

Duke Office of Information Technology

Minutes

December 8, 2005

Members present : Owen Astrachan, Pakis Bessias, John Board, Shailesh Chandrasekharan, Tammy Closs, Dick Danner represented by Ken Hirsh, Shiva Das, Angel Dronsfield, Nevin Fouts, Tracy Futhey, Michael Gettes, Craig Henriquez, Billy Herndon, Deborah Jakubs, David Jamieson-Drake represented by Bob Newlin, Roger Loyd, Gregory McCarthy, Kyle Johnson, George Oberlander, Lynne O'Brien, Mike Pickett, Rafael Rodriguez, Molly Tamarkin, George Turner, Robert Wolpert

Guests: Jim Rigney, Duke Computer Store; Ginny Cake, OIT; Ed Gomes, Library; Pat Driver, OIT; Mike Gunter, Pratt School of Engineering, Julian Lombardi, OIT; Dmitriy Morozov, Computer Science

Start time : 4:05 p.m.

I. Review of Minutes and Announcements:

? Oracle Collaboration Suite

Michael Gettes - Duke has recently acquired the Oracle Collaboration Suite. Most of you know we had been looking to obtain this product as a result of the ITAC Calendar Committee as the calendar to best fit the OIT infrastructure and to be a service to eventually offer to the rest of the institution. We'll be rolling out Oracle over the next few months at OIT; once we have worked out support issues, we will offer it to the rest of the institution. Oracle's main purpose is calendaring and scheduling, though there are other capabilities; if and how we make use of those has to be explored.

Mike Pickett - After a month-long search including folks from around the country, I am happy to say we have employed Molly Tamarkin as the new Associate Dean for Arts & Sciences Information Systems and Technology and OIT Director of Arts & Sciences IT Services.

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II. CIEMAS machine room update - Pat Driver, Mike Gunter

Pat Driver - Because the machine room in CIEMAS is a different size and shape than the old machine room, the floor layout makes it difficult to lay out the room like you normally would. It was initially designed to have three long rows; we eventually went with shorter rows, aligned with the floor. We started noting other problems, like that we needed to have sub-floor sealed because it was creating concrete dust. In the discovery phase, we figured out that we needed HVAC where the UPS was, and we have quotes on those kinds of things. We determined that there was only one electrical breaker for

the entire room, so we installed a few more breaker boxes. Just in the last week we have written an SLA and we are going through an approval process. Two weeks ago we officially moved Dan Sorin's 80 servers into the room; two weeks before we added Rachel Brady's servers.

John Board - For background, the room is bigger than Pratt needs on day one, so OIT is going to use that space until the Telcom space is available.

Pat - We have room for 27 more racks to go; we still need a second UPS for power. FMD is putting in an address file system so each rack will be given a code for its physical location to help identify things. We will also have to add two more boards for monitoring. In addition, we'll be getting an FM200 fire system.

Tracy Futhey - A couple of years ago in a different context we heard horror stories of machine rooms with problems, and we warned people that if they are building machine rooms don't do it on your own or with just FMD. I urge you, if anyone is building a machine room, get in touch with Pat.

John Board - Obviously that wasn't done with Pratt; has anyone done that for French?

Pat - I have gotten some contact from them looking for advice on the flooring, and I advised them not to use concrete tiles for the floor. Other than that they have not asked for my help.

III. Duke Digital Initiative - plans for Spring term and general update - Lynne O'Brien, Ginny Cake

Lynne O'Brien - I took the charts Ginny created in the spring and updated them with what actually happened in fall and what we have planned for the spring. The top row shows something of the growth in the iPod stuff. You will remember that this year we switched to providing iPods if faculty requested them to use in their course and it made any reasonable amount of sense. Faculty and staff are free to use iPods they received last year, so we figure that are more courses using iPods than these listed here. As of spring will have 42 courses and 80 sections across 28 different departments/program units. There has definitely been a growth in what people are doing. We're guessing we'll be giving iPods out to not all 1200 students; we found out our estimates last year were quite a bit off because our estimates of how many students already had iPods was wrong. Microphones not available for fifth-generation iPods yet, so we're offering the fourth-generation devices for most courses.

