



UNIVERSITY COUNCIL ON TECHNOLOGY

Friday, September 9, 2011

2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

316 Kent Student Center

Attendees: Paul Albert (Educational Technology), Ken Burhanna (University Libraries), Marcy Caplin (College of Nursing), J. P. Cooney (Graduate Studies), Joe Corall (College of Public Health), Fashaad Crawford (Diversity, Equity and Inclusion), John Crawford (College of Arts), Kele Ding (College of EHHS), Paul Farrell (Faculty Senate), Jonathan Fleming (College of Architecture and Environmental Design), John Graham (College of Technology), Deb Huntsman (Continuing & Distance Education), Koon-Hwee Kan (School of Art), Jan Kover (Regional Campuses), Bob Logan (Regional Campuses), Jason Piatt (College of EHHS), Sarah Rilling (English), Arden Ruttan (Chair), Wanda Thomas (Regional Campuses), Mary Ann Stephens (Graduate Studies), Rose Tran (Undergraduate Studies/Research Graduate Programs),

- I. Welcome and Call to Order – Chair Ruttan called the meeting to order at 2:06 p.m.
- II. Minutes – Draft minutes from May 6, 2011, were distributed. Approving the minutes was postponed until the next meeting. Future draft minutes will be posted to the UCT website two weeks before the next meeting date.
- III. Meeting Schedule for 2011-2012 – The proposed meeting schedule on the UCT website was projected for discussion and approval. Meetings are typically scheduled the first Friday of each month. Today's meeting falls on the second Friday of the month due to Labor Day. The proposed meeting dates are October 7, November 4, December 2, January 6, February 3, March 2, April 6, and May 11 with no dates occurring during exam weeks.

The January 6 meeting date may be problematic due to holiday schedules and the start of the spring semester. One member expressed support for canceling the January 6 meeting now.

A consensus on the proposed schedule was acknowledged by Chair Ruttan.

- IV. Informational Items – The UCT website will serve as a focal point for the committee with minutes, priorities, and feedback from several levels. Depending on the page, there may be subgroups providing feedback. If you see something to add, please let Chair Ruttan know. The desire is to have the web pages as informative as possible.

Before reviewing the posted contents with the committee, Vice Chair Tran advised that the website is still actively under construction so it is not complete. The landing page displays information on the mission and membership. We are actively working on the design for our logo. The left hand navigation bar includes historic information; membership information, schedule, agendas, and minutes; and action groups. There are also links to the Information Services page and the UCT bylaws. The UCT historic information page includes hyperlinks to archived data for your review. The membership information page displays the current membership information and is being updated by Rose's students. If you see anything that needs updated, let Rose know. The schedule, agendas and minutes page will be redesigned. The action groups will have their own branch out to what they are working on. We can add interactive items, such as a FAQ page, feedback, answers to posed questions, etc. These pages represent

a foundation for us to build on to create a very functional and useful site to enhance our abilities beyond the eight meetings we have.

Paul Albert inquired if the UCT mission was the same as the bylaws. Paul Farrell responded that we have a charge, but he does not think we have a mission statement. If there is one, it should be on our old website. Chair Ruttan noted that the bylaws are a little too verbose for that page. The committee can decide if we want a mission statement posted to our landing page.

Chair Ruttan added that the action groups will consist of interested faculty and associated groups from IS that can decide on related issues. Two action groups were chosen to put on the pages for discussion, web page which is very broad and may need narrowed and search engine design. There were discussions on the search engine design, and some dramatic changes were made, but we have not seen them. The search engine has to be tuned for the University's interest. The action groups should focus on places to change or improve the behavior of something related to technology like distance learning. Concerns were also raised that UCT meetings were focused too much on faculty discussions and should look at more general issues. An action group for administrative and staff issues could address that. It was recommended adding a course management member in addition to IS members on the groups.

V. Approve UCT Priorities for 2011-2012 – Chair Ruttan compiled priorities remaining from last year and added some new ones for discussion.

- Funding of Technology under RCM – This priority has problems associated with it. UCT's charge limits involvement to discussions on how those funds are added. Decisions are made and priorities are set at a higher level, and those individuals making the decisions are not on this committee. Absent an understanding of this funding, what is covered and what is not, the UCT does not have a basis for making recommendations.

Paul Albert noted that he can speak to what IS spends funds on and how much is spent on various applications but not on how funding is set. He can discuss FASBAC presentations and what was funded through IS, but not on areas outside of IS. He referred members to the strategic plan and maps on the President's web page as a resource for determining where we are headed and what is considered important. Chair Ruttan commented he was unaware of these pages and will review them, but he inquired as to what level is it UCT's responsibility to wade through pages, make notes, and ask departments for clarifications?

