

UAA University Technology Council

Meeting Minutes

October 23, 2020

8:30 am – 10:30 am

Teams meeting

Attendance:

Present: Benjamin Shier, IT Services; Andrea Miller, IT Services, Veronica Howard, Faculty Senate/ACDLITe; Paul Wasko, AI&E; John Lutterman, College of Arts and Sciences; Alpana Desai, College of Business and Public Policy; Kim Riggs, College of Engineering; Brad Myrstol, College of Health; Al Grant, Community & Technical College; Mike Robinson, Consortium Library; Ian Bushell, Kodiak College; Amos Secoy, Mat-Su College; Don Bickley, Prince William Sound College; Alyona Selhay, Student Affairs; Ryan Rivers, USUAA

Guests:

Excused:

Absent: Rob Lewis, Kenai Peninsula College

1) Welcome and Introductions

- a. Approved meeting schedule for remainder of the year
- b. Co-Chair election
 - i. Veronica Howard nominated for reelection and approved

2) Review and approval of agenda

- a. Approved

3) Review and approval of past meeting minutes

- a. Motion approved to table to next meeting

4) Discussion items

- a. Student Technology Fee and FY21 Budget – *Benjamin Shier and Andrea Miller*
 - i. Overview of current STF budget
 1. An overview of the Budget document, which shows the last four years of approved budget and actuals along with a column for this year's budget, was provided.
 2. Last year, IT recognized there was a potential to see the next year starting with a deficit due to the unknown impact of spring semester refunds. Due to this, IT returned \$40k from Central Labs due to cost savings realized because of lab closures in the last semester, and \$30k from the Technology Support due to financial exigency vacancies. Another \$38k was returned due to the decommission of the sponsored labs program.
 - ii. Can we identify which STF budget line items are adjustable and which are not?

1. A number of these line items for IT are not adjustable, such as those for licensing, and some even don't cover the full amount. IT has absorbed remaining costs in the past but is currently unable to absorb any additional expenses.
- iii. What are the different pools of money?
 1. Andrea summarized each item. The committee will also be sent last year's presentations, which cover each of the line items.
 - iv. Looking at continued declines in student fees, and declines in general funds which impact the subsidies to many of these line items, how should these be addressed?
 1. This is one of the main responsibilities of the UTC. The committee will be discussing how to address the declines and distribute this year's STF at the next meeting.
 - v. Would like the opportunity to discuss the network fee.
 1. Network fee is the other student technology related fee. Of it, half goes to UAA it and the other goes to OIT. There is not a lot of transparency on how the fee is used at OIT.
 2. In broad terms, the network fee is on our telecommunication side, and supports access such as telephone infrastructure, Wi-Fi, network etc. This can be addressed at the next meeting.
 - vi. Interest in learning more about Kaltura, how it's used, and alternatives.
 1. General understanding is the Kaltura provides a platform to record and post videos for their coursework to Blackboard.
 2. We've seen an uptick in usage, as to be expected, in the past few semester.
 3. There's still the question as to if there are alternatives to Kaltura. IT would struggle to lead this conversation as we are not the primary users.
- b. IT COVID-19 Response – *Benjamin Shier*
 - i. In addition to the updates in the general updates agenda item, IT has been checking out Chromebooks in partnership with the Library and internet hotspots for students in need. Some colleges have been checking out mobile-lab laptops to students as well. IT has been continuing to communicate the availability of these devices.
 - c. General Updates from CIO – *Benjamin Shier*
 - i. Brief update on a few of IT priorities from this summer and what we've been working on this semester so far.
 - ii. Key priorities are support through COVID-19 and distance delivery including PC support internet access and the increasing technology need on campus. There

has been an increased digital approach, with upticks of use in Blackboard and Zoom along with distance and remote support.

- iii. Working on rolling out swipe card access across campus, with at least one door of access per building. IT is working with Facilities on deploying a new access management system to expand this. We're no longer looking at a few hundred people using the swipe card access, but rather thousands of people.
- iv. Bookstore textbook rollout:
 1. Bookstore now has textbooks being sold through the vendor Academos. IT has helped with the initial implementation and is now working on the student account and financial aid processes. We're on track on having that in place by spring enrollment.
 2. Why was there a change to Academos rather than purchasing textbooks in person? Academic Affairs would be the best group to answer that question. From an IT perspective, we know that there were many students making textbook orders electronically, which was creating a lag in the Bookstore's processes and being able to fulfil orders.
- v. UAA has an aging data center environmental system (cooling, backup power, etc). IT has had issues with that system cropping up more frequently and has been looking at backup plans. IT has identified core sites for backups at RH and AAC and is putting together funding for the replacement of equipment. The plan is for work to be done over winter break, with a goal of limited disruption.
- vi. Computer labs are closed and unused around campus. We've been able to keep the Library central lab open. IT has also partnered with CBPP to have the CBPP computer lab available through the Library and online. A Virtual Lab environment was recently deployed, and virtual labs are now available to departments to move their labs to a virtual environment. There is no cost currently as funding has been provided by the CARES act.
 1. Do the departments know which of the labs are equipped for virtual access by students? What sort of information needs to be given to students, especially in relation to the course schedule, so students know which classes have a virtual lab component?
 - a. Labs are general college controlled, and their leadership is making decisions on labs. If the college identifies they have additional needs to make labs available, they can work with IT. The college can then communicate the students
 2. What type of labs can use the virtual lab?
 - a. There's a general lab with basic access. After that there are labs that may have specialty software, such as CAD or statistical software. There are also labs that have specialty hardware.