John Board - When you discuss support and customer service, what's the sense of how time divides, does it correspond to how the money goes?

Lynne - A big part of planning for the spring we need to do is just that, because the number of devices out there has increased so much and the amount of activity has increased so much, we need to figure out how we are going to do that.

Ginny Cake - One of the aspects you're talking about is using iPod-like devices. There are lots of questions we need to answer, such as "Are we going to go to a recommended device?" Answers to those questions will drive support. How do we continue that support for both, is it a service both will provide, something CIT does some of, but not all?

Robert Wolpert - Support costs will climb if you move from 100 percent iPod to a motley mix of mp3 players. Is that something you are looking at?

Ginny - Yes, we want to look at how different decisions affect various aspects of the project. We assume that soon there will be a device that does similar to what the iPod does. Right now they do bits and pieces, but not everything. With Julian Lombardi coming on board, we will be handing the gauntlet to Julian in a lot of these initiatives.

John - Is there some interest in continuing the DDI another year?

Tracy Futhey - The DDI is a broader project and not iPod specific. In that context, we will certainly continue DDI for another year. Over the next few months we will be evaluating options for the iPod component, as well as the more general program. There is a range of ways we could approach this.

IV. Futures forum: backup & archive - Mike Pickett

Mike Pickett - We started with looking at what could possibly go wrong. After everyone was thoroughly horrified, we had some people describe what they thought what were well-running systems. What was interesting to me is how many people have been able to get their administrators to support things like user-restore capabilities where users could restore files they deleted themselves. The question everyone else had: how do we get administrators to spend money on this? We decided that we needed to be able to tell stories so administrators realize it's not all about bits and bytes. It's about things like restoring research data, which has real consequences on faculty time and staff time that add up to be more expensive. Having people at the Dean or administrator level understand what is a reasonable level to spend money on is important. We had a good discussion around what would be next steps, and George Oberlander volunteered to start a group around coming up with best practices; folks from DHTS and OIT will be looking at what they can provide as far as institutional service. We need to communicate the clear message that this is not only happening in isolate cases, it's happening all the time, and we need to take better care of data and know if backups are working. We'll come back with some proposed good practices.

Molly Tamarkin - I think a nice thing that came out of this is some people did volunteer to come and look at other departments. A lot of people noted some solutions didn't scale down to small departments, so I hope we can look at how OIT can help with their backup or pool small groups together so they can have off-site backup as well.

Mike - Another thing people did is said we don't want to store backup tapes next to your server, so we can put ours over there with yours and we'll put yours over with ours; there are other simple things you can do to dramatically increase safety.

Michael Gettes - As a friendly reminder, Chris Cramer's group is available to come look at your computing environment with respect to security needs.

Mike - Jess Mitchell took notes and created a wiki on one of Molly's wiki sites with the notes and presentation materials. You can access this information at https://www.nicholas.duke.edu/wiki/collab/backup_archive:index

V. Microsoft - Jim Rigney

Jim Rigney - Microsoft has a license program for institutions, and it's a very good deal. Several years ago Microsoft instituted a subset of institutional licensing called student licensing. It included only four products and could only be purchased by students, who had to sign a license agreement and had to register online. Those products were selling

for around \$80. That still left faculty and staff paying around \$200 for office. Microsoft has changed, and there are now four products available for \$80 for faculty and staff. We've been running some ads in The Chronicle to let people know it is available. There is a license form to sign, and users must register the product online.

Robert Wolpert - Does the agreement go forward far enough that it will cover Microsoft Vista?

Jim - I've been asking Microsoft this question. Microsoft's answer today is "campus agreement", i.e. there is no upgrade path; we have to buy it.

VI. Other Business

End of Term reception.

End time : 5:00 p.m.

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