

Case Western Reserve University

**Information Technology Services
Planning and Advisory Committee**

Minutes of the Meeting
August 29, 2006

In Attendance:

Iwan Alexander
Caron Baldwin
Roger Bielefeld
Tron Compton-Engle
Eric Cottingham
Denise Douglas
Gregory Eastwood
Kevin Fechter
Lev Gonick
Julia Grant
Jeff Gumpf
Peggy Gup
Tom Horn

Eric Johnson
Barb Juknialis
Don Kamalsky
Linda Karaffa
Tom Knab
Bob Knight
Pat Kost
Tony Kramar
Mike Kubit
Bonny Lafave
Nathan Lambert
Walter Lambrecht
Pam Lebold
Frank Merat

Colleen Nagy
Steven Organiscak
Dave Pilasky
Beth Quinn
Michael Rabinovich
Tim Robson
Charles Rosenblatt
John Reilly
Lynn Singer
Tom Siu
John Smolik
Lora Veselsky
Jeff Wolcowitz

The meeting was called to order at 8:30 am. Minutes from the February 14 meeting were approved, and will be posted on the ITS web site.

New and returning committee members introduced themselves. Lev called for questions and/or comments about the materials which he circulated on August 24 in preparation for this meeting, including:

- ITSPAC Charter Document
- Executive Summary of Spring '06 IT-Retreat
- Key themes for FY07 ITSPAC Meetings
- Dates for ITSPAC Meetings and Subcommittee meetings

In preparation for the priority-setting exercise, committee members were asked to write down four key priorities for their respective departments.

Why Priorities Matter

President Eastwood discussed why once high priorities move out of the top tier and other priorities moved up to replace them:

- *discrepancies between available funding versus implementation cost
- *items which move up or down in response to a change in circumstances, i.e., the University Arts and Retail District project
- *a donor may unexpectedly offer to fund a lower priority item
- *a low cost/lower priority project may offer high returns on investment

The committee discussed characteristics of optimal priority lists:

- *using priorities as an assessment tool
- *balance priorities with opportunities or misfortunes
- *avoid rigid, "central planning" styles of prioritizing
- *use priorities to help in decision-making process around competing objectives
- *one way to "measure" success
- *avoid "priority of the day" mentality
- *look at "low hanging fruit"
- *establish short term, interim term, and long term priorities
- *allow for the fact that some priorities are realized over a period of years
- *ensure that the infrastructure is in place to sustain initiatives

High Performance Computing and Advanced Network Research

Professors Iwan Alexander, Walter Lambrecht and Misha Rabinovich talked about Case's high performance computing cluster.

- Overview: High Performance Computing at Case (Alexander)
 - Scope
 - Cluster Usage
 - ACRC
- High Performance Computing in Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering (Alexander)
- High Performance Computing in Condensed Matter Physics and Materials Science (Lambrecht)
- Advanced Network Research: Utility Computing and Network Performance (Rabinovich)

Iwan Alexander, Professor of Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering, provided examples of departments that use the HPC as well as the range of applications, including:

- Astronomy: data processing and analysis, simulation...
- Physics/Materials science: 1st principles approach to predicting materials properties; 'macroscopic' simulation of materials preparation processes (casting, solidification, vapor deposition)
- Biology: computational genomics

- Medicine/Biomedical Engineering: image processing, data analysis; molecular processes, bone fracture mechanics and remodeling, cardiovascular processes
- Chemistry/Chemical Engineering: computational chemistry, chemical transport, transport in fuel cells
- Mechanical Engineering: turbulent mixing, chemical reactions & passive scalar transport in turbulent flows; contact impact & detonation dynamics; fluid structure interactions in biological systems (heart valves, inner ear fluid dynamics, bone fluid flow and solid bone deformation), microfluidics
- Aerospace Engineering: cryogenic liquid management, multi-phase flow & energy transfer in spacecraft power, propulsion & life support systems; high mach number aerodynamics; aircraft icing

Physics Professor Walter Lambrecht talked about HPC relevance in condensed matter physics and materials science. Ohio has one of the densest networks in the country, but it is all centered in Columbus. The research community should attempt to spread the network around the state, using individual clusters represented by Cluster Ohio and the Wright Mega Center for Innovation.

