Academic Technology Committee

MINUTES OF MEETING: 09/08/06  APPROVED BY COMMITTEE: __________
Submitted Exec. Committee: __________  Approved by Exec. Committee: __________
Submitted Academic Senate: __________  Approved by Academic Senate: __________

Members Present: John Adams, Ardavan Asef-Vaziri, Hilary Baker, Larry Chu, Kimberly Embleton, Ellis Godard, Xiyi Hang, Gloria Melara, John Noga, Jacek Polewczak, Ashley Skylar and Magdy Rizk

Minutes: Marla Joseph

Excused: Daniel Hosken (sabbatical)

Guests: Steven Fitzgerald, Valerie Myers, Joseph O'Connor and Jeff Wiegley

1. Approval of Minutes – The minutes of the 05/05/06 meeting were approved with one change

2. Announcements

Employee Self Service Update; Removal of SSN -- Guest Valerie Myers, Office of Human Resources

Valerie Myers explained that the committee's concerns were heard regarding the protection of sensitive data. Effective September 30, 2006, SSN's and date of births will be removed from the self-service module of PeopleSoft. New employees will have 30 days to view their SSN and DOB data to verify its accuracy. If there are any inaccuracies in the data, a downloadable form is available to fill out and deliver to HR. Concerns or questions should be forwarded to Myers in the HR Department.

ADA & Web Compliance Update – Guest Joseph O’Connor, University Web Communication

The handout contained the University’s Web Accessibility policy on one side and W3C Checkpoints for Web Accessibility with Priority 1 guidelines on the other. The law requires only Priority 1 guidelines to be met, but CSUN is also incorporating Priority 2 & 3 guidelines into the template. The University Web Accessibility policy was changed to reflect federal law.

The Web Communication group launched a new template system for web accessibility on June 12, 2006. The web template system that has been developed is for administrative use. This group is working with college web masters to alter the template system to better suite the faculty.
O’Connor is in the process of forming a faculty-based committee to help develop a template that is better suited for faculty needs. Members from ATC are encouraged to serve on this committee.

O’Connor will email links, containing examples of the templates, to Noga so they can be forwarded to ATC members.

O’Connor believes that the majority of web-based material can be made accessible. Faculty with subjects that may prove more difficult, such as physics and mathematical equations, should work with the Center on Disabilities to make an accommodation. Training was available in the spring and additional training to assist with compliance will be scheduled. The template was developed to help facilitate the transition to compliance but you need to spend an hour or two with our web-producer to get started.

There was discussion that the wording in the definitions section of the policy needed clarification.

3. Chair’s Report

   a) ATC Membership (handout) -- John Noga informed the committee that ATC is composed of members: one from each college and the library, two students representatives, and two from the Senate. This committee is a communication conduit between ITR, ATC members, and each of the areas represented. This committee will deal with policies to a degree. There are basic administrative policies that will flow through ATC then to other committees and finally to the President. Academic related policies flow to the Faculty Senate.

   b) Draft of Annual Report (handout) -- John Noga asked the committee to review the draft and to provide feedback. In approximately a week, the annual report will be posted on the website.

   c) Draft of Open Standards Resolution -- John Noga will send an open standards resolution to the committee this weekend and would like to revisit the topic next month. To reiterate from last year, Noga explained that a standard in technology is something “the community” agrees upon so computers and people can interact with each other more effectively. An example of a standard document format in technology is a “.pdf” or “.doc” file format. Standards are either open or closed. Closed standards do not allow us to know what the standard is. Noga believes open standards have a variety of benefits that will be stated in the resolution.

Noga would like the ATC Committee to pass a resolution here, then pass it on to other committees, and finally to the Senate to endorse as a Senate resolution. This resolution would have a statement such as; when making decisions related to technology or faculty we would prefer products that utilize open standards. There will be a phrase related to exceptions in the resolution.
Ellis Godard interjected that a resolution focused on a “.pdf” standard might warrant further thought.

4. Department / College Issues

Ellis Godard from the Department of Sociology is aware of an issue with the centralization of servers but needs to investigate further.

