

University Computing Standards Committee Meeting
9:30 a.m. Wednesday, March 14, 2001
Faculty Senate Conference Room, D.H. Hill Library

Steve Keto, Sam Averitt, co-chairs

Voting members present:

Arnold Bell, Kathy Brown (substitute for Gail Wilkerson), John Isenhour, Joe Flowers, Barbara Kirby, Ernie Knowles, Betsy Mebane, Harriet Mermes, Don Patty, Tom Miller, Bill Scott, John Tector

Technical advisors present:

Mardecia Bell, Gregory Buol, Aparicio Clifton, Pete Evans, Mike Freeman, Alan Galloway, Gwen Hazlehurst, Carl Malstrom, Ron Melbourne, Bill Padgett, Greg Sparks

Guests present:

Loren Allston, Sid Holmes, Alan Schueler, Michael Yoakam

- **Welcome:**

Sam Averitt called the meeting to order.

- **Approval of Minutes:**

The Committee unanimously approved the minutes from the February 14th meeting with the correct spelling of Gwen Hazlehurst's name and Lou Harrison's name.

AGENDA

- **Campus IT presentations:**

Tom Miller, Vice Provost for DELTA, gave a presentation on distance education at North Carolina State University. Tom said the acronym DELTA stands for Distance Education and Learning Technology Applications. Former Provost Kermit Hall created DELTA last July. DELTA was a reallocation of positions from three different units: Continuing Studies, Information Technology (LTS) and Engineering. Some of DELTA's primary objectives include:

- **Bring consistency and focus to campus time-enhanced learning (TEL) efforts.** (Time-enhanced learning includes the concept of distance education (DE) and includes the concept of technology on campus to provide flexibility and other advantages for the teaching and learning process.)
- **Consolidation and efficiency of distance education support functions.** (Tom said prior to 1998-99, distance education efforts were entrepreneur efforts that sprung up on various parts of campus and operated independently. With the growth and demand for distance education and with state support, one of DELTA's major roles is to consolidate a lot of those efforts and to improve efficiency in production as well as support in services.)

- **Faculty/staff training and support.** (This is a primary function of Learning Technology Services.)
- **Accelerate adoption of TEL methodologies and technology in NC State University curricula.** (This is a combination of both distance education and learning technology services. The WolfWare and WebCT projects are examples. About 60 percent of the students on campus are taking this semester at least one course using WolfWare.)
- **Maintain leadership position in DE within the UNC system and move forward nationally.** (NC State presents about 25 percent of the distance education activities within the 16 campuses of the University of North Carolina System. Tom said NC State has traditionally been a leader in distance education and it would like to maintain that leadership and establish a national reputation at least in selective programming.)
- **Foster external DE/TEL partnerships.** (Tom said partnerships are the name of the game in this business. Universities are traditionally built on a model of geographic monopoly. When distance education comes into the picture, geographic monopoly no longer applies. It actually, however, applies to some extent in the state of North Carolina because the state legislature subsidizes in-state distance education activities.)
- **Improve distance education competitiveness.** (Recent surveys show that 80 percent of universities have distance education programs. Nationally, distance education is growing at about a 30 percent annual growth rate. Tom said distance education is clearly growing in importance in higher education nationally and worldwide.)

Tom said DELTA's organization consists of two main components: LTS headed by Joanne Dehoney and the Distance Education unit headed by Michael Yoakam. Since the legislative funding in 1998/99, the University has grown 99 percent in terms of enrollment and 79 percent in terms of courses offered. He said the University would not continue at that level of growth for various reasons. The University has presented to the General Administration (GA) a 10-year distance education growth plan with a 16.5 percent annual growth rate. By 2010, the distance education growth rate should add 5,000 additional students to the expected campus population of 31,000. Tom said in the past, distance education was a relatively small, but important operation that was separate from traditional campus-based instruction. What we see now is that distance education has grown by a factor of two within the past two years and there is more than a 50 percent overlap with the University's traditional campus-based students. Tom said that trend is expected to continue because of the flexibility distance education offers to students and because there is not a significant financial factor. As the overlap continues, Tom said the University would need to provide services and resources that serve essentially one population of students whether they are on campus or off campus.

