Minutes - ASG/IT Advisory Committee  
February 2, 2007, 12 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.

Committee Members

Student Representatives:
Jay Schumacher  
**ASG President**
Jordan Fox  
**ASG Academic Vice President**
Zachary Galin  
**Education and Social Policy**
Jonathan Webber  
**Weinberg**
Emily Yeh  
**Music**
Nathan Edwards  
**MedIll**

Committee Members:  
Shailesh Mittal  
**McCormick**
Kevin Palms  
**ASG Technology Director**
Jordan Rost  
**Communication**
Alex Arney  
**Weinberg**
Leah Witt  
**ASG Student Services VP**
Vacant  
**Weinberg**

NUIAA Representatives:
Wendy Woodward  
**Director, Technology Support Services**
Bob Taylor  
**Director, Academic Technologies**
Dennis Sage,  
**Associate Director, Technology Support Services**
Robert Davis  
**Associate Director, Academic Technologies**
Lynne Jeffers  
**Manager, User Services**
Ben Smith  
**Program Assistant, Technology Support Services**

Introductions

Reports:

**Collaboration Services Status (Wendy Woodward)**
Discussions with an outside e-mail provider are nearing the final stages and close to the final draft. The new e-mail will be the default account for incoming freshmen in the fall of 2007. Existing students will be able to opt in to the new e-mail system. Student will be able to keep this account after they graduate. After graduation, the only thing that will change is that advertisements will be displayed.

**Webmail Update (Wendy Woodward)**
The new Webmail is prepared for launch in March. The focus of the new Webmail system is stability and not new features. The change is a move away from the current vendor the University is using.

**Status of NU Portal  (Lynne Jeffers)**
The NU Portal is going live July 16, 2007. The initial rollout includes portlets for NU news, library news, and library (NUcat) search. More portlets will be added over time. Portlets for Blackboard and SES/CAESAR are due to be added by the end of 2007.
**Change in Software Vendor (Dennis Sage)**

NUIT is switching software vendors from TRC back to e-academy. Students should not see many changes due to the switch. The links to products will still be on the NUIT software website. A few additional software titles maybe added later this year.

The Norris bookstore currently offers software titles at higher prices than e-academy. Students are not aware of the discounted software and, as a result, are paying too much. Wendy has approached Norris about this. The bookstore can charge any prices they want. The solution is to make students more aware of the discounted software program and how they can purchase it. The software link will be added to the Here and Now page.

**WiFi on Campus (Lynne Jeffers)**

Statistics from November 1, 2006 through January 31, 2007 show that the nuwlan wireless network was connected to by 10,198 unique NetIDs. The total number of connections to nuwlan during this time period was 271,128.

Northwestern wireless network was connected to by 4,549 unique NetIDs from November 1 to January 31. There were a total of over 4 million connections to the Northwestern wireless network.

There has been previous discussion about Northwestern wireless not working well in Norris, Kresge, and University Halls. Telecommunications and Network Services have no data concerning problems connecting to Northwestern wireless in that area. The problem may be related to computers attempting to access nuwlan. Staff from Technology Support Services were not able to reproduce consistent dropping. However, intermittent problems were found when both Northwestern and nuwlan were available. This problem went away when the nuwlan was disconnected on the computer being used.

Effective September 1, 2007, nuwlan will not be broadcast. It will remain available for those who need it, but it will not be the default wireless network. This should solve any problems related to the open issue. Technology is headed in the direction of 802.1x, and while it may be a little difficult and time consuming to set up, it is a better wireless environment. Students needing assistance connecting to Northwestern wireless network can visit Laptop ER or call 1-HELP.

**NUIT Laptop ER Update (Lynne Jeffers)**
Laptop ER is going very well. Based on feedback from students surveyed when visiting the Laptop ER, hours will be slightly changed. Effective Sunday February 4, 2007, the Sunday hours at Lisa’s Café from 12-4 will be moved to Tuesday. The hours at Crowe Café on Friday from 2-5 will change to 12-4.

**Virtual Store**
The Virtual Store website has been retired by University Services. The link on the NUIIT home page will redirect to Purchasing Resources. It is scheduled to go live the week of February 4. ASG has requested the link be placed on Here and Now. The link will be sent to Kevin Palms and he will do this.

**Mediaworks Update**
The Mediaworks lab in the basement of the library is focused on student projects regarding high-end video and audio. It is reserved for walk-in student use. Upgrades to the lab in the basement of the library will be made this summer.

**Start up of Classroom Response System Effort**
The project has been well received. The Norris bookstore is selling many clickers. Faculty have been going to training. There has been wide use of the system, especially in large lectures like Math, Chemistry, and Physics. Students are reporting high levels of satisfaction.

**NU Blog Beta**
Blogs have been integrated within Blackboard. There is a link for each student that allows them access to a blog as a part of their classwork. The project overall has been a success.

**NU Planning for Future Science and Engineering Library Improvement**
The Library and AT are partnering together for this project. No budget has been assigned yet. Preliminary discussions with Facilities Management point toward an overhaul of the building being 4-5 years off. The Library and AT will work together to find interim solutions. AT has been visiting other universities to gather ideas for effective redesign. The library has been happy with the Information Commons and would like to use this as a model for future changes.

**Smart Classrooms**
A project to add eight new smart classrooms to the campus is scheduled for completion during the Spring Quarter.

