Technology Advisory Board (TAB)
Minutes of Meeting of October 27, 2004

Location: 4th Floor Conference Room, Andy Holt Tower
Time: 2:30PM

Attendance:

Members: Barbara Dewey, Steve Dolgner, Stephen Esposito, Jim Gehlhar, Jessica Hodge, Judy Huddleston, Julie Little, Anne Mayhew, Mike McNeil, Camellia Meehan, Chaz Molder, Faye Muly, Stan Pinkleton, Jelena Pjesivac-Grbovic, Rita Smith, Gretchen Whitney, Gena Wilson, Jenny Wright.

Others: Brice Bible, Larry Jennings, Robin Mcneil, Judy Travis, A. J. Wright.

Steve Dolgner opened the meeting by welcoming Gena Wilson, who has replaced James Price as the Finance Office representative.

Bylaw Changes

Steve Dolgner called on Faye Muly to review the changes to the Bylaws which were presented at last month's meeting for consideration and first vote. It was noted that the January meeting was added to the schedule last year due to the acceleration of the award process; awards are now made in February prior to the departmental budget cycle for the next fiscal year. In addition, titles of administrative members have been updated to accurately reflect the unit representation, but remove the specific titles. This will avoid the need for updates as titles may change in the future. The motion was made, seconded, and unanimously approved to accept the Bylaw changes.

FY 06 Award Process

Ms. Muly announced that Nancy Gnilka, who has coordinated the award process for a number of years, is on extended annual leave prior to retirement. She will certainly be missed. Ms. Gnilka had drafted documents for the FY 06 fiscal year, and Robin McNeil and the Lab Services Group, as well as Judy Huddleston, with Robert Osborne, from the OIT Business Office have provided help in continuing the process.

Once again, there is a web-based request form which will come to the OIT office via e-mail. After review by TAB today, notification letters of the award process will be sent to deans, directors, and department heads. The submission period is November 8 through December 10. The deans' offices are asked to prioritize the requests from their colleges by December 17. Then a chart will be prepared of the requests, including budget estimates and the deans' priorities. This chart will be reviewed by this Board at the January 19, 2005 TAB meeting. Subsequent to that review, the award letters will be issued by the middle of February. The guidelines for the request forms are the same as last year with one phrase added to item number one: "Follow priorities assigned by deans, based on the SACS unit goals."

Other guidelines will remain the same and are as follows:

1. Follow priorities assigned by deans, based on the SACS unit goals.
2. Give priority to low cost, but high impact, applications.

3. Consider DLABS services and computing lab hardware/software before funding for peripherals such as GPS devices, cameras, VCRs, and other equipment.
4. Requests for network installation will be considered only if there is a departmental commitment for the recurring monthly port charges

5. Make an effort to equitably distribute the funding among as many departments as possible.
6. Give special attention to colleges or departments that did not receive significant investments in the previous year.

7. Departmental staffing will not be considered for funding.

The SACS reference was added so that deans will be cognizant of the larger strategic goals of the university. Dr. Anne Mayhew explained that SACS is the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, the accrediting body for universities and colleges. We are presently going through the re-accrediting process which occurs every decade. This year one of the focuses of the SACS process is to integrate campus planning with academic goals.

Dr. Gretchen Whitney requested clarification of the phrase which said "Awards are not for a specific amount of monies…" Ms. Muly explained that the Office of Information Technology takes fiscal responsibility for the technology fee and thus does not distribute or transfer money; OIT provides equipment or services based on the support request.

Ms. Judy Huddleston, Director of the OIT Business Office, explained that hardware purchases may be bundled to reduce costs by purchasing in bulk. Nevertheless, a budget estimate is required in the proposal form to facilitate the review process. Ms. Robin McNeil added that the cost may increase or decrease, depending on the market at the time of purchase.

Educause Student Guide to Evaluating Information Technology on Campus

Mr. Dolgner reported that the SGA Student Services Technology Committee is soliciting feedback from students to the questions in the Guide. They have begun some preliminary investigation but haven't gone into any real depth at this point. He stated that this committee will be working on the project during several meetings next month. He would like to use this data as a basis for strategic planning to establish some broad information technology goals.

