

**OIT Executive Advisory Board
Meeting Notes
November 28, 2007**

Attending: Jim Gilchrist, Sue Brodasky, Len Ginsberg, Diane Anderson, Lowell Rinker, Peter Parker, Bassam Harik, Rick Gershon, Tim Greene

Jim thanked everyone for their participation. This Board has been formed as a response to the OIT audit.

Agenda Items:

1. Meeting Schedule: The intention is to meet quarterly with additional meetings between if items arise that need a more immediate attention. The meeting dates were set as follows:

Tuesday, January 15, 2008 at 1 p.m. in the Business and Finance Conference Room

Tuesday, April 15, 2008 at 1 p.m. in the College of Engineering

Tuesday, July 15, 2008 at 1 p.m. – location to be determined

Tuesday, October 21, 2008 at 1 p.m. – location to be determined

2. Meeting Notes: Jim reported that once Sue completes the notes they will be circulated to the Board members for review, prior to them being post on line at: www.wmich.edu/oit/groups
3. Role of Board: A handout was provided of the draft role of the Board and solicited input. Jim explained the make up of the Board. His notion is to have this group serve in policy and strategic decision making that involves commitment of resources, and not on the technical concerns. It was questioned how students were being represented. Jim is talking to the WSA and GSAC leadership to clarify that item and also mentioned the student participation on the faculty senate academic information technology council, which Peter Parker is chairing. Each member of this Board has contact with students in their positions; he encouraged them to bring those perspectives to this group. There was a caution against creating any new student organization group participation. Since WSA and GSAC already have systems in place it would be best to plug into the existing meetings. Jim referenced the Student Consultants that worked on the SIS implementation, as a good model for this Board. The role of the Board was approved as provided.
4. E-Mail Strategies: It was explained that most universities are watching the changes in student behavior stemming from the market place and the resulting effects of services provided. One such consideration is e-mail service providers. The newest version of the Sun e-mail system, used for student web-mail, is available but the previous product has not held up to the vendor's promises. Prior administration had been discussing moving all e-mail services to Google, but it has been determined that at the same time significant monies were spent on new hardware to run the Sun system. It was questioned if that hardware could be used for another purpose, to which the reply it is a possibility. It is anticipated that the new Sun version will be better than the current one because a calendar feature has been added. GroupWise is most commonly used by faculty and staff and is a robust system. GroupWise has been starved for resources over the past eight years, so it is operating on equipment that is soon to fail. Some areas opted to added servers in their buildings to assist in running it, but under past administration they were not supported. As it stands now we have an e-mail system that the students do not like, and one for faculty and staff that is on its last leg. OIT staff had been asked to provide a proposal to stabilize GroupWise, a copy of which was provided, and shows that phase one would cost \$207,000. Thus moving ahead with e-mail services is an issue of University strategy. There is a trend with other universities providing one system for students and a separate one for faculty and staff, however all faculty and staff are required to use the same system, products like GroupWise or Microsoft Exchange for faculty/staff and Google for students. Discussion was held regarding products and services provided. Merit is offering e-mail hosting with Mirapoint which Central Michigan has gone to. There was discussing regarding the question of what e-mail needs to do in serving the University. Board members provided the following list of needs for e-mail services:

- Seamless interface between faculty and students
- Large file transfer and hosting
- Abundant address lists
- Access world wide via the internet
- Uniform look and operation via internet
- Access to mobile units
- Spam filters
- PC and Mac platforms
- Centrally managed
- Allow students to keep the e-mail address forever
- Longevity of product
- Ability to send emergency communications
- Mass e-mailing
- Same suffix of all users (i.e. @wmich.edu)
- Calendar and calendar sharing

It was confirmed that the students prefer the g-mail environment. GroupWise is being used across campus for projects other than e-mail, for example the travel authorization and expenditure approvals. It was determined that this discussion has led to a conclusion that Jim should invite the service providers to WMU for a internal presentation. He will be contacting Google, Mirapoint, and GroupWise and potentially others. Discussion was held regarding effects of a disaster scenario on e-mail services.