Minnesota State University, Mankato
Learning & Technology Roundtable
Tuesday, December 1, 2009
2:00 – 4:00 p.m.
CSU 238 (Nickerson Room)

Minutes

Present: Evan Bibbee, Queen Booker, Marcius Brock, Matt Clay, Becky Copper-Gelenz, Diane Coursol, Marilyn Delmont, Marni Dunning, Jan Eimers, David Georgina, Jennifer Guyer-Wood, Jeff Henline, Avra Johnson, Ted Johnson, Brian Jones, Sarah Koenen, Don Larsson, Peg Lawrence, Dawn Leech, Gary McKinley, Steve Robinson, Joan Roca, Bryan Schneider, Wayne Sharp, Steve Smith, Steve Vassar
Absent: Jane Baird, Ron Browne, Robert Dooley, Yvette Dulohery, Catherine Hughes, Chris Kaufman, Joshua Kilvington, Jayme Pretzloff, Danae Quirk Dorr, Murtaza Rajabali, Julie Snow, Gary Urban

Joan Roca and Steve Vassar welcomed the group to the last meeting of the semester and wished everyone happy holidays. They brought juice and cookies to share and encouraged everyone to refill as necessary. The agenda was reordered to allow Jeff Iseminger to present first.

ANNOUNCEMENTS & UPCOMING EVENTS/CONFERENCE (FYI)
- LTR Meetings spring semester: 1/12, 2/2, 3/2, 3/30, and 5/4 (CSU 238)
- Other Announcements

OLD BUSINESS
- Approval of Minutes of 11/10/09 (sent separately)
  LTR Minutes posted at: [http://mnsu.edu/ltr/ltrinfo.html](http://mnsu.edu/ltr/ltrinfo.html)
  A motion was made by Bryan Schneider and a second was made by Steve Smith to approve the minutes of November 10, 2009. The minutes were unanimously approved without change.

NEW BUSINESS
1. Faculty Technology Issues (from recent faculty meeting and others)
The LTR faculty met a few weeks ago to discuss issues pertaining to them. There was a lot of conversation on how to disseminate information about technology resources on campus. One suggestion was to have ITS put a separate web page dedicated to resources for faculty.

Another comment from the Faculty LTR meeting raised concern about how decisions such as software purchases or the Telepresence system were being made in ITS. Vice President Marilyn Delmont explained that since Telepresence is very costly, she has been asked to develop a business plan. She will be consulting with the deans and faculty in order to identify how Telepresence can serve our University. The company (Cisco) has verbally committed to in-kind equipment or money for the University. Marilyn has also applied for various grants (Stimulus Broadband Technology Grant). We still need faculty to work on this and if you are interested, please contact Bryan Schneider. Information will be sent to Donna Blom so that she can send a request for participation to the faculty.

Marilyn explained that SPSS 17 is very expensive and requires more server space. We could not afford it at this time. The decision was made to go with version 12, which was much more affordable and was initially funded jointly by Academic Affairs and the College of Business. The server-based version would cost several hundred thousand dollars to purchase. With version 12 there is a limited number of licenses available but if you need it, please call ITS. As far as other software needs, ITS does try to consult with faculty on purchases. A lot of times there is a partnership with ITS to purchase software but sometimes colleges purchase it outright out of their own funds. If you have questions on a specific software purchase, please contact Marilyn.
ITS is also considering applying for grants. They have begun researching potential avenues to supplement funding to make sure we don’t fall off the “cliff” in 2012. We rely very heavily on technology and hopefully we will be awarded grants to promote learning and teaching with technology.

Diane Coursol announced that many faculty have had opportunities to see how other institutions are served by their IT departments and wanted to let it be known that our campus ITS is wonderful and should be commended. One of the areas to improve is to provide more clarity on the process to make suggestions or software recommendations. For example, with the growing number of doctoral programs, we may need to have a higher level of SPSS. We need a place for faculty to discuss this information and also to access information and to see what is available to them. Marilyn agreed that a faculty portal would be a great idea and that the LTR meetings should provide such a forum for discussions. She said that ITS is working on streamlining the process so that everyone will know how decisions are made.

There are many great projects taking place on campus. We need to be able to spread the word so that other people know exactly what is going on. Communication needs to be improved. When introducing a new technology, we need to speak of it in more common terms. Some faculty may be afraid to admit that they haven’t stayed “up” with the technology and may be intimidated by the discussions.

For spring semester we need to begin thinking about ways to improve the decision-making process. As for assessment of online courses, we need to look at the actual learning outcomes. This should be a part of the assessment plans and does not fall under the LTR purview. These issues should be referred to the Assessment Sub Meet.

Another suggestion was that Faculty Best Practices could also be included as part of the LTR meetings to share what faculty are doing. It was agreed that the LTR could easily do that. We have a large group but please suggest topics for discussion. The LTR needs to hear about technology issues occurring in your colleges. Feel free to call or email Marilyn Delmont with issues or ideas that you have.

