

MINNESOTA STATE COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
November 15, 2011

Technology Committee Members Present: *David Paskach, Chair; Trustees Brett Anderson and Michael Vekich*

Technology Committee Members Absent: *Alfredo Oliveira Vice Chair; and Trustee Philip Krinkie*

Other Board Members Present: *Scott Thiss, Cheryl Dickson and Jacob Englund*

Leadership Council Committee Members Present: *Vice Chancellor Darrel Huish, President Judith Ramaley and President John O'Brien*

The Minnesota State Colleges and Universities Technology Committee held its meeting on November 15, 2011, 4th Floor McCormick Room, 30 East 7th Street in St. Paul. Chair David Paskach called the meeting to order at 3:02 p.m.

1. Minutes of July 19, 2011 Technology Committee

The minutes of July 19, 2011 were approved as written.

2. Information Technology Update

Vice Chancellor Huish introduced the presidential liaisons to the Leadership Council. Presidents Judith Ramaley and John O'Brien, will assist in planning topics that will be brought forward to the Leadership Council.

This year the system had an extremely challenging start to fall semester. During the third and fourth weeks of August, there were periods of instability in Integrated Statewide Records System (ISRS). The student services system would slow down, begin to lock up, then the system would (usually) repair itself; but not before the disruption affected students. This happened multiple times each day during these two weeks. To work around it required patience and persistence from student services personnel throughout the system whose efforts are applauded.

Another full day outage took place on Monday, November 7th. Since then there have been other isolated problems, most likely related to the necessary upgrades to the Oracle and Uniface environments. Situations like these can be difficult to diagnose and resolve, and this one has been especially vexing both for users and for Oracle.

The encouraging news is that late last week Oracle identified a database bug and sets of related patches that may resolve the problem. This issue continues to be Information Technology Services' (ITS) highest priority. One should note that although there were problems, the system experienced a relatively good startup for the Desire2Learn teaching and learning environment.

Vice Chancellor Huish introduced Jim Pulliam, the new Chief Information Security Officer (CISO). Jim comes to us from Salt Lake City Community College where he was both the Chief Information Officer (CIO) and the CISO.

Vice Chancellor Huish also introduced Marty Gang, the new Associate Vice Chancellor of Infrastructure. Marty comes from the Maricopa Community Colleges, where he was in charge of the infrastructure and applications. Prior to that, Marty was the CIO of Columbia College in California.

With these two important hires, the ITS leadership team is nearly fully staffed with exception of the position recently vacated by Gerry Rushenberg's retirement. A search is currently taking place to fill this Business Intelligence and Data Warehouse role.

Another significant activity that ITS has been conducting is listening sessions. ITS sent managers, directors and lead technologists to Lake Superior College and the Northeast Higher Education District. These listening sessions focus on a wide range of topics, including what is confusing, what could be better, and examples from the campuses of best practices. About four or five of these visits take place each year. These sessions have tremendous benefits in increasing ITS's knowledge and ability to better serve campus needs. Vice Chancellor Huish expressed appreciation to President Sue Collins and President Pat Johns for hosting these sessions.

Trustee Anderson inquired if the outage on November 7, 2011 impacted the student dashboard used for features like registration and how was it communicated to users. Vice Chancellor Huish confirmed that this outage affected all student services. The outage was communicated using multiple methods, including messages sent out to CIOs, listserves and webpages like status.mnscu.edu.

Chair Paskach inquired if the issue resided within the updated Oracle database. Vice Chancellor Huish confirmed that the problem resides in the Oracle database. What happened is an accumulation of issues. Recently the system updated to Oracle 10 and then to Oracle 11. There were issues with things that were expected to work in Oracle 11. Although testing of upgrades takes place, it is difficult to emulate in a test environment the high volume of usage that a semester start entails. Considerable changes have been made in coding applications that serve students and how Oracle optimizes their databases.

3. Service Delivery Strategy

Vice Chancellor Huish shared a PowerPoint that depicts progress to further implement the Service Delivery Strategy (SDS). This document provides a timeline of what has been done so far and the process used. It is important that ITS align with the Strategic Framework and Chancellor Rosenstone's work plan. The SDS serves as a connection to the number III.2 on the Strategic Framework work: "to provide the highest value and most affordable higher education option." The SDS assists us in moving to create clarity about which technology services will be done by the system office, by consortia, by partnerships and/or by individual institutions.

The CIOs are completing an application inventory. The information gathered will include the application name, business purpose, maturity level, initial cost, on-going cost, agility for change and where the technology resides.

There is considerable excitement about the survey. The CIOs will be able to use this information to collaborate with other colleagues using a particular technology for a particular business function. This information will identify areas where campuses are converging around one or two dominant solutions. Then a decision can be made to pursue a strategy as a system office initiative or perhaps a Campus Service Cooperative initiative.

President Ramaley commented that the progress reported is a fundamental change that will allow the system to be creative, while bringing our differences together to inform each other. The power of this is yet to be revealed. The campuses are extremely supportive of this effort.

President O'Brien stated that decisions to provide services systemwide have been taking place for years, for instance the adoption of Desire2Learn as a system application. More recently a decision was made by the Board to approve the expansion of Hobsons. This application started out on a few campuses and has moved into being provided and used by a consortium of campuses. This type of activity will play a critical role in leveraging purchasing power in the system and creating efficiencies across the system.

Chair Paskach expressed appreciation for the deliberate aspects of this strategy that will allow informed decisions to be made. This committee will want to have updates on the Service Delivery Strategy.

4. Board Committee Goals

Vice Chancellor Huish stated that the hope is to have a goal that is aligned with the work that is happening across the system as well as the Strategic Framework. It would be helpful if the Technology Committee considered adopting a goal to sponsor, and monitor and provide council on the Service Delivery Strategy.

President Ramaley responded that this is a new process that will involve planning and action as it develops.

Vice Chancellor Huish stated that it has helped to have this committee provide counsel on the strategy and to know that the trustees are prepared to support its continued development.

Chair Paskach asked Chancellor Rosenstone to provide his thoughts on whether the Technology Committee should shepherd the continued development of the Service Delivery Strategy. Chancellor Rosenstone expressed excitement; this strategy is completely in alignment with the future plans for the system. As this model moves forward decisions to act will be made, rather than waiting to make changes to where services are being delivered. This will allow the system to decide what to do collaboratively or in partnering that may result in savings. It will also define what to leave to the individual campuses, if there are no gains in economies, efficiencies or gains in working together. There may be potential savings in hardware as well.

Chair Thiss stated that this is an appropriate goal for the Technology Committee as it is in alignment with the Strategic Framework.

The Technology Committee will adopt the goal **to provide leadership and support in the development and implementation of the Service Delivery Strategy initiatives across the system.**

Chair Paskach adjourned the Technology Committee meeting at 4:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Christine Benner