John Tector asked if Tom intended to show that the off-campus distance education growth would be much less than the on-campus distance-education growth. Tom said

the off-campus growth should be at a similar rate.

According to Tom, DELTA enables DE programs, DE (flexible) courses, hybrid courses, and technology, which involves course management/student services, teacher and learner and the classroom. DELTA initiatives that are relevant to the University Computing Standards Committee are integration and support of learning technology tools and applications, increased training opportunities, build production support capability and full-service web portal, consolidated DE course production and management, classroom technology standards and videoconferencing infrastructure and support, including desktop. Some challenges of relevance to the Standards Committee include ADA compliance issues, faculty access to up-to-date technology, faculty/staff technology training, faculty/staff/student support services, classroom technology, advanced learning technology tools and applications; and web-enabled student/faculty services. The entire presentation is available at http://www.fis.ncsu.edu/standards_minutes/.

Pete Evans asked about the capabilities and overlap of WebCT and WolfWare. Tom said Joanne has been incorporating those issues in her campus seminars and presentations and the issue has been addressed on the Learning Technology Service's web site. There is a section on the site explaining the differences between WebCT and WolfWare and when you should choose which.

- **Communications and Networking**
Prior to his early departure from the meeting, Sam Averitt reported that Jennifer Van Horn of ComTech and John Streck of Information Technology were absent. They will give a presentation at the next Standards Committee meeting on wireless. The presentation will cover what the University is doing with wireless, what it is about to roll out and what people need to know. Sam asked that this update from ComTech be included on the next agenda.
- **Discussion and New Business**
Sam also reported that the Office of State Personnel has approved a career banding option. In terms of Information Technology positions, the University will have fewer classifications and a much broader range. Sam said his hope is that information technology is moving away from positioning as the only criteria by which someone can be hired and rewarded to a more competency based model. Sam said the University will launch an initiative to apply the concept and he will be calling upon members to participate in the effort. He said he is optimistic in terms that it will assist the University in hiring more students.

Sam also said a committee needs to be established to review the Sunset procedures. The University is experiencing a lot of problems with the old Legacy Systems' inability to work with new systems. He said University policies needed to be established on this issue.

Sam also addressed John Tector's concerns about the new design of NC State

University's homepage. He suggested that the issue be a presentation at the next University Computing Standards meeting.

Pete Evans also suggested a discussion of network charges and any upcoming significant changes. Sam said it is too early to discuss the issue and the group should discuss the nomadic and wireless issues first.

- Sam introduced Loren Allston, who is a consultant with Disaster Recovery. Sam said disaster recovery wouldn't impact most of the members in the immediate future, but he wanted the group to be aware that the auditors are forcing the University to look at these issues. Sam said the auditors are going to force the University to make some changes. Right now, the University's business practices are their primary focus. Sam said that there is an additional concept -- the business continuity plan-- that will affect everyone. The plan includes operational activities that impact business continuity. Business continuity is how a department or unit will conduct business while the computing environment is being built.
- Steve Keto commented that the disaster recovery plan and the business continuity plan are good business practices. The University has to have a way of recovering its information technology environment. Steve said the plan has been endorsed by the Provost, the Vice Chancellor of Finance and Business, and the Chancellor. This is a high-priority University initiative.
- Loren gave a presentation on the University efforts of disaster recovery and the business continuity plan. Loren said the University began on February 5 the disaster recovery project with the objective of performing an assessment, seeing what was needed within the environment and starting to spearhead the efforts for building a rock-solid disaster capability along with business continuity planning. The primary objective of Phase I has been to assess the current ability to recover critical information systems support. The University's environment is being supported by ACS, IT, NCS, EIS as well as ComTech. Data gathered during the assessment will be used to make recommendations, to create the Disaster Recovery Plan and to initiate the Business Continuity piece of it. The Business Continuity Plan will help campus departments plan what they do without the support of information systems. Phase II will focus on the selection of the vendor to implement the disaster recovery solution, the implementation of the Disaster Recovery Plan and the completion of the final Business Continuity Plan. It also will involve testing the Disaster Recovery Plan and the Business Continuity Plan for effectiveness and addressing shortcomings before final implementation.