2. **Computer Standards – discussion of current practices on campus and for students**

There seems to be confusion for students when they are purchasing a computer. Should we set minimum standards for taking online courses? The College of Business is the only one where students are given guidelines as to what they need but we are not making clear the minimum computer requirements to other students. Student Sarah Koenen mentioned that she was told about the College of Business standards but feels that there should be an orientation to online coursework. Admissions also get that question asked a lot. Questions seem to be very course oriented. Specific courses require specific software. The issue would be to address the basic standard.

Many schools do this. The absence of requirements for programs other than the College of Business is creating some confusion. Extended Learning directs students back to the program. The idea of adding requirements to the syllabus was also discussed. There are many issues that the faculty at-large should know about. This discussion will come back to the LTR in the spring semester.

3. **FY09 ITS-funded Faculty Projects: Bill Wagner**

Bill Wagner thanked the LTR for making this possible. He has learned how to develop online modules for training and has created them for the Department of Corrections with support from the ITS-funded Technology Grant. He began by showing the LTR one of the modules that is being used by the Department of Corrections for training purposes. He explained that there are approximately 4,000 employees and each of them needs to take 40 hours of training per year. This equals roughly 16,000 hours of training each year.

The training modules are set up with an instruction session and then a quiz. The modules are set up at an eighth grade reading level and that has been challenging. Bill envisions having over 200 modules when he finishes but plans to include leadership academy and some certification modules as well. Only a small number of people have access to these modules but the plan is to open it up to a much larger group of employees. This project will be self-sustaining. Approximately $200,000 per year is projected from the Department of Corrections.

This method of training is very convenient. Bill stated that about $45,000 has been spent and there is approximately $11,000 left. He is in the process of building a certificate program that will be appropriate for any
probation officer in Minnesota. Modules underway include: History of Minnesota Corrections; History of Corrections; a module on Serial Killers; a “Great Escape” module. There are currently 3 general modules available, 2 relate to suicide prevention and 1 is on sex offenders.

When asked why these modules were done with Moodle versus D2L, Bill explained that Moodle provides easy access to outside users. It allows faculty to connect directly with people who may not necessarily be students. Marilyn Delmont added that this project was halted at one point but that Bill kept working on it and did not give up until it became reality.

Bryan Schneider asked if all of the 4000 state employees that will attend this program each year for certification will be revenue for the University and will they be added to our head count. Bill said yes, revenue comes into the college and they will be added to student head count. Thank you to Bill Wagner!

Web Redesign – Jeff Iseminger
Jeff Iseminger spoke of the MSU Web redesign project. He said that it was an attempt to transform our portal to our brand through the web. The Redesigners included: 1) Enrollment Marketing Team; 2) Tom DeRanitz, Marketing Consultant; 3) Pam Belding, Web Designer; 4) Web Development – ITS; and 5) Input from stakeholders on and off campus. The presentation “Transforming our Web Presence in the Marketplace” is available for download (10MB): at this address <http://www.mnsu.edu/ltr/PPT/LTR-Marketing-Web-report.ppt>

The “Current Students” page used to average around 20,000 visits per month. When the new site was deployed, the number of visits spiked to 600,000. This past September, we reached 773,000 visits. The new template has increased our page visits by 400 – 600%.

The Image Library will be expanded. This is available to everyone.

Matt Clay said that he read that 30 – 40% of students were using cell phone browsers to visit college websites. He asked Jeff about setting up a page for a mobile browser. Jeff explained that we have not moved forward with this yet but it is being planned for next semester. It is a piece of a different marketing project.

Jeff was asked what he saw as challenges to this project. Jeff said that staffing was a big problem and if we could add a staff person to update pages, the problem would be solved. As is, we don’t have the capability of updating the pages as we should; there are many departmental pages that need to be changed.

Another question was raised on whether the older web versions are being archived. Jeff stated that they have ‘major milestone’ pages saved but not every version.

4. Other

ONGOING TECHNOLOGY UPDATES
A. Student MSSA/STC (Students) – No report.

B. Extended Learning (Becky Copper-Gelenz) – Becky reported that the tracking of 100% online learners is defined as any student enrolled in a semester. They are interested in getting students that are online only. We are trying to get a better sense of who they are.

C. Library Services (Peg Lawrence) – Peg reported that the Library has been very busy with the semesters closing weeks. This afternoon, 129 computers were in use on the 1st floor and only 16 were idle. On grading day, we have 190 high school students coming to the Library for History Day. It will be busy in the Library. Peg also shared a “Play Away”, an MP3 book player.

D. ITS – VP/CIO (Marilyn Delmont) – Marilyn Delmont reported that ITS has received feedback on Veteran’s Day. There were some major printing issues that day and they are working on a “Plan B” for next year.

The MnSCU Project Management Access Committee will provide input as to what is working and what needs fixing. (ex. Student First, Oracle…) They will communicate with campuses regarding resources and upcoming projects. The Students First initiative already put together a draft timeline. No campuses were able to provide input. On December 10 and 11th, the MnSCU CIOs will meet and information will be presented. Three are 6
initiatives bundled into 1 and they are huge. Implementation is expected by June and for us not to have input will require a lot of resources from campus. The basic requirements were identified 4 years ago and may not be the same anymore. To have the application implemented by 2011 would take an army of people. Manpower concerns will be voiced.