Dr. Gretchen Whitney said the faculty senate information technology committee (ITCOMM) has discussed the Educause Guide, but has taken no action to date.

UTK Response to SPAM

Although not on the agenda, Ms. Muly introduced a discussion of SPAM in response to recent questions from students. Mike McNeil, the OIT Executive Director of Computing System Services (an ex-officio member of TAB), Larry Jennings, Manager of the NT and Unix Systems Group, and A. J. Wright, a Systems Administrator of this group were present to provide information on this topic.

It is recommend that you forward spam e-mail to abuse@utk.edu. Although not all reports receive direct replies, each one is read and investigated. E-mail spam that is of a potentially serious legal nature is followed up with appropriate authorities.

When a particular site is known to send large amounts (possibly tens of thousands) of messages, by subscribing to several different services, UTK will temporarily suspend connections from that site until they can handle the compromise or problem at that particular site.

When the university is inundated with spam from a particular site, it may be blocked. This prevents an overload on the UTK Network. In the filtering system, all external e-mail that comes through our central server is stored, anti-virus checked, and passed on to that machine. Some departments who have their own servers use our central server as a filter. Everyone on the UTK system can go into the website at accounts.utk.edu to set their own spam score, using the SPAM ASSASIN application.

Mr. Brice Bible brought up the fact that there is now a direct link from our homepage in the lower right-hand corner by the UT Portal where someone can click and report either abuse or security incidents. Mr. Bible asked the students if they had a problem with spam, with a response of a fairly small amount on their UTK accounts. Mr. Bible asked if they had supplied that information on the e-mail survey that was issued last Wednesday. With the subject of the survey, Mr. McNeil said that on the first day, we had received 3,200 responses from faculty, staff, and students. He did not have a current count of total responses.

Other Business

E-Mail Recoverability: In response to questions, Mr. McNeil advised that requests for recovery of e-mail have come mostly from administrators and, on occasion, from people whose hard drive crashes. Back-up retention policy for e-mail is two weeks from the date it is deleted from your files, unless it has been deleted the day it was received before it was backed up overnight. Mr. Jennings said they receive requests for restoring lost e-mails an average of two times a month. In response to an inquiry about student e-mail falling under public disclosure, Dr. Mayhew said she has discussed this with the General Counsel and was assured that most student records including e-mail are protected under the Federal Education Right to Privacy Act (FERPA).

UT Alumni E-mail Account: Ms. Camellia Meehan asked if there was a way we could implement e-mail accounts for alumni. Mr. Bible responded that it has come up before and some universities already do it. One question that has come up in discussions was the open records law. There are concerns that once you are not a student those records are subject to this act. Mr. McNeil said that technically alumni e-mail can be provided, however, we would have to have larger and faster machines. Ms. Jenny Wright also voiced her interest in being on alumni e-mail.

Dr. Mayhew suggested some of the people from the Alumni/Development Office should further investigate this due to the complexities. This topic will be on a future TAB agenda.

University Center Renovation Plans: Mr. Bible brought up the subject of the UC renovation. He has attended several preliminary meetings and suggested bringing students into this discussion with administrators. Jenny Wright felt that the student members of this Board would be a good focus group for this due to their awareness of technology and needs on campus. Tim Rogers, Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs, has planned to get a survey to students on this issue.

VolPrint: Dean Barbara Dewey reported that the Dart machines for Hodges and AgVet Libraries are on order and should arrive in several weeks. A question was asked about the reasoning for duplexing as opposed to single print, when the cost is the same. It was explained as a possible way to conserve paper. This is one thing to be considered in a year when VolPrint is evaluated. Statistics will be kept for a full school year cycle to be able to make a complete evaluation. At that time possible changes could be made in the cost model. In response to a question about the volume of printing going up in departmental labs, Mr. Stan Pinkleton said that it did go up; however, now about seven departmental labs have signed up for VolPrint.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned. The next meeting of the Technology Advisory Board will be Wednesday, January 19, 2005 at 2:30PM, in the 4th Floor Conference Room, Andy Holt Tower.

Minutes by: Judy Travis