Research areas for Professor Michael Rabinovich, EECS, include

- Utility computing for internet applications/web services
- Scalable, resilient content delivery
- Network performance measurements
- Wireless networks

He shared what HPC means to his research, complimenting TIS staff members and calling the NLR a unique resource which represented a true wide-area network. He offered a vision of the resource provisioning challenges and the evaluation challenge, as well as suggestions to evaluate proposed solutions.

Priority Setting for FY 07

Strategic themes and priorities were presented for each of the following categories. The Committee then broke out into groups to offer feedback on the priorities presented.

Academic Technology

As presented:

- Technology Enhanced Classrooms – strategies for development, construction and operations
- Develop a strategy for Faculty Development using technology in teaching and learning
- Develop and implement Collaboration Tools including; video conferencing and web tools
- Develop an Assessment Strategy for instructional technologies

From ITSPAC:

- Shared Server support (soup to nuts at reasonable cost.)
- Technology for Teaching
 - Media/AV (in addition to TEC)
 - Networked Communication/Collaboration

- Click-2-meet
- Videoconferencing
- Pachyderm
- Blackboard
- Work with partners on alternative instructional processes/pedagogies
- Expand advisory group to include IT staff (within management center) dedicated to instructional technology. Getting access to this group has been almost impossible.
- Support for faculty in development of website materials and other e-projects
- Educational video creation distribution and ownership
 - Podcasting
 - Distance learning
 - University seminars and other broadcasting
- How do we get faculty members up-to-speed on using technology to enhance student learning?
- How far should we go in offering online learning opportunities?
- Do we have adequate numbers of technology-enhanced classrooms, and is the maintenance adequate and systematic?
- Mediavision to enrich student academic experiences
- Increase training for staff on uses of technology

Budget and Facility Planning

As presented:

- Restructuring the ITS Budget
- Re-allocation of IT costs to Case departments
- Space Planning for Enterprise Data Centers
- IT Planning for new construction, renovations
- IT Construction specifications

From ITSPAC:

- Data Center reliability
- Budget – both campus wide and ITS
- Operations- Server replacement budgets and data centers growth and maintenance
- We need solid data center facilities for use both in support of administrative IT and research computing/High Performance Computing/Advanced Networking
- Student IT fee – currently residential only. Most schools have a universal IT fee
- Impact of outsourcing student IT service
 - Benchmarks
 - Long range
 - Short term
 - Financial impact
 - Quality assurance
- Funding IT
- Better decision making process on project before university/schools are committed. Get the “right” people at the table.
- How to keep up with technology changes and student expectations without breaking the bank
- IT Infrastructure disaster recovery capability

- Data center as a foundational risk
- Computer upgrades - \$
- Trade off between adding new services vs. holding down costs.

Council of Technology Officers

As presented:

- Identity Management Architecture and Implementation
- Collaboration Tools for the Case Community
- Backup services planning for end user community
- The CTO and the University IT Strategic Planning Process

From ITSPAC:

- CTOs should have more input into central technology strategic planning
- Full implementation of Oracle Collaboration Suite
- Cheap/Free Centrally manned storage
- Oracle Collaboration Suite
- Moving from NT4 to Active Directory

Customer Service and Communications

As presented:

- Establish relationships between the "grass roots" (schools/departments - distributed) staff and the ITS/PerceptIS (core) customer service group
- Set up quarterly "listening" meetings with each school/department's grass roots staff to better understand their customer requirements and issues.
- Based on the "listening" meetings, determine which process improvements and potential projects should be moved into the Program Management Office "pipeline".
- Communicate the partnership of ITS/PerceptIS as THE place to call/visit/view web pages for service and support of all ITS services (instructions and user guides, troubleshooting guides, where to go for help, etc.).