In interviewing 11 universities, Loren said the disaster recovery models that were successful and fully tested were those that implemented a disaster recovery solution as part of the PeopleSoft implementation. Only two universities interviewed had effectively tested their disaster recovery ability and were able to make modifications based on that result. Nine out of the 11 universities interviewed confirmed that their disaster recovery solution and documentation were inadequate and required updating

and/or technical solutions to be implemented. All universities agreed that the implementation and maintenance work exceeded expectations that were established during the planning phases. Hardware needs plus database requirements and customization/legacy issues strained efforts to address user needs and the desire to have an optimal environment in production.

According to Loren, NC State's information technology organizations have made great strides. ACS and EIS have made improvements to the PeopleSoft environment that range from stabilizing hardware to modifying the software environment to address user needs and support a more robust and stable environment. NCS has upgraded the current network to provide more robust support to desktop users and is addressing Novell issues that can affect optimal network performance (IPX to IP). ITD has created one of the most robust, stable and secure environments on campus to support its users. The use of open source technologies and distributing hardware to provide redundancy in the network has provided users with a flexible environment in terms of email and applications. ComTech over the last nine months has made the University communication hubs more robust and enabled alternate processing ability reducing the risk of downtime. Loren said for effective disaster recovery to meet the University's 15-day recovery requirement, the University must address its points of failure in the following areas: site, hardware, communications, people, documentation, operating systems, database and applications. Each University administrative and academic area must have a strong Business Continuity Plan in the short term until shortcomings regarding information technology recovery capabilities are addressed. The recommendation going forward is that management must endorse the Business Impact Questionnaire exercise. The Coordinator of Disaster Recovery and Business Continuity (new position being created in ACS) will use the information to create a standard Business Continuity Plan that will describe all procedures and critical processes as reported by Operations and Academic units. The procedures will be formally tested. Loren said campus business units are in the first phase of the Business Continuity Plan, which is impact assessment and plan development. This phase will run through April/May. Testing and implementation will take place through June/July. Impact assessment of academic units will run through the May/June time frame with plan development beginning in the July/August time frame. Testing and implementation phrase will be in the October through December time frame.

Sid Holmes reported that the list of business units in Phase I has been updated to include the NCSU Libraries, Housing and Foundations and Accounting.

Don Patty asked if NACUBO has any types of standards. Steve said NACUBO had none that the University would want to use, but EDUCAUSE and the GartnerGroup were probably the better sources.

Don also asked if the sabotage issue has been addressed. Steve said there is a concern in general about sabotage on campus. Steve said the problem with the Hillsborough Building is that it was not designed as an Information Technology Center.

Steve asked if the Committee wanted Loren to give an update on a monthly basis. Don Patty requested that Loren give a short presentation to the University Business Officers. Steve said he would add it to the UBO's April agenda. Mardecia said the Business Impact questionnaire would be posted to the web for units to download.

Bill Padgett asked if DELTA's services should be a separate bullet that should be pulled out of the BCP Implementation plan. Steve said in the second phrase of the business continuity planning, every unit would be addressed. Every academic and administrative unit has to prepare a continuity plan. Tom Miller expressed a desire to be involved in the business continuity process. Steve said he would add DELTA to the first group of business units.

Committee Reports

- **Data and Data Access Standards:**

Mardecia Bell reported that ACS is in the process of incorporating the Financials System into the Automated Security Access Process (ASAP). It should be available to the campus by the first week in April. It was reviewed with Purchasing and Paula Tate yesterday and ACS has a few minor changes to make. ASAP is currently being tested by campus users in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, the College of Engineering and the Provost Office.