Larry Chu from the Department of Health & Science, informed that the feedback he was receiving from colleagues on the improved grading system was positive. He also fielded questions regarding the two webmail versions. Steven Fitzgerald responded that he was receiving equal feedback on both versions so the final tally is not in yet.

Magdy Rizk explained that professors from the Art Department informed him that they were having problems with invalid permission numbers. A discussion ensued and it was determined that the course number is entered then the six digit permission number is entered. Once this information is submitted, a confirmation step is required. The last step is sometimes missed by the users and this is causing the problem. The button is not pushed the second time and the permission number is invalidated. Hilary Baker offered to look further into this issue and get back to the committee with possible resolutions.

Kimberly Embleton from the Library has had feedback regarding the implementation of Active Directory. The issues regard the inability to load personal software, change desktop settings, websites being locked, and plug-ins. Members gave the response that policies are chosen by each college and can differ from person to person. Fitzgerald informed that there have been a lot of discussions regarding administrator rights. The outcome is that you have the choice of having the local IT staff manage your desktop or to manage your own desktop. There is an agreement by both sides as to who is maintaining the machine and what the roles and responsibilities are. The decision is a local issue.

Gloria Melara from the computer Science Department asked if direct entry into the grading page could be added. A request to reorganize the drop down box of grade choices was also made.

Gloria Melara requested an update on Google Gmail for students. Steve Fitzgerald said that the pilot with Gmail and the Computer Science department is currently on hold. Google Gmail changed the authentication process, and we are working with them to resolve the issue.

5. CIO’s Report

a. *ITR Governance*—Hilary Baker informed the committee that there is a new ITR Governance structure. There are several new committees that will be developed. Baker is working with Harry Hellenbrand to establish these committees. One of the new committees, the Advisory Committee on Academic Technology focuses on immediate management of University wide IT support of instructional and scholarly activities. This
new committee will work closely with the ATC committee, including twice annual joint meetings.

b) *Portal Performance* – Hilary Baker hoped that an improvement was seen over last year’s semester start with regard to the portal. ITR has been monitoring the portal around the clock. An average of 800-1200 concurrent users has been logged with a peak of 1800 concurrent users over the weekend. If you hear of any issues please let Fitzgerald or Baker know.

a. *Forgot Password* – Baker explained that this new system will prompt the user to answer three questions up front so if you forget your password, then you can be prompted with the same questions before your password is reset. The three questions can be selected from a list of 10. This will eliminate the insecurity of verifying identity over the phone. Baker will be coming back to this group with the time frame and more details on the process for password reset.

b. *Class Lists* – Steve Fitzgerald discussed the process on how faculty receives their class lists. The naming convention for the class lists has changed and faculty received an email indicating this change. These lists are pre-populated before the semester and weekly thereafter until Census.

c) *Printed Phone Directory* – Fitzgerald explained that the printed phone directory will be printed soon. This delayed printing will allow new faculty hired over the summer to appear in the book. The Senate Executive Committee has asked that the next printing occur in the spring. We will have further discussion on the most appropriate timeframe to print the campus phone directory.

d) *Hypernews Server* – Fitzgerald informed the hypernews system was under a “denial of service” attack a few weeks ago. The system is a public website where anybody can post any material to the site. Work is ongoing with the Office of Online Instruction to address the issue. The Office of Online Instruction is working to find a new solution for bulletin boards and you will hear more in the future.

6. **Discussion Topics**

7. **Policy**

*CSU Patch Management Policy (handout)* -- Steven Fitzgerald explained that the CSU is developing this policy that states, all campuses must develop a policy that addresses certain aspects of security for desktops and servers. One goal is to have every desktop on campus to have automatic patches. There is already a patch management infrastructure in place on the campus in which many colleges are utilizing. A benefit to having your computer managed by the local IT staff (etc) is that OS patches and anti-virus updates are performed automatically. (sometimes this is referred to as being in Active Directory). Macs are updated through a live update mechanism. The campus servers are usually updated
This CSU systemwide policy is requiring all CSU campuses on similar standards even if they don’t use the same solutions. If you have any comments regarding this policy, please inform Baker, Fitzgerald, or the Information Security Officer, Al Arboleda.

8. New Business

Meeting adjourned at 4:00 PM. Next meeting is scheduled for October 6, 2006