MINUTES
IT Advisory Committee Meeting
May 27, 2010
8:30-10:00 AM

Present: Andy Bland, Lauri Brender, Becky Carr, Bill Chollett, Nolan Flowers, Dave Jennings, Stephanie Leary, Tom Lyster, Jim Rosser, Henrik Schmiediche, David Sweeney, Ron Szabo, Rick Young, Pete Marchbanks, Willis Marti, Jeff McCabe, Michelle Osterholm

Item 1: IT Project Reporting Advisory Group Update
A. Michelle Osterholm presented an update from the IT Project Reporting Advisory Group (ITPRAG) meeting on May 19th
   • The group received the following document templates for review:
     o Project Change Request
     o Team Status Report
     o Project Status Report
     o Project Performance Report
   • The group discussed project portfolio management tools.
     o The PMO is in the process of narrowing the candidate list to 3 or 4 and asked
       the ITPRAG for any final thoughts
     o The PMO will schedule demonstrations with the 3 or 4 finalists
   • The ITPRAG reviewed a flowchart that showed the expected functions of the Project
     Risk Assessment
     o The Project Risk Assessment is a tool to evaluate project risk and suggest
       risk mitigation tactics
     o The tools is still in development
B. David Sweeney discussed the Division of Student Affairs project request form
   • All IT work, except maintenance, in the Division of Student Affairs is considered a
     project
   • To request any IT project you must complete the project request form.
   • Forms are reviewed by the IT Governance Council
     o The council meets every two weeks to review forms
     o The council decides the priority of projects
     o This council works well because it gives the departments a sense of control
   • All requested and active projects can be reviewed in the Content Management
     System by anyone in the division

Item 2: ITAC Galveston Trip
A. Date Change
   • Due to the conflict with Father’s Day the ITAC trip to Galveston will be moved to July
   • Possible dates are July 16-17, but these must be confirmed with Steve Conway
B. Agenda
   • Reviewed the tentative agenda
   • Agenda includes subcommittee meetings which all ITAC members are encouraged
     to attended, even if they are not on a subcommittee
C. Travel, Hotel and Meals
   • The communications subcommittee will try to reserve a hotel block at a nearby hotel
     for everyone to stay in.
   • Every meal except lunch on Saturday will be provided
   • Discussed the possibility of a van for transportation, but little interest was expressed.
Item 3: Around the Table

A. Willis Marti discussed the IT input to the Texas A&M Strategic Plan

- Strategic Objectives and Tasks:
  - Provide State-of-the-Art Information Technology Infrastructure to Support Teaching, Research, and Outreach
    - New Data Centers
    - Campus Network Resiliency
    - TTVN Wide Area Network Upgrades
    - Telecommunications VoIP Migration and Fiber Infrastructure Upgrades
    - Educational Broadcast Services Backup Power
  - Deliver Effective Technology and Support for Teaching and Learning
    - Instructional Technology
    - Classroom Instructional Technology
    - Open Access Labs
  - Provide State-of-the-Art Administrative Services
    - Howdy and Compass Enhancements
    - Implement Additional Howdy and Compass Modules
    - Enhance Howdy and Compass Disaster Recovery
    - Enterprise Identity and Access Management
  - Ensure World-Class Research Information Technology Infrastructure
    - High Performance Computing
    - Data Intensive Campus Computer Network and High Performance Connections to National Research and Education Networks
    - Data Center Space for HPC and PI Research Computing
  - Deliver Quality and Cost Effective Shared IT Services to Texas A&M University and the A&M System
    - Support and Expand Existing Shared IT Services
    - Create Centralized Virtualization and Storage Infrastructure
    - Create Centralized Email Shared Services
    - Document Management Consolidation
    - Participate with Other A&M System Members in Developing New Shared IT Services
    - Shared Disaster Recovery Data Center for the A&M System

- Strategic Plan includes Appendices with specifics for each department within Texas A&M IT

- Discussion:
  - Strategic Initiatives will cost money
  - Managing systems within a department is less costly to the department than using Texas A&M IT services
    - But the cost to the University may be increased by running services within a department
  - Machine Room
    - There is an inequity in costs because networking installations are included in building costs, but CIS must include these costs in machine room pricing.
    - When CIS builds a new machine room, there is a fear that it will still not be large enough for academic departments to use it
A top down mandate is the best way to ensure that departments use the centralized machine rooms
- Networking Funding
  - Consider a knowledge worker funding model instead of a fee-per-port model
- ACTION ITEM: Willis and Michelle: provide a copy of the Strategic Plan to the ITAC listserv
- ACTION ITEM: All ITAC members: read the strategic plan

B. Rick Young
- Implementation of Network Access Control (NAC)
  - Make sure machines are clean before getting on the network
  - Know who’s connected
- Remote Access
  - Considering Remote Desktop Protocol (RDP)
  - Will there be a centralized solution?
- VPN for private vLANs
  - Veterinary equipment vendors require access to the machines
  - Creating VPN access to private vLANs to fulfill this need

C. Stephanie Leary
- Working to get on Virtualized machines in the CIS machine rooms

B. Bill Chollett
- Identity Management
  - Visiting professors
  - Health Sciences Center
  - Acting effective as a public library, thus providing service to everyone

C. Nolan Flowers
- Dealing with professors who expect their own way.

D. Lauri Brender
- Considering name change
- Mandated move to Microsoft Exchange

E. Andy Bland
- Offsite business continuity
- Need to have the same cost to move to CIS machine rooms

F. Dave Jennings
- Desktop virtualization
- Large labs
- Centralized email if costs come down
  - ACTION ITEM: Willis will follow up with Pete and Cheryl about the price of Exchange services
- Suggested Zimbra demonstrations and presentations to show that it is a versatile tool

G. Henrik Schmiediche
- Expressed concern that consolidation of IT services will not directly help his college
H. Becky Carr
  • Suggested creating teams that combine Texas A&M IT and the ITAC who could provide technology reviews to colleges and units
  • Agencies have begun similar reviews

Additional Discussion
  A. Considered having only one meeting a month in the summers
  B. Plan to discuss further at next meeting