Annual Report (AY 2010-2011) to the Campus Senate

Submitted by
Academic Technology Committee

This report summarizes the major issues discussed and recommended by the Academic Technology Committee (ATC) during academic year 2010-2011.

Blackboard 9 “Grade Center”
While the rollout of Blackboard 9 has gone smoothly, concerns were raised about a function in the “Grade Center”. Some faculty would like to be able to have their preference to list all students in the “Grade Center” persistently, rather than having to change their preference for each Blackboard session. COLRS is in the process of seeking possible solutions.

Microsoft Outlook Calendar Default Setting
ATC discussed the problem of the default setting for Microsoft Outlook Calendar which did not allow users to view and schedule meetings beyond one month. ITS investigated the issue and made modification in the newly installed Exchange 2010.

File-Sharing of Unauthorized Material
The Higher Education OPT Act requires that institutions have a plan to curb file-sharing of unauthorized material. ITS worked with Student Affairs to revise our policy, which is posted on the ITS website. When ITS receives a complaint involving students, it notifies Student Affairs and identifies the student sharing the files; then, Student Affairs contacts the students to discuss with them the types of sharing that are legal and illegal. If a complaint were to be received that involved faculty or staff, ITS would notify the appropriate Dean, rather than Student Affairs.

eDocs for Shared Confidential Personnel Information
Using Blackboard as a repository for documents containing confidential information is a questionable practice because of the default system implementation (non-secure http) and staffing. Examples of such documents are faculty personnel review files and faculty/staff search applicant files. ATC requested a demonstration to showcase the security/privacy benefits of using eDocs (over Blackboard). As a result, ATC approved the following guideline: “The Committee recommends that shared confidential personnel information, such as searches, be shared through eDocs.” There is a handout on the ITS eDocs page, “Using eDocs for Committee Work”.

Technology Recommendations for the Administrative Review and Restructuring
ATC discussed in detail regarding the IT Report in Administrative Review and Restructuring (ARR) which includes the followings:

a) Implementing Banner modifications locally, which will reduce software maintenance expenses;
b) Consolidating data centers and decommissioning small server rooms;
c) Consolidating email and calendar services;
d) Considering consolidation, on an Enterprise-wide level, at all U of I campuses;
e) Reducing power consumption for personal computers, e.g. automatic shutdown of computers in labs;
f) Standardizing the desktop environment. UIS is currently doing this through the Desktop Refresh program.
g) Increasing reliance on cloud computing and other rapid-response outsourcing. University lawyers are working on legal and contractual issues. Testing of a virtual desktop environment at UIS is currently underway. Storing applications on a server could double the life of machines and make it easier to add and manage applications.
h) Renting storage from an outside organization.
i) Shifting from Centrix to VoIP.
j) Discontinuing phone service in dorms because 95% of our students have cell phones and/or use Skype (phones will be provided for students who need them).

Several members of the Academic Technology Committee met with a consultant from Huron Consulting Services to provide information for the review of their Technology Recommendations for the Administrative Review and Restructuring report.

**Life Cycle for UIS Accounts**

UIS has over 5000 accounts and needs to develop guidelines to manage the life cycle for these accounts. Resources are currently removed from employee accounts 30 days after they leave; for graduated students, it was suggested that resources remain available for one year (in case they return).

**Kaltura Video Platform**

Kaltura is an interactive open source video platform which would consolidate the currently 23,000 items stored on 3 UIS streaming servers and facilitate searches for those items. Kaltura can be integrated with lecture capture systems already in use. A Kaltura webinar was presented to ATC and more introductory and training workshops will be scheduled for UIS faculty/staf/students. Potential issues concerning intellectual property and third party ownership were raised and require further examination.

**Mobile Apps Guidelines**

A sub-committee is formed to develop compliance standards, guidelines, and policies and to consider issues related to iPhone/iPad and Android applications. This committee will review the apps to ensure that mobile apps developed for UIS confirm to standards set by the committee.

**USDOE New Regulations**

ATC is concerned about the new Department of Education regulations that require institutions be licensed in each state in which they offer online learning. The Department of Education may be looking for WCET to coordinate the State Authorization Rules, which become law on July 1st. The University of Illinois will request an extension of time to comply and could renew the extension each year. Some ATC members have been heavily involved in this process.