Mardecia also reported that security profile report for the Human Resources and Financials systems along with the Mainframe/Sybase systems will be distributed to the Deans/Vice Chancellors the first week in April. For each college/division, the report will list the current users and their security access for each system. In order for ACS to ensure the validity of the security profiles, each Dean/Vice Chancellor should review the report and submit any necessary changes online via the ASAP application. A copy of the profile report will also be sent to the appropriate Business Officers.

Don Patty asked Mardecia if the user profiles for IDMS applications could be included within the report. Mardecia said the profiles would be included. The plan is to distribute the report twice a year.

- **User Authentication:**

Mardecia said she did not have a report.

- **Electronic Mail and Directory Service:**

Alan Galloway reported that the subcommittee met for the first time yesterday and about 23 people were in attendance. The subcommittee is going to review some comments and proposals from several years ago and bring forward recommendations to the full Committee for review. Alan said there were two comments that Committee members continued to bring forth. One was that they needed a more focused charge. They also expressed concerns about whether or not their efforts would be approved and enforced by the full Committee.

In addition, Greg Sparks said members had some questions about the subcommittee's scope. Greg said the subcommittee was able to develop two categories: what were standards and what were policy issues. He said the subcommittee needed a charge of what it should and should not address.

Greg also said the subcommittee did not want to recommend a particular package(s) as opposed to standards. Subcommittee members believed packages were one of the major contributing factors to the failure in the past.

Steve said that he and Sam as well as the rest of the Committee were expecting the subcommittee to make a presentation to the full Committee with whatever scope it was trying to operating under and the directions it believed the full Committee should be going. He suggested that the issue be discussed at the next Standards Committee meeting.

Don Patty said four voting members from the Committee are on the subcommittee and had expressed concerns about whether they would be spinning their wheels on the same issues the last committee dealt with. They also expressed concerns that if the subcommittee came back with recommendations would there be any assurance that those recommendations would be acted upon.

Steve said if the recommendations from the Committee were significant changes in the way the University deliver these services, he and Sam would carry the recommendations to the Provost, Vice Chancellor of Finance and Business and perhaps to the Chancellor.

Greg said he would present a scope next month and ask the Committee for a vote of approval.

- **PeopleSoft Implementation:**

Gwen Halzhurst reported that the purchasing reengineering project had been implemented. The Purchasing Department will now be able to make adjustments to original requisitions without having to first make a copy of the requisitions and the default method for accounting distributions on requisition will change from amount to quantity.

Nvision Reports have been implemented and the training classes were well received. She also reported that the Attorney General Report had run. The report is a collection report of individuals who have owed the University money for more than a year.

In addition, Gwen reported that Administrative Computing Services has completed workstation configuration requirements for PeopleSoft. The findings will be posted on a web site that will be advertised in the weekly PeopleSoft Update.

Gwen reported that the University is also performing a PSTools 7.06 upgrade, which

will allow the use of Windows 2000 and Office 2000. The validation of grad students will be available at the end of April or May and visa information also will be available in April.

Gwen said the Performance Team is working on the Additional Pay Reports, which has been delivered to the UBOs. Gwen hopes to have some feedback soon on the recent performance issues from the Performance Team. She also reported that the denormalized tables in the Human Resources environment have been delayed. They were scheduled to run this week. There is no new date for running the tables.

Bill Padgett reported that Hardware services would be closing down in August. Bill said it is easier for users to repair machines now and some machines have three or four-year warranties from vendors. There will be some limited support and expertise for repair services available to colleges and departments.

- **New Business:**

Steve stated that the Standards Committee would continue to meet in the Faculty Senate Conference Room. He also proposed a change in the meeting date. It was decided that the Committee would not meet in June or August. It will meet in April, May, July and again in September to discuss the fall meetings.

The meeting was adjourned.

- **Next Meeting:**

The next meeting will be held at 9:30 a.m. on April 11, 2001 in the Faculty Senate Conference Room of D.H. Hill Library.