MnSCU Vice Chancellor Linda Baer sent an application for us to participate with the Department of Commerce in a sustainable broadband initiative. The deadline was August 20th and the memo was received on September 25th.

There is still an opportunity to participate in a Public Computer Center initiative. We would need to partner with the community on this initiative. Marilyn will be sending information to the Deans and Vice Presidents to check for interest. We would have to identify which partner we would team up with. We have 3 months to submit the application to the Department of Commerce. Time is of the essence for participation. There is a $4.7 billion federal award. In Round 1, MnSCU asked for $1.4 billion for broadband technology. In Round 2, MnSCU asked for $200 million dollars for Public Computer Centers. It is not clear how this money would be divided. Members of the LTR will receive a memo and a PowerPoint. If you need clarification, please contact Marilyn.

Kelly Peterson was hired at MnSCU. She is an excellent grant writer. She will be the facilitator for these meetings. There are three meetings scheduled.

The Minnesota Digital Symposium will be held December 14 & 15. The State CIO will be speaking. This will be centered on technology challenges during these tough economic times.

ITS is beginning to research grant opportunities with Microsoft and the Bill & Linda Gates Foundation. There are a plethora of other grants available that people have not been applying for. If you need a grant, there are a lot available online. Contact Marilyn for additional information.

E. **ITS – Networking/Systems (Bryan Schneider)**
   - Items of interest from MnSCU Enterprise Administrative Systems Committee -
     1. Student's First
        - John O'Brien meeting with SCSU on 16th.
        - MSU has a lot of students that take credits from other schools, whereas Winona has very few that take outside classes.
     2. Student Direct Deposit is being delayed - Still some issues with security of authentication and capabilities of ISRS to protect banking information.
     3. Secure Identity Access Mgmt - Target is July 2011 for all ISRS web applications.
        - PHASE I - ISRS Security Management Feb 2010
        - PHASE II - Migrate all ISRS web admin apps Dec 2010
        - PHASE III - Migrate all remaining ISRS web apps including student-facing apps by July 2011
   - Thanksgiving break - Installed new firmware for Wireless Maintenance release -
   - Winter projects:
     - Access Points in COB areas 802.11n (we have 50 to deploy)
     - Core network redundancy changes
     - Network firmware updates
     - New VPN service - clientless VPN
     - Migration form SQL 2000 to SQL 2005
     - Trafton North - remodel completing and moving back into those areas
     - Exchange upgrade - Voicemail and E-mail
     - Office Communication Server (MavCHAT and web conferencing capabilities). Working with this product and communication of it.

F. **ITS – ACC (Wayne Sharp)** – Wayne announced that the ACC has been busy as well. All of the machines are being used. They have waiting lists to use the study rooms. They are planning changes for the Library during December. All of the desktops will have a new splash top. Also in December, Marni, David and Jeff will be getting ready for the faculty workshops. These were designed to assist faculty with moving their course content online. The faculty will be paid a flat fee stipend for this and the Provost’s Office is working on it.
G. ITS – Customer Support (Dawn Leech) – Dawn reported that they have been very busy.

H. ITS – ISRS (Ted Johnson) – Ted reported that the ISRS has been behaving normally and that it will be down this Sunday for maintenance.

I. ITS – MSU Web & Portal – There is little new with the project. The Class Schedule Building group has joined forces with the technology committee in the English Department to create a usability study. There was a good amount of feedback and a number of changes have been implemented.


K. ITS- D2L (Jeff Henline) – D2L is running smoothly.

L. Other Technology Updates/Announcements (Don Larsson, …) – Don Larson thanked Ted and the student for the hard work on the Schedule Builder. He was very impressed with the beta version.

As a follow up to John O’Brien’s visit, we need to build on small successes. John O’Brien did a presentation to the IFO board and it was rougher than presenting to the LTR. There is no update with MnSCU Curriculum Design. There is a call out for individual work groups in Students First. The more Mankato voices that we have, the better off we will be. Don is hoping for a good turn out from faculty.

Brian Jones spoke about single web applications. He said that many deliverables are already in place. There are questions to discuss such as the waiving of application fees and consistency in the transfer of credit.

TECHNOLOGY SHOWCASE

1. DISCOURSE: A Technology Tool Available to MSU Faculty (Steve Robinson)

   Steve Robinson presented DISCOURSE to the members of the LTR. Discourse is software for creating a one-on-one learning environment that allows instructors to assess individual student learning. ETS is a company that owns this but they are no longer marketing or using it. Users are sent to Steve Robinson from ETS when there are questions. ETS has granted MnSCU an unlimited free license to use this software. Steve hopes there is other interested faculty. He is willing to do a presentation for anyone interested. This software is like “a clicker on steroids”. It allows students to answer open-ended questions in their own words. If there is interest, Steve will hold workshops to get users started. Contact Steve for additional information.

Respectfully submitted by: Julie Dornack