Paul Albert recommended that "under RCM" be struck from the priority description. This recommendation was accepted, and the priority item was approved.

- Understanding how security choices are being made and increasing constituent information and input into decisions – Sometimes security measures mandated for all faculty members seem like an uninformed decision resulting in wasted time for many, such as encrypting hard disks. Is there a way we can get security choices discussed in this meeting before decisions are made?

Paul Albert recommended bringing Brendan Walsh in to discuss how they are done and what they do. Further discussions were held regarding the need for certain levels of security for some departments and whether those departments should be able to make decisions on their security. Committee members were reminded that this issue involves equipment which is state property. It was noted that because of this fact, some members of faculty do not use University computers. Members were cautioned that everyone has potential security risks. Concerns were raised that this security measure interrupts performance for people conducting research.

- Creating mechanisms for improving two-way communication, including construction of mechanisms for faculty/staff feedback – The UCT web page is expected to address this priority. We will seek feedback from committee members on feedback we should obtain from the larger community.
- Search Engine Design – Some members reported experiencing better results just going to Google. Issues regarding search engine design were discussed. Denise Bedford's name was recommended as a good resource for this. Paul Albert indicated that Sameer Jaleel who reports to Coleen Santee knows the search engine, but he is not the one making the decisions. It would probably be more important to invite UCM which is under Iris Harvey for discussions on advancing this priority.
- Survey Software – Paul Albert reported that Qualtrics was purchased. We have to get the single sign on set up, and then we can review it.
- Technical Support for Research Related Software – This item moved from University Libraries to Educational Technology. Paul Albert stated that Tina Ughrin with University Libraries is still working on how to use the software, the research design, etc. Paul will be handling purchasing, loading, and distribution to staff. Tina was working on the analytical aspect, and the distribution aspect started consuming her time and was not where her background lies. Chair Ruttan suggested this priority may be an appropriate item for an action group.
- Expanding UCT Membership – This priority was discussed last year. We went through the bylaws and updated them. We need representatives from many areas on campus, and this year, we have a better mailing list. Chair Ruttan suggested leaving expanding membership on the priority list in order to identify anyone who may be missing and anyone who needs help with technology.
- Planning for integrating voice, video, e-mail – Chair Ruttan added this as a priority item after Ed Mahon discussed with him that there may be people with considerable resistance to this initiative. Paul Albert reported that unified communications is an active project which Jason Wearley is in charge of.
- Planning for new teaching modalities – Chair Ruttan feels synchronous teaching support in the university is problematic at best. There is a need for dialog, discussions, and thinking. We need more synchronous technologies such as writing on a blackboard and crossing it out. We as a committee should be thinking about these kind of things. Paul Albert noted that we did have a synchronous subcommittee, and they recommended Wimba. Wimba has been purchased and installed, and we will have training. Paul Albert noted there will be training for Academic Federated Service support people, and they should be able to help train the faculty in their support area. Wimba is relatively new, and funding is not sufficient to support staff in all buildings at all times. Support is needed beyond the two weeks before classes begin.
- Planning of next generation technology and software – There are many people to consult with on this priority, and an action group is the only way known to address it. It is unknown what goes on in Educational Technology and how they plan for it.

Deb Huntsmen announced that they will be launching a program to address online pedagogy in October. This would be the avenue for feedback. They will have forums and chats and a whole array of online training. One challenge in the past has been that we have had no budget for this, and we now have an online fee to support it. Val Kelly is heading up the initiative, and UCT should bring her in to talk to this group.

Additional concerns were expressed that training programs often go from the obvious to highly detailed and miss the middle road where they cover what to do and how to do it. Deb Huntsman advised that they have added staff members, a designer as well as an educational technologist to help faculty with problems with software and the associated technology.

Chair Ruttan voiced support for distance education as an action group with an associated group of IS staff.

VI. Discussion on improving effectiveness of UCT – Planning for the next generation of technology and software is part of this agenda item. Are we supporting faculty? Part of our mission should include how to integrate technology into the educational aspect.