- b. Our team is not currently set up to set up the specialty hardware virtual, but we've been discussing options and are ready to work with departments on finding a solution.
- 3. Are departments reaching out to IT for support?
 - a. Yes, they are, and IT is working on proactively engaging to identify needs. There is a gap between IT being able to provide the need and departments recognizing the solution.
 - b. UTC members are encouraged to let their units know about the virtual labs potentially being a solution they can use. IT forecasted more interest in the virtual labs initially but have not seen it so far and would appreciate continued dissemination of the virtual lab environment across campus.
- vii. CBPP IT has centralized into IT Services. IT leadership has been working with the CBPP dean and leadership team this fall. As of October 11, we have transitioned to IT being the IT Service provider for CBPP. We meet with CBPP on a weekly basis as a part of the transition process. IT is excited to have them on board.
 - 1. With the transition, will it be seamless from the perspective of the students and the faculty?
 - a. A seamless transition is our goal. From experience there will always be some bumps in the road as we go through this transition. From colleges who have come on previously had some initial anxiety in the beginning, but a year down the road the colleges are happy with what they are getting.
 - b. One thing IT has done to help with a smooth transition is to have Jeremy, the CBPP IT staff who has moved into IT, is the primary staff serving CBPP at this time. IT is also meeting weekly with CBPP leadership and Jeremy to work through any issues or concerns.
- viii. While UAA IT delivers many IT services, at the UA level is the Office of Information Technology. UAA IT collaborates with OIT on many services. The CITO of OIT resigned earlier this week, and an interim, John Boucher (SP) has been announced. Ben knows John from previous roles and believes this interim appointment will be a positive change for UAA.
- ix. Question on Zoom security and Zoom bombing. Is there anything that can be done to address the security concern? This has been an issue nationally. Zoom has been addressing this with updated security and recommends either a password or a waiting room for all Zoom meetings.
- x. Question concerning the human side of IT Services. There are IT personnel around the nation that are experiencing burn out, high workload, and turn over due to the pandemic response. How are the IT staff doing? There are some key people we don't want to lose.

1. All those items are currently present in IT services. As we've seen continued to see budget cuts, and increased workload and requests for services this pressure is continuing to build. IT staff are reporting the highest workload they've ever had. Ben has been meeting with staff.
2. IT has been setting goal and initiatives, which will be presented to the committee at a future meeting. The IT office wants to and is used to saying yes to requests, wanting to provide those services.
3. With IT strategic planning, Ben has been working towards using strategic initiatives in managing priorities and workload. Team is feeling overloaded. Some of it is outside of our control, such as responding to changes caused by COVID, while others such as workload management and prioritization are within our control.
4. Additional concerns are around the compensation study, which identified that many IT staff are under compensated. With UA putting compensation increases on hold, that has created additional challenges.
 - xi. What is the best way that members of the UAA communicating for better support of ITS? Within the colleges, with your leadership and within other governance groups. Ben's goal is to be talking to these groups on a regular basis.
- d. Committee approved tabling new business items that were not addressed until the November meeting.

5) New Business

- a. Technology Survey
- b. Blackboard Move to the Cloud
- c. Long term PC Check Out/Loan Alternatives
- d. Review of First Week of Term Metrics
- e. Cyber Security Awareness Month and Training
 - i. Cyber Security Awareness month is October. There have been several notifications in the G&G and from OIT. IT is encouraging to review those notifications. Request to be aware of potential security concerns.

6) Adjourn

Items for next meeting

7) Tabled from previous meeting

- a. Technology Survey
- b. Blackboard Move to the Cloud
- c. Long term PC Check Out/Loan Alternatives
- d. Review of First Week of Term Metrics
- e. IT Budget Project

8) Canvas Pilot

Future Meeting Dates:

- Nov 20 8:00 -10:00a
- Dec 18 8:00 -10:00a
- Jan 22 8:30-10:30a
- Feb 26
- March 26
- April 23