Information and Communication Technology Council
March 25, 2014

Attendance
• Steve Brewer
• MJ Canavan
• Julie Buehler
• Jon Olsen
• Dave Hart
• Gail Cruise
• Bret Holloway
• Robert Eisenstein
• Nikki Stoia
• Timothy Randhir

IT Status Update

Progress in the area of vendor relationships is being made. IT is challenging the vendor contracts. There are new opportunities with companies to get better deals, Apple and EMC specifically.

Some examples of improving vendor relations
• Nursing is doing great things with iPads. In looking at best practices in Nursing one thing that pops out is how outrageous the cost is for nursing textbooks. Open source nursing materials are being supplemented with faculty owned materials
• Another example is in the area of assistive technologies. We may be spending too much on software when existing software will do the trick. Some of the necessary assistive functions come built into the software we already use (e.g. screen readers).

Julie will be meeting with Deans on April 20th to discuss some of these issues.

Julie is looking for folks from this group and others who might participate in looking at finalists for new help desk position. Several key positions are close to being filled, others are ready to be advertised.

Julie is looking to bring in Karrass, a leader in negotiation training to work with some of her staff. She may be able to open up this training more broadly.

IT is looking to change the building checklist. Checklist originated long ago and has not been updated to reflect the technology needs of modern buildings. We have had new buildings without the appropriate technology. We have new buildings and buildings that
have undergone major renovations that have no IT plan. Chancellor has set aside some money to address some of these needs.

**Email Forums**

Iris provided a handout (also posted on the OIT website) which includes how many people are on Exchange, how many are on Google Mail, and some results of the feedback sessions. There are mixed reviews of Exchange as a platform, and OIT is preparing a more detailed report that will summarize the findings.

- More transparency with how decisions are made, what options are and the “why” of the decisions.
- Retaining email history was seen as very important.
- Heard a lot about an “effortless” transition.
- Need for minimal training.
- System that works for all platforms, including mobile.
- Assigning different platforms for different populations could be cumbersome and difficult. Who decides what population uses which tool?

Vendors have offered the world but have been short on delivery. Doesn’t believe IT should decide things that are really policy decisions. Going forward we have a pent up demand for those folks wanting to go to Exchange. IT is developing a standard template for feature comparison. Two examples where the template is useful are email systems and teleconferencing software. Early draft of feature template will be on the transparency pages of the OIT website.

Systems interoperability is an important factor to consider. At this time, there isn’t any way for undergraduate students to participate in the Exchange system, which can become a burden when it comes to calendaring for student workers. Biology has moved into Google for email. How could we have communications that work at the unit head level that can be effective? A lack of a standard vocabulary about email interferes with good support and discussions.

**Campus Search and Apache Solr**

Brief discussion of Apache Solr v. the Google bot. A group will be convened to look at search tuning. New England Regional Developers Conference is coming to the campus in September (Brewer).

**Extended Help Desk Hours**

Genti Lagji sent email request soliciting input on what hours might be most useful if IT were to extend the help desk hours. Julie suggested that it would be helpful in meeting some
help desk queries to have a public facing knowledge base. IT would also like to establish a true tiered help desk, with Levels 1, 2, and 3. Students will no longer be answering Help Desk phone, and IT will stop asking people for their employee numbers. As much as is possible it would be great to determine peak periods and provide coverage during those times. We need to think about the needs of all constituents, faculty, staff, students and alums. Students for example seem to work later into the evening. Faculty may want extended hours earlier in the morning.

With all enterprise systems that IT supports serious thought should be given to governance. Projects planned without proper funding components have been an ongoing problem. It would be good to develop an inventory of dashboards and stop spending money on the kind of customization involved in creating these. Developing inventories like this is very difficult. Identifying and bringing together communities of interest or practice would be one way of targeting needs and areas of overlap.

**Consolidation of Dashboards**

There must be an easier way to work between dashboards. How do we create community? Julie has some ideas gleaned from her listening tour.

- Sessions meeting face to face
- Brown bags and seminars.
- Data classifications well.
- Analytics of dashboards.

Must have good data and a solid core structure underneath to get to a point where we could really take advantage. Who is the custodian of this data on campus? Characterize recruiting as “early onset advising”

**Other Business**

There was a suggestion for a *Summit on Silly Things We are Still Doing*. Let’s create a list of things to stop doing if possible. (i.e. telephone codes). What are other things we could eliminate?

There was a suggestion that information on Email etiquette would be a useful. Schools thinking about how faculty communicate with students. Develop guidelines regarding expectations for returning emails.

There was a suggestion that we look at a project at Mary Washington University called “A Domain of One’s Own”. Reclaim your domain. Charge $20-30. The project creates an electronic portfolio on a domain name that users can take with them.

**Edit to February 25th Minutes**

A correction to the minutes from the Other Business section of the February 25, 2014 minutes:
Other business

Exchange email/Open Forums on Email

Raw notes from meeting sessions will be available soon, behind a NetID login. Major issues include:

• Email platforms need to be intuitive to minimize users’ learning curve (minimal time and training should be needed to learn to use a new email platform)
• There are certain times during the academic year that are more suitable for an email migration than others (e.g., summer)
• The community’s training needs
• **Biggest concern**: email migrations should factor in email history, which is critical for some members of the campus community.
• Explanation of why Umail is no longer viable was not made clear enough in the past.
• Faculty’s separation from undergraduates if multiple email platforms are selected
• Limited support of IMAP and certain email clients with Exchange
• Some faculty, staff, and graduate students expressed the desire to have Google Mail as an option
• Some participants had a positive experience with Exchange on campus and at other institutions; others did not.