

Technology Advisory Board (TAB) Minutes of Meeting of April 19, 2000

Location: Andy Holt Tower, 4th floor conference room
Time: 2:00 - 3:05 pm

Attendance

Members: Allen Cain, Will Carver, Jim Gehlhar, Dewitt Latimer, Susan Metros, Joshua Morrison, Faye Muly.

Others: Eric Beaty, Becky Cassill, Holly Garrigan, Nancy Gnilka, Nathan Hammer, Keith Morton, Brock Thomas, Matthew Thigpen, Rob Power.

Discussion 1: Introductions

Muly asked each person to introduce him/herself because this was the first meeting since the Student Government Association elections. The new SGA President, Eric Beaty and Vice President, Becky Cassill and many new students were in attendance.

Eric Beaty noted he had met with Matt Disney, the outgoing TAB student co-chair, to review the activities of the Technology Advisory Board. Also, he indicated four new student voting members have been selected for appointment to this board and the fifth should be chosen before the next meeting.

Discussion 2: Review of FY00 Accomplishments

Computer Labs

Gnilka reported three Open Student Labs had been upgraded in the past year. Thirty-six computers were replaced in the Humanities Lab, forty-two in the Hodges Library Lab, and fifty-three in the Math Lab. Computer upgrades for the year totaled one hundred and thirty-one units. Based on a "trickle down" policy, many of the replaced computers were relocated to departmental labs in Physics, Sociology, the Ag campus, as well as student labs in the dorms and married student housing.

The new lab in Presidential Court opened in January and each of the twenty-eight new desktops is connected to the campus backbone via 100mb connections. SGA input was credited with the success of establishing this new lab.

In a discussion on the various platforms it was noted while PCs seem to have greater popularity with many students, the lab in Art and Architecture is populated with Macs. Much of this is due to a departmental program preference for particular specialized software. Several students requested the retention of Macs in this area be seriously considered when replacements were planned.

Educational Technology

Metros described the role and mission of the Educational Technology unit (formerly called Innovative Technology Collaborative) as enriching and supporting academic life through educational technology.

Academic teaching staff may attend courses in Blackboard and CourseInfo for on-line and course management applications. Metros noted that last year 76% of faculty who took technology courses were first-time participants. "Teaching with Technology" is a learning module available this summer and has an enrollment of 40. A Development Lab is also available for faculty to learn and "test drive" software.

Educational Technology also serves as an information clearinghouse and assists instructors in developing on-line courses. Currently, 448 instructors have course accounts.

Among the grants and incentives administered by this unit is the awarding of carts with projection equipment for classroom use. Last year eight carts were placed.

Networking

Latimer reported the primary goal of his DII Computing and Networking unit is to provide stability of service while meeting escalating end user needs for bandwidth. Issues of cost, use, and overhauling the campus backbone are a major focus. August 15 is the target date for installation of the new backbone with a one-year window to convert buildings from the legacy backbone to the new backbone.

Rewiring of the Physics and Nursing buildings is scheduled to be completed by August 15th. Wireless projects are also underway in selected campus areas. Other projects include mobile computing where users may plug in anywhere on campus, new directory services, and implementing commercial email packages for applications such as targeted bulk emailing.

Regarding connectivity for Fraternity Park, Latimer explained the problem is largely geological since that area of campus has an extensive layer of rock beneath the ground surface. Wireless is most likely the only appropriate connection method.

Responding to a question about student freedom to use web-based programs, Latimer stated his group's role was not to act as a censor, but to ensure adequate bandwidth is available for the campus. Therefore, persons identified as using a disproportionate amount of bandwidth will receive warnings. Repeated offenses will result in progressive measures through established channels of due process.

Latimer discussed the distinctions between Internet 1 and Internet2 type connections. Internet 1 is generally referred to as the "commodity" Internet while Internet2 is the next generation research backbone. UT has 45 Mbit DS-3 connections to both I1 and I2.

The next meeting will be 2:00 pm, July 19, 2000 in the 4th floor conference room of Andy Holt Tower.

Minutes prepared by Holly Garrigan and Frances Fogerson.