VII. Member Concerns

- A. Questions on Residence Halls Going Wireless – A concern was raised that all the residence halls went to wireless, and that wireless technology might have problems supporting that many users. Paul Albert responded that for the first resident hall, they gave students with problems the option of a cable (about 50 to 60 users, mostly gamers). There were issues on the first weekend. Paul clarified that the wires were not actually pulled, so if you do need a wire, you can request one. Paul advised that the residence halls are an auxiliary, and this was their request. It was stated that the problems may occur at certain times of the day; the usability of the wireless network can fluctuate. Paul advised that if members are experiencing special issues, send it to him, and he will make sure that Jason Wearley receives it. Paul Farrell indicated that this represents an area where we do not always talk to those using the technology in the design stage. We need to be careful that decisions are not made before they are discussed. Chair Ruttan noted that tests were done in his areas, but they were not tested under load. Instead of trying to do everything at once, maybe we could put in a reasonable test case, or maybe that would be cost prohibitive.
- B. Distant Learning Concerns – Jan Kover has a few concerns in distant learning that need to be approached before midterms. The availability of testing centers is inconsistent across campuses. Regarding the overall mechanism, the structure of IT at Kent affects regional campuses. Bob Logan advised that once you are on the system, the only other difference is the timetable of upgrades for OS or updates to office software. Other campus schedules are not in synch with the schedules at Kent, software versions are not accessible at all of the campuses, and not all of the campuses switch at the same time.
- C. Bookstore Issues- Bob Logan shared that he had a student in Ashtabula who requested a book providing the ISBN, and the book store sold the student the wrong book. It was also noted that the Kent book store will not send books to the regional campuses.
- D. Computer Refresh Concerns - Regional campuses have solved the issues of reusing older machines replaced by a faculty refresh; Kent has not. The Kent campus has faculty refreshes but the problem of providing machines for nonfaculty has not been solved. Some nonfaculty computers are very, very old. The average age of computers on all of the campuses is much too high.
- E. Mac Support – The regional campuses lack online support for Mac. At Kent, it is not as much of a problem. Paul Albert noted that if you are in a department which has a 90 percent Windows concentration and you decide to go with Mac, your support personnel may have problems supporting it, but there is someone you can call. The trouble with specializing the Helpdesk is it causes it to become more and more expensive. We have four call groups now and every time you create another group, it adds expenses. Mac use is rising. Vice Chair Tran indicated there is no official way for

gaining Mac support. We have to train by using them in order to support both. Jason Piatt advised that there is a Mac listserv. Chair Ruttan noted that if there are groups like this out there, they should be listed on our web pages.

- F. Synchronous Software Alternatives – Fashaad Crawford who stated he works a lot with RPIE and has experience teaching online, inquired if there is any other software being examined for synchronous use. Chair Ruttan reported that others were assessed, and Wimba was chosen; we are not looking at any new synchronous software. Paul Albert reported that we now have Blackboard Vista and Learn, and Wimba is the only online tool supported. Elluminate was purchased by Blackboard, they are both called Collaborate, and we decided not to go with it. It came out in July and not a lot of the features are there yet. Bob Logan noted that Elluminate prior to Blackboard's acquisition had more features than Wimba. Jason Piatt is testing Wimba live now using the video, audio, and screen presentation features. Wimba can be used free-form, unassociated with classes, for video conference, etc.; it has many uses outside of Blackboard. Contact Preeti Palvanker regarding Wimba uses.
- G. Testing Centers Lacking Coordination - Wanda Thomas reported that faculty council members are very frustrated with the fact that there are online students from the different campuses going to the testing centers and they all have different rules. There is no coordination, and faculty is very challenged at this point in trying to accommodate the student. Another concern is when our students lack the computer skills to perform what we are asking of them. Faculty assumes that they know how to do what is being asked of them, and we are having a hard time trying to help them. The student is directed to the Helpdesk, but their requests are not timely addressed according to their needs. There is a course being formed that covers the skills needed of the online learner. There is one campus that will not test on finals week. Wanda Thomas asserted that this is a big issue, and it is not moving forward as quickly as we need it to. Deb Huntsman acknowledged the need to provide support and direction from Kent. Now that we have a revenue stream, we may be able to move in that direction. Paul Albert stated that there are products like 360 degree cameras and people watching videos that we could evaluate. Jan suggested that typically libraries will work with you.

VIII. Themes for Future Meetings - Chair Ruttan suggested the following themes for most of our meetings. One theme could be distant learning. We would extend invitations to all interested parties, ask people to submit questions, and format the meeting as a discussion with a free, open question period. Others meeting themes could be security, search engine, and web pages. Paul Albert suggested unified communication as a theme before they start deciding on what type of device they need. The meeting could consist of an overview on what it is and what they are installing and also a focus on how many people are willing to just use their computers as opposed to a device and how many are using smartphones. Chair Ruttan suggested scheduling the unified communications theme for October. Deb Huntsman may have an end-of-the-year forum for people to come in to talk about next generation technology. The distant learning and IS staff could identify vendors with tools, and we could hear from faculty on their needs. This would be an open invitation likely in March. The concern with Exploratorium is it is in early August, and faculty may not be around at that time. The next UCT meeting is scheduled for October 7.

IX. Meeting adjourned at 4:00 p.m.
Minutes submitted by Debbie Dobrilovic