Minutes
ASG/IT Advisory Committee
Thursday, October 27, 2005, 12:30 to 2 p.m.

Committee Members

Student Representatives:
Jason Downs, ASG Academic Vice President: Present
Jeffrey Kaplan, Weinberg: Absent
Zachary Galin, Education and Social Policy: Present
Patrick Keenan-Devlin, ASG President: Present
Nishant Goyal, Weinberg: Absent
Jonathan Love, Medill: Present
Paul Grajek, Music: Present
Charles Moore, McCormick: Present
Whitney Gretz, ASG Student Services Vice President: Absent
Jordan Rost, Communication: Present
Michael Jurewitz, ASG Technology Director: Present
Jack Vrett, Weinberg: Present

NUIT Representatives:
Wendy Woodward, Director, Technology Support Services: Present
Bob Taylor, Director, Academic Technologies: Present
Dennis Sage, Associate Director, Technology Support Services: Present
Robert Davis, Associate Director, Academic Technologies: Present
Mark Reynolds, Manager, Support Services: Absent
Rachael Bild, Support Specialist, Support Services: Present

Introductions

Reports:
New Student Week Update (Wendy Woodward)
Handheld radios, NetPass improvements and a more technically-inclined staff helped make New Student Week 2005 a success. Thanks in part to better communication with students and parents, only .6% of all students needed help – 32% fewer people than last year. Of these, 60% were helped the day they called, and the remaining problems were resolved within 3 days.
NUCH1 (Wendy Woodward)
The VideoFurnace software was upgraded to facilitate the encoding of NUCH1.

E-mail Defense System (EDS) (Wendy Woodward)
Students like the new E-mail Defense System. Users have released less than .1% of the mail caught by the filters. Few people have opted out. Viruses account for 1% of all the mail that has been caught. See http://www.it.northwestern.edu/security/eds/ for information about EDS.

Cellular Phone Carrier Status (Wendy Woodward)
Many are interested in improving cell phone service on campus. ASG surveyed students to learn what kind of coverage they want. However, the survey results were vague. A new poll was proposed to help clarify this question. Students should understand that service inside buildings may not improve. Wendy offered to review any future student surveys for technical clarity and relevance.

The University does not pay to erect towers on campus. Cellular providers contact NU if they want to raise a tower, and a committee decides. Sprint and Cingular have towers on campus. Aesthetic concerns are stopping more towers from getting erected right now – Verizon & Nextel have requests pending.

See http://www.it.northwestern.edu/telephone/mobile/.

Wireless Usage on Campus (Wendy Woodward)
Wireless usage continues to climb: this year, about 1900 people access NU’s wireless network. Schools and administrative departments will be getting wireless access points next year. Most access points are marked with a sign. See http://www.it.northwestern.edu/oncampus/wireless/signage.html for information about these signs.

For a complete list of current access point locations, see http://www.it.northwestern.edu/oncampus/wireless/locations.html. Creating a map from the list was discussed. Buildings that contain wireless access points may not be completely wireless, so a map might be misleading.

Feedback from this committee helped improve wireless access in the Library.
Auditorium Improvements in 2005-2006 (Bob Davis)
During last 6 months, about $200,000 has been spent to improve Tech’s Ryan Auditorium, including the installation of a cinema-quality projector and audio enhancements. Fisk 217 will see similar improvements.

By the end of the year, exactly half of the Registrar-controlled classrooms in Evanston – 56 – will be “smart.” The NU Classroom Committee will ask administrators to accelerate the process of building smart classrooms. Students who feel the acceleration is a good idea are welcome to advise the committee, who will relate that feedback when requesting funding.

University Library Information Commons (Bob Davis)
The Information Commons is finished, with a project room for group discussion that can be reserved at the service desk. Students like the space.

Sodexho is investigating changing the first floor of Norris. Bob Taylor will talk to Norris informally to see if NUIT input into the space dedicated to computers is welcome.

All computers in the Information Commons were purchased by the Library. The year-old computers they replaced were moved to the Reference section. If ASG would like to see newer computers throughout the Library, they should inform NUL administration.

A list of software in each AT lab can be accessed at http://www.at.northwestern.edu/ctg/labs/.

MediaWorks (Bob Taylor)
Short ads promoting MediaWorks ran on NUCH1 recently. The lab replaced a few existing PCs with Macs and added tape decks.

Depot (Bob Taylor)
Depot is a web-based tool that allows Northwestern faculty and their students to upload files such as syllabi, homework assignments, notes, papers, theses, dissertations, and graphics. After uploading a file, Depot can be used to store, share, or conveniently access that file. AT added licenses recently. Although it is not available to every student, group or faculty projects may require its use. See http://www.at.northwestern.edu/depot/.

New Business:
ResNet Drop-In Locations (Wendy Woodward)
NUIIT partnered with Student Affairs to provide a drop-in location for on- and off-campus student laptop help. This service is offered on a trial basis through 11/30. NUIIT believes it will give students greater flexibility in solving their computer problems.

Discussion about locations and advertising followed.

Telephone Service, Network Extensions and VoIP (Wendy Woodward)
The current phone system is near the end of its life. As the University looks to replace current switches and hardware, it is moving towards Session-Initiated Protocol (of which Voice over Internet Protocol, or VoIP, is a component).

NUIIT wants to provide better online storage, e-mail, calendaring and instant messaging. Confidential information should not be exchanged over 3rd party servers. Implementing the new technology will take six years to fully deploy.

NUIIT rates for telephones and data service were adjusted this year. See http://www.it.northwestern.edu/telephone/converge/ for more information.

Routers, switches and other network extensions can affect wireless access and NUTV. See http://www.it.northwestern.edu/policies/extensions.html. In addition, using products such as Vonage or Skype – which do not have e911 – is not allowed.

Discussion followed about cable and the fiber backbone of the University and ways to improve e-mail. For information about IMAP, go to http://www.it.northwestern.edu/accounts/email/imap/.

Security Communication Plan (Wendy Woodward)
NUIIT is providing comprehensive information for successful, safe computing with a new focus on personal responsibility. Monthly themes are communicated on the IT home page as well as in the Daily and at Tech Talks.

ASG Server (Wendy Woodward)
The ASG server was offline due to security concerns. The new server will be installed at the NUIIT Data Center. Electronic services that ASG provides won’t be affected by the move; student groups can still store files on the server, and it will continue to be integral to ASG elections.
Additional Discussion
Since personal information on third-party servers elicits security concerns, the idea of expanding Blackboard for student groups was raised as a way to help students to share information guarded by NetID authentication. Other universities use Sakai. If ASG can explain the shape of the demand, AT can investigate ways to serve student interests and needs.

Summary of Action Items:
• Investigate linking http://www.library.northwestern.edu/hours/location.html#listening from IT’s site. (NUIT: Rachael Bild)
• Talk to Norris informally to see if NUIT input into the first floor renovation is welcome. (NUIT: Bob Taylor)
• Formally tell Wendy if more inspool space on the NUIT mail servers is useful to students. (ASG: All)

Adjourn