

University Computing Standards Committee Meeting
9 a.m. September 27, 2000
D.H. Hill Library
Administrative Conference Room

- **Welcome**

Sam Averitt opened the meeting. He introduced himself as a co-chair of the University Computing Standards Committee Meeting along with Steve Keto. Sam is the Vice-Provost of Information Technology representing Provost Kermit Hall. Steve is Associate Vice Chancellor of Finance and Information Systems, representing the Finance and Business Division of the University. He reports to George Worsley, Vice Chancellor of Finance and Business. Both are ex-officio staff.

Sam said the Standards Committee was restructured to broaden its representation beyond the colleges to include other organizations on campus such as the Faculty and Staff senates. Sam told members that the new structure offered members more opportunities to express themselves and to shape policies. It also offers greater responsibilities than in the past because most members are new to the University's technical issues and policies.

- **Introductions**

Sam asked each official college or unit representative to introduce himself and express information technology initiatives or concerns that each would like for the University Computing Standards Committee to address. Some of those issues/concerns included: uniformity and consistency in computing standards, single connectivity, security and access procedures, standard desktop environments, transference of files, support, availability of technology to students, open standards, learning technology issues, and dual environments.

Those in attendance included: Tim Lowman (substitute for Alan Galloway), Information Technology Division Systems; Lorie Beam, Network and Client Services; Harriet Mermes, College of Veterinary Medicine; Barbara Kirby, College of Agriculture and Life Sciences; Kevin Gamble, College of Agriculture and Life and Sciences; Bill Bayley, College of Design; John Tector, College of Design; Gregory Buol (technical staff for Gail Wilkerson, Faculty Senate); Jason Young, (technical staff for Bill Scott, College of Engineering); Bill Scott, ITECS, College of Engineering); Scott Payne, College of Natural Resources; Ernie Knowles, College of Physical and Mathematical Sciences; Pete Evans, College of Physical and Mathematical Sciences; Baran Erkel, student representative; Mardeica Bell, Administrative Computing Services; Kenneth Crabtree, College of Textiles; Shawn Dunning, College of Textiles; Ron Melbourne, Administrative Computing Services; Don Patty, Staff Senate; Rick Liston, Graduate School; Frank Buckless, College of Management; John Isenhour, Libraries; Arnold Bell, Undergraduate Studies; Sam Averitt, Information Technology Division; Steve Keto, Finance and Information

Systems; Betsy Mebane, College of Education and Psychology; and Gwen Hazlehurst, Enterprise Information Systems.

Sam announced that some members were absent because they were attending UNC CAUSE in Charlotte, North Carolina.

- **Information Technology Perspectives**

- **Information Technology Division**

Sam gave the Committee a summary of the organizational changes that occurred during the summer in the Information Technology Division. The greatest change took place in ITD's physical network infrastructure. According to Sam, technology was driving a data convergence wherein both ITD and Finance and Information Systems needed to work together. The result was the formation of Communication Technologies (ComTech), a partnership of ITD's NCState.Net and FIS' Telecommunications. Telecommunications Director, Jennifer Van Horn will head up the ComTech partnership. The networking and telecommunication groups will officially remain as units of ITS and FIS respectively. The partnership will go through a one-year trial, but Sam expects that the partnership will continue beyond that period. Sam said ComTech is a combination of sound business practices and financial accounting with technology. The partnership will provide campus users with a single point of contact for voice and data connectivity and it will also improve support structures. In addition, the partnership will result in the efficient use of resources and will put more focus on information technology issues.

Sam also reported that Learning Technologies Services would merge into a group called Distance Education, Learning and Technology or DELTA. DELTA will deal with learning technology pedagogy and interact with NC State faculty. The Old ITD group will deal with the infrastructure. A search is being conducted to find a person to lead the group. Sam reported that he has had 70 applicants to apply and has reduced that number to 25.

Sam also reported that last spring ITD made a push to bring "Open Source" to academic computing on campus. According to Sam, there is no way to select one solution for such a diverse campus. Multiple strategies are necessary.

In addition, ITD purchased an IBM 390 machine. Sam said IBM has made a very substantial commitment to Open Source. IBM has started an international initiative running Lynx on the IBM 390 mainframe. NC State is participating in this project. Sam said one of the other pieces of software that IBM has just this month put into Open Source is the Andrew File System, which is one of the most critical and important pieces of software used by ITD. NC State is working with IBM and other industry partners to move forward in this theatre.

ITD is also trying to reorganize micro systems and desktop groups.

- **Finance and Information Systems**

Steve also presented to the Committee a summary of events that have occurred in Finance and Information Systems.

Steve announced that Greg Sparks is the new director of Network and Client Service (NCS). He will join NCS on October 23. Greg is a graduate of NC State University's College of Engineering and Computer Science.

Steve reported that FIS has survived the fiscal year. He reported that PeopleSoft is up and running and processing correctly. Steve said the system is not where it should be, but that it is getting better. Steve also said FIS is in the process of stabilizing the environment. Currently, the University is using older releases of PeopleSoft but will move to newer releases as soon as resources are available. Steve said there is an initiative to improve the systems performance and additional consultants have been on campus to improve the systems' usability. On the Financials side, Steve said FIS needs to reemphasize its training program and to improve upon reporting.

