Information Technology Committee

April 3, 2009 1pm, Vance 307

Minutes

Present: Debbie Herman, Otis Mamed, Tom Brodeur, Sherry Pesino (guest), Henry Rudzinski (ex officio), Barry Sponder, Paul Altieri (ex officio), Krishna Saha, Elizabeth O'Neill, Craig Pocock (guest), Lisa Washko (guest), Mark McLaughlin (guest), Derek Pierce (guest), Tiffany Doan, Charles Menoche, Stan Kurkovsky, Julia Kara-Soteriou

I. Call to Order

II. Minutes of the March 6, 2009 meeting: http://www.ccsu.edu/itc/Minutes/2008-09/ITCminutesMar6.rtf
The minutes were approved as presented.

III. Guest: Provost Lovitt Online & Hybrid Learning at CCSU
Provost Lovitt wished to clarify the committee’s role in online/distance education at CCSU. He shared his ideas concerning the role of the ITC in moving things forward. Lovitt asked about the committee’s involvement in the online course pilot and whether the ITC issued a report or recommendations. He also asked the group what place online education has at CCSU. Lovitt questioned whether the development of online courses should be ad hoc or more strategically-oriented (e.g., to increase graduation rates). Lovitt stated that summer and winter online courses run by Continuing Education are being offloaded to IDTRC, who will provide instructional design support.

Altieri remarked that the ITC did formulate the distance education pilot proposal, which was approved by the Faculty Senate.

Lovitt also questioned the impact of online/hybrid courses on facilities. He provided an example of space sharing by two hybrid courses that will be run in the summer of 2009. In this instance, the two courses will share a single classroom.

Kurkovsky observed that the role of the ITC should be evaluating technological solutions for distance learning and should not be as involved with the academic side—pedagogy, assessment, etc. Menoche agreed that technology intersects with other areas such as the Curriculum Committee and articulated the concern that while distance learning might be viewed as "cool", how can we ensure that learning is happening?

Kara-Soteriou and Sponder pointed out that research on distance learning has been done, and that the success of distance learning is as dependent on the instructor as on-ground courses. Kara-Soteriou asked what the expectations would be for instructors who are new to distance education. Do new instructors work with instructional designers and what tools for evaluation are available? Sponder stated that CCSU was in a good place to get started and that the ITC should look at delivery solutions that are appropriate for specific disciplines.

Pesino added that over 50 online courses are being taught this summer and that there are already a number of faculty who are experienced online instructors.

Kara-Soteriou expressed concern that some courses with a hybrid component are not being advertised as such. Altieri responded that if students are participating in hybrid courses, they should
be aware of what they are getting into. He suggested more sharing of faculty experiences with online education by hosting regular discussions and events like the recent ECSU Online EXPO.

The Provost concluded his remarks by expressing his desire to pull together an interest group to begin implementing distance education and to develop a plan and parameters for moving forward.

IV. Announcements

☐ Workshop by Dr. Ike Shibley (Penn State Berks) on “Increasing Student Success in Challenging Courses” (focusing on blended courses). The workshop is on 4/17—contact Paulette Lemma for more information.

☐ Merlin Mann (http://www.43folders.com) on campus 4/28
  Events: 10am: “Broken Meetings and How You’ll Fix Them” (Alumni Hall)
  3pm: “Future-Proofing Your Passion: The Job You Never Knew You Wanted” (Alumni Hall)
  5.30pm: “Inbox Zero” (DiLoreto 001)

☐ Sponder announced the CSU Technology for Teaching and E-Learning Conference (formerly CSU Academic Computing Conference) had been canceled due to low attendance and budgetary reasons. Sponder mentioned that the conference date conflicted with the annual AERA conference, which might have been a factor in the low registration.

IV. Old Business

☐ Update about web site for reviewing academic requests / proposals / queries
  O’Neill stated that the subcommittee would be meeting on Thursday, 4/9 to draft a submission form.

☐ Interim updates from the smart room or software committees
  Rudzinski updated the ITC on the smart room subcommittee’s activities. The group met on 3/11. There were several new members this year who had not been involved in this process before. Of the $139,500, roughly $92K had already been allocated to projects. The remaining funds will be used to update classrooms over the summer. Signs were placed on 150 black boxes asking the faculty for input. Department chairs were also contacted and urged to solicit faculty for input. The subcommittee members also offered to meet individually with Department Chairs. To date, 28 faculty have responded with representation from 18 departments and 4 schools. Maria Alvarez was invited to attend the next subcommittee meeting to provide feedback. Rudzinski recommended that the subcommittee begin its work earlier.

  Menoche stated that requests for software with a link to the request form will be sent out soon. Requests for any type of software, even freeware, should be listed. The deadline is 4/24.

  Kurkovsky asked about books with accompanying software. Given support and licensing issues, Waskho was opposed to the idea of loading on black box PCs. Laptop installation was proposed as a solution.

☐ Interim update from the iTunes U ad hoc committee
  Herman stated the ad hoc committee met on Tuesday, 3/17 concerning the implementation of iTunes U at CCSU. Sherry Pesino provided the group with some background information on CCSU’s relationship with the CTDLC. It was agreed that the best course of action would be for CCSU to purchase and administer its own x-server, which would be consistent with the decision to host Vista locally (rather than contracting with CTDLC) as well as allow for greater flexibility and control. It was also suggested that ITS staff (Amy Magno, Chad Valk, and
Lisa Washko be brought into the conversation as well. Pesino will contact them. Herman volunteered to contact AAUP to address concerns about faculty intellectual property rights.

The group plans to invite CCSU's Apple sales rep., Paul O'Brien, to our next iTunesU meeting and aims to present recommendations to ITC at the May meeting.

V New Business

☑ Guest: Mark McLaughlin & Derek Pierce: Demo of the new CCSU.edu website
McLaughlin and Pierce presented the new CCSU.edu Finalsite website. A link to the preview is available at the following URL: http://www.ccsu.edu/w.

☑ Sherry Pesino will present on the next-generation version of Blackboard and on the Blackboard iPhone app
Pesino updated the ITC on the new iPhone application for Blackboard 9. She also mentioned that the new BB version would include other modules such as outcomes and assessment. A training sandbox is available. The new version offers integration with Web 2.0 tools such as Facebook, drag and drop functionality, and early warning grades. The new grade center uses AJAX technologies and is no longer Java-based. Integration with other Course Management Systems like Sakai and Moodle is planned for a future release.

☑ Using Outlook's calendar as a substitute for e-mail
Altieri asked ITC to consider the recent misuse of the Outlook calendar by the Bookstore manager. ITS received numerous complaints about this incident. It was agreed that the issue would receive further consideration at the May ITC meeting.

☑ Call for volunteers for the Elections committee
The following members agreed to serve on the elections committee: Tiffany Doan, Henry Rudzinski, and Krishna Saha.

VI Adjourn – The meeting adjourned at 2:57pm

Respectfully submitted,
Debbie Herman, ITC Secretary