entities will be brought in to assist in identifying the deep problems. There is ‘something insidious’ occurring, which requires a deep analysis of the pieces of the system. It is currently stabilized, through the addition of some strategic elements. The recommendations of the reviewers will be available at the next UCAT meeting.

As time had expired, the meeting was adjourned.

The next meeting will be May 18, 9:30-10:30 am., Room 126, ITC.