He also reported that Student Administration would not be implemented until at the earliest Version 8.0, but more than likely Version 9.0. The Student Administration System is currently embedded with the Human Resources System. Steve said it was totally impractical to bring the Student Administration System up in a combined database and then uncouple the two systems in the next release. The Student Administration System is about three years away. In the meantime, Administrative Computing Services' student development team is working with customers to improve the Student Legacy System.

Steve encouraged Committee members to participate in both the Customer Teams meetings and the Special Interest Groups. Customer Teams meetings are administration-sponsored meetings held to inform campus about the new systems. The Special Interest Groups, (SIGs) were formed to be User directed and for ACS and EIS to receive feedback from customers about what needs to be done about the systems and what they think is important.

Steve also reported that Weekly Updates, which are reports about the Human Resources and Financials systems, are being distributed to central office users. Steve ask members to send him an email if they wanted to be added to the list.

In addition, Steve said FIS is looking into disaster recovery and backup. The current plan is obsolete and the University needs to have a current plan.

He also mentioned that the Data and Data Access Subcommittee, a security procedure group led by Ron Melbourne, would be starting very soon.

- **Discussion**

Sam gave the members the opportunity to ask questions or to express concerns about the changes in the Information Technology Division or the Division of Finance and Information Systems.

- Pete Evans expressed concerns about the remote facilities and Level 4 support for video conferencing. He wanted to know the local units' responsibilities and what will be the university's role. Pete said those issues need to be addressed because some of the units have pressing needs. He also asked how scheduling will be done.

Sam said DELTA is consolidating ITD product capability in video conferencing. ITD is responsible for the infrastructure. DELTA will be the first point of contact. Sam said DELTA also would handle scheduling.

- In the area of student laptop computers, Pete asked if the University would form a large group and single out a vendor for wireless. Sam said there is not a plan to have an ownership department for the wireless technology. Wireless is a standard and is purchased through several vendors. In terms of nodes, the University purchases those from Lucent Technologies and Cisco.
- Pete also expressed concerns about networking issues relative to CMAST and reestablishing contacts and bringing these issues to fruition.

Sam said CMAST is a marine science extension of the University campus in Moorehead City and it should be supported like other campus facilities.

- Pete also commented on the status of the RF links to hospitals. Sam said the University intends to get back on board with all of the projects, but it was a matter of getting resources back in place. Sam said the Learning Technology Services Groups, which has reported to ITD for the past year, will work with UNC-GA on courseware, consulting, etc. There will be two vice provosts for ITD and DELTA. Tom Miller is standing in as the DELTA leader.
- Don Patty inquired about the upgrade of the wiring standards as technology changes.

Sam reported that the wiring upgrade had been completed except for the Hillsborough Building and Holladay Hall. Sam said category 5 would be more than sufficient to meet the University's need for a long time. Sam said the equipment is going to change every three to three and a half years and will be

completely replaced. The backbone technology will change every two to two and a half years.

Pete also inquired about the priority list of building that need to be wired.

Steve said the list is located on Telecommunications' home page.

- Rick Liston inquired about the University's web site design. He said the issue keeps resurfacing and there were complaints and concerns. He wanted to know if there was some organized effort at this point to resolve the issue.

Sam said a group of individuals are working to make recommendations to the University about how to handle the first two levels. Sam said there were some highly political and emotional activities involved and that it was hard to get those emotions out of the process.

Ernest Knowles stated that users can't find what they are looking for with the current design.

John Tector said he could not access information because of the complexity of the web page.

Sam said Committee members should speak with their deans to advocate for a good design for the University's home page. He said recommendations should be sent to Harry Nicholos and Brad Mellon. Also, Liz Pettengill is involved in the process.

Kevin Gamble said there are a lot of technology issues beyond design issues like ZOP that should be addressed.

- **Committee Structure**

- Sam said the charge of the committee is to make recommendations and to give advice to the Provost and Vice Chancellor for Business and Finance so they can consult with the Chancellor to establish official guidelines and standards.

Co-chaired by two individuals, the Committee, he said, is an advisory board that is responsible for establishing subcommittees and making the sure they operate in a useful manner.

Sam stated that the Committee has had a subcommittee structure as indicated on the second page of the agenda.

- Pete asked how members would be selected. Sam said he would ask for volunteers.

Shawn Dunning asked if there will be voting and technical members on the subcommittees. Sam said there would be.

Steve commented that individuals who do not participate in the University Computing Standards Committee but have a particular expertise could be part of the subcommittees.

- Betsy Mebane asked if DELTA would be represented at the standards committee meetings.

Sam said there would be representation from DELTA on the Committee. DELTA was not yet created when the committee list was done.

Sam made a motion to add the vice-provost of DELTA to the Committee. The Committee approved unanimously.

- **Meeting Format**

- Sam said the meeting format would be a combination of membership and central services.
- Steve said each member should look over subcommittees and submit interest to him or to Sam. They also should highlight other areas that need to be included and to emphasize topics that can be added to agenda.

Both Harriet Mermes, College of Veterinary Medicine, and Rick Liston of the Graduate School, agreed to present a 15-minute presentation at the next scheduled meeting.

- It was decided that the meeting would take place the second Wednesday of each month starting in November.

The next meeting will be held at 9:30 a.m. November 8, 2000 in D.H. Hill Library's Administrative Conference Room.