

OIT Executive Advisory Board Meeting Notes October 21, 2008

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

Jim provided a report of OIT project updates. He reviewed the following topics with the committee and indicated he was open for questions on any of the items that he did not speak about specifically.

Management Practices

Peer Approval: OIT has changed its practice in regards to approval of upgrades/outages. There had not been central manager approval process for upgrades/outages previously. While web postings had been the mode of communications for the changes it was found not to be accurate. Now the OIT managers meet bi-weekly and are presented change requests. They review and approve those requests as a group.

Professional Development Budgets: There had not been monies budgeted for training previously. Some staff members had taken annual leave and paid for training themselves. This year \$62 thousand of base money was committed for professional development. Those funds were from savings generated out of vacant positions. This fiscal year that has been increased by 10%. Jim noted that in reviewing other OIT departments typically \$150 thousand is spent annually on professional development.

Performance Problems: Several areas have had some adjustments for performance problems. Support has been provided for those instances including HR managed performance improvement plans.

Telecom Budget: The telecom budget had been projected to end at a \$427 thousand loss for 2007-08 FY. The Provost's office helped offset that deficit by allowing the surplus of Viji's salary to cover moving staff compensation for two positions out of the telecom budget and placing them in fund 11. Also Brad and Kanti managed the project to change Educable from WMU carrying individual contracts with each station provider to a contract with one provider. An RFP was sent out and seven companies attended the bid meeting which resulted in three formal bids and ultimately Charter was selected from those. The switch in service was the Friday before Fall classes started. We are providing the same channel line up plus a few additional channels. Further discussion was held regarding the digital conversion in February. It was noted that the conversion will be handled by Charter. Jim intends to do some experimenting with internet TV.

Overall OIT Service Accomplishments

Improved Reliability: There has been significant improvement due to gaining knowledge of these systems.

Security Patches and Version Upgrades: OIT started the year with a backlog of security patches and updates needing to be done, so a plan was developed to get us up to date on production servers for all enterprise systems. With these being implemented there was an extensive number of weekend outages. Most are completed and caught up at this time. Enterprise systems will continue on a schedule of twice a year for system shut downs. The only exception to this schedule is if we receive an emergency system patch.

PCI Compliance: PCI compliance, the set of standards for payment card services on line, affects every way we accept credit cards on campus, including tuition and housing payments. This project has involved staff hours in OIT, Auxiliary Enterprises, Accounting, and Student Services. Touchnet is the only system that requires upgrades be implemented every month due to PCI compliance. Discussion was held regarding the time line for upgrades being completed.

Significant Initiatives

Banner 8 Upgrade: Banner 8.1 is scheduled to be released next week. Most likely it will be implemented in January 2010. This project will require thousands of hours of staff time and most of that will be outside of OIT staff. It will involve Registrar, Financial Aid, Accounts Receivables, and both admissions offices. Already this week there is a consultant on campus today for functional users to get an overview of new system. They will develop a timeline for upgrading. Discussion was held. It was noted that SunGard has released a new product called Strategic Enrollment Module which is a rewrite. We will eventually have to purchase and implement this new module because SunGard will eventually drop support for the current admissions module.

Applications Performance Monitoring: A couple of products have been demonstrated on site for applications that identify system slow downs. Discussion was held regarding examples. These systems are fairly expensive but funding will be from OIT.

Hardware for Banner and PeopleSoft: Upgrades for hardware that house both Banner and PeopleSoft are already underway, both in the UCC server room and the BTR park.

Unresolved Issues

Voice Over IP Phones: The current phone system is obsolete and beyond its expected lifetime. The phone switch is also at the end of lifecycle. To replace it would be approximately \$2 million. It is preferred that we change to voice over IP phones, which would no longer require phone line cabling but rather would use data lines. It was noted that fax machines would still need the traditional phone lines. Conversion to IP phones is expected to have high up front replacement costs. Discussion regarding what services would be purchased with the phones such as voice mail since that system is also at the end of its life. This project will be a topic of discussion for the committee.

New Business

1. A question was raised regarding faculty computing monies. It was confirmed that there isn't a line item funding for that purpose. Discussion was held regarding allocation differences for one time funds versus continuing monies. It is anticipated that there will be additional funding this year for faculty computing from OIT, but that is not the preferred model. There will need to be some planning to have it as reoccurring funds budgeted within the departments. It was noted that the same budgeting issue exists for classroom technology, being that there is budgeting for maintenance but no line item for development/replacement. There are also staff computing needs in areas outside the academic units like Auxiliary Enterprises and Student Services.
2. It was questioned if OIT has been participating in the pandemic flu planning. OIT is doing an assessment of that now and is working with Student Affairs regarding working from home if necessary. Discussion was held.
3. It was noted that the Library's Voyager system does not have a test instance or fail over.