From ITSPAC:

- PerceptIS help desk still doesn't have it right – "local" (school specific) Knowledge
- Improvements needed with help desk – needs to be more responsive.
- Help Desk –continual improvement approaches + Communications with Faculty, Staff, students
- Improved communication between Case community and PerceptIS (help desk)
- Create a customer service focused/resolution seeking organization
- Web pages for departments and schools – how to get the message out in the best way.
- Electronic database searches (eg. Science Citation) does not go back far enough in time.

Information Security and Policy

As presented:

- Acceptable Use Policy Change Vetting
- IT Policy framework
- (create, update, cancellation, publish)
- Complete rework of all ITS and Security policies

- Balance HIPAA and FERPA requirements
- Coordination with HR and other pertinent policy
- Security policies- connected to ongoing risk management

From ITSPAC:

- Reliability of email and internet access (available 24/7/365)
- SSN use policy
- Information architecture
- Desktop backup
- Information backup and security
- Standardization: formal policies and procedures for IT usage and support
- Security student information – SSN
- Data security: coordination of school security with ITS security initiatives
- Improvements needed in spam and adware filtering
- 2 – factor authentication for key applications
- Identity Management

PeopleSoft Advisory

As presented:

- Communications when changes occur in PeopleSoft
- HCM Business Processes

From ITSPAC:

- Datawarehouse implementation (more rapid development)
- Training so people utilize tools available more effectively
- More robust data warehouse or better financial reporting tools
- School integration with PeopleSoft student implementation
- Keeping enterprise software on current release – perform upgrades as needed.
- Reliability of access to PeopleSoft applications and reports; safety and integrity of the data (Finance and HR)
- Implementation of PeopleSoft Student module and integration with admissions systems in the professional schools (cost and effectiveness)
- Strengthen internal controls and implement segregation of duties
- Implement processes/systems to provide for better monitoring of expenses against the budget
- Enhance PeopleSoft to allow for regular (ex. monthly) financial statements; as compared to only yearly financial statements currently.

Research Computing

As presented:

- Enhancing the central HPC resource through grants and university investment
- Addition of an FTE for HPC administration and faculty support
- Continuation of the matching funds program sponsored by the Provost and the VPITS/CIO
- Pilot project in visualization

From ITSPAC:

- Grow local resources for HPC
- Interactions with OSC and Third Frontier

- Ongoing and increased central support for HPC and advanced Networking in terms of funds for HW, SW, and staff
- Pilot on visualization with awareness program
- Resources for HPC
 - Hardware
 - Data storage
 - Software
- Enhance HPC resources through grants and investments
- Add HPC Admin personnel
- Improved HPC resources
 - Large smp's
 - Large (10 cubed cpu's)
 - Dismounted memory processes
- Computation
- Storage
- Networking
- System Admin
- Software
- Visualization
- Research computing infrastructure and support staff

Strategic Alignment

As presented:

- ITS 2nd 5-Year Strategic Planning Framework

From ITSPAC:

- Inoculation in tech use to Teachers, Learners and Research
- Test beds and innovation support
- Leveraging technology services, solutions, across Case community
- Continued/increased emphasis on collaborations, partnerships, particularly in University Circle.
- Enhance communications mechanisms within/between schools and partners, particularly the "wins." Need to be communication more effectively.

Student Impact

As presented:

- Communications
- Business Process Evaluation

From ITSPAC:

- Online registration needs updating
- Focus on Students
 - e-portfolio
 - Online tutoring
- Move course evaluations to online process
- On line student academic transactions
- Promote and support student-led initiatives (i.e. start.case.edu, usg.case.edu)

- Implementation of contact manager upgrade for COLLEGENET (online admissions system)
- New PeopleSoft student information system
- Darwin vs. PeopleSoft degree audit
- Student support – who's going to fill in for John Molnar?
- More easily accessible student data
- School integration with Case portal
- Communication
- More robust wireless network capable of handling large amounts of students within a small geographic (single building) area.

The meeting adjourned at 10:00 am.