**Blackboard Community System**
The University has been using Blackboard Learning Suite for seven years. There are continued discussions concerning a switch to the Blackboard Community System. This system would allow for student groups to access to new services. Student Affairs wants to investigate if the Blackboard Community System will benefit student group activities. This system is harder to use from an administrative stand point, but could be worthwhile if student benefit from it.

**Google**
Google Scholar is a search engine that is geared toward scholarly research and peer-reviewed journals. The Library website will feature this search engine to a greater extent beginning this fall.

Discussions are underway to create a Google video site for Northwestern. Because Google recently acquired YouTube, AT wants to know what this would mean for the future of a Northwestern Google Video site. Google does not know at this point. As of now, YouTube will be the repository for videos. In addition to being a repository, YouTube is also used as a social space. Google wants to know if this is of interest to universities. Northwestern is one of the early partners in this project, so it is too early to predict future developments. AT will have more information to report by spring or fall.

**Old Business:**

**Fill Committee Vacancy – WCAS: Hard Sciences**
Any student in WCAS will suffice. Jordan Fox will follow up on this and report back to Ben Smith.

**New Business:**

**ASG Elections**
Elections will be held in April, but no one was sure on the date. The spring ASG/IT committee meeting includes incoming and current committee members. A headcount of who is graduating and who needs to be replaced is needed. Ben Smith will make a list of these students and send them an email with pertinent information. Kevin Palms and Jordan Fox will be included in the correspondence.

**Microsoft Vista (Dennis Sage)**
NUIT does not recommend an upgrade to Microsoft Vista at this point in time. It is suggested that students, faculty, and staff wait until additional support and
stability is seen. It is recommended that the upgrade to Vista is not made until after service pack one is released. Microsoft recognizes that vendors need time to make software compatible to Vista. Microsoft has also stated that only about 15% of existing machines can handle Vista.

Discount Microsoft Vista software might be available in March or April. It sometimes takes extra time for the University to get copies of new software from the vendor.

NUIT understands that new machines will have Vista installed. They are prepared to offer “best efforts” support and handle problems that may arise. Microsoft hasn’t taken a hard stance on the end of support for XP (possibly 2011).

**Campus-Wide Electronic Distribution System**
Students would like to see improved cell phone coverage and wireless access throughout the campus and residence halls. A central cell phone and wireless tower was proposed.

NUIT is currently working to install technology in Medill and Kellogg that will improve wireless signals. One of the challenges in extending this campus-wide is cost. This technology is carrier agnostic, meaning that there is a cost to bring carriers on board with this project. There have been discussions with wireless carriers, but it is too early to say when this may happen. Data pertaining to access areas where service needs improvement are currently being compiled by the senate. Administration wants to do more to solve this problem, but it depends on priorities and budget. The current NUIT budget priorities are research computing and the collaboration project.

**Linux Single Sign-In (SSO)**
ASG would like to see SSO for Linux for their web server. Unfortunately, Sun has not yet put out an SSO module for Redhat 4. The time frame for availability estimated by Sun is late spring.

**IT Fairy Discussion**
Wendy asked ASG: If there was an IT fairy that could wave its magic wand and give you any new or improved technology, what would you ask for?

1. Webmail needs to be improved.
2. Library research is very difficult. Students would like to see Google Scholar used as the main search engine for research on the library website.

3. There is a desire to have ubiquitous WiFi throughout campus, including dorms. NUTV requires a hardwired connection. Students want to keep wired ports and have WiFi.

4. There is a need for improved cell phone coverage. Students shouldn’t have to go outside to make phone calls. They also do not want to switch carriers to get improved signal.

5. Landlines are still needed. If students no longer had landlines in their rooms, there would need to be emergency phones in central locations or in CA rooms. The problem with public emergency phones is that they might be misused. Some students also do not have cell phones. It is an expectation of the students and the parents that there will be a landline in the room. One possibility is to still offer landlines, but students must request to have them turned on.

6. NUTV has problems during high traffic times (ex: Cubs games, Grey’s Anatomy). Service stops or drops out. Students want ability to have cable carrier outside of NUTV.

7. Do not limit BitTorrent. NU students gaming and creative media is dispersed through BitTorrent. Students would like better internet connection and less throttling of use.

8. Projectors or plasma screens set up in public areas for gaming. This leads to community building (ex: Connect to play 16 player games of Halo was big community building exercise.)

9. Podcasts of lectures. Students don’t think class attendance will drop with the possible exception of large lectures. Professors need to use the technology and understand it. Podcasts would provide a review of lectures for study purposes.

10. Dorm rooms need to be wired with more data jacks and electrical outlets. Many students have more than one Internet connected device. Another
possibility is to change policy to allow students to have their own internet router if proper security is in place.

11. More smart classrooms are wanted that are available to students. There is a need for more places for students to gather where they can have access to computers or projectors for free.

12. Online storage space is wanted. Gmail has storage but it is limited. Students need somewhere to store large files. Online space would be great for student groups to store video.

13. Unified Calendar system.

14. Link laundry facilities online to allow students to know when washers and dryers are in use and available. This would also allow for online scheduling.

15. All student access locations stored on Wildcard instead of Marlok keys. RFIDs are also a solution.

**Summary of Action Items**

- Fill committee vacancies.
- Make a list of graduating committee members that need replaced and send out the appropriate correspondence (Ben Smith). Jordan Fox and Kevin Palms will be kept apprised to the status so they can assist with filling the jobs as needed.
- Continue advertising software available to students. Send the software link to Kevin Palms so it can be added to the Here and Now page. (ASG: all)

Adjourn