Staff Congress Minutes January 13, 1010

Members present: Susan Kirkpatrick, Amy Wilson, Carrie Frey, Mary Beth Garriott, Megan Noltemeyer, Meredith Sizemore, Mona Wyatt, Gary Bugg, Charlotte McConaha, Kathy Miles, Cheryl Coulter

Approval of December Minutes: Charlotte McConaha moved to approve minutes and Meredith Sizemore seconded the motion.

Committee Reports:

Information Technology Resources Committee:

College Council Information Technology Resource Committee Meeting Minutes, November 18, 2009


Neiser: Two proposed meting dates for the spring: once a month on Wednesdays at 4:10—February 10th, March 10th, and April 7th. (No objections)

Neiser: Reviewing charge for committee from the College Council

- One glaring change is “director of instructional resources” needs to be changed to “director of the CTL”
- We're basically a recommendation and policy investigative body for the library, the bookstore, and ITS.

Muzyka asked: Why is no one from the bookstore on the committee?

- Neiser: We can try to add one.

Klosterboer: Do we have any specific goals?

- Neiser: We have a subcommittee looking to 2025.

Kelly: How general is the term “instructional resources?” Are classroom ergonomics included in the charge?

- Neiser: Yes. These are probably under the CTL.

Muzyka: This committee came from the combination of the computer services and library committees.

- Holmes: The slide librarian is not represented here.

Tapley: The slide librarian reports directly to the Dean and has its own budget.

- Neiser: We'll look into adding her as well. I'll inquire with the Dean directly.

Kagan-Moore: What about funds? Do we need to draw out financing for proposals?

- Holmes: Historically, we haven't had to find funds.

- Neiser: We don't have a budget, but it may be wise to consider cost when recommending policy.

 Muzyka: In the past, we have investigated costs.

Moore and Muzyka: Co-chairs of IT 2025 Subcommittee

- Moore: History of the Committee: we are loosely affiliated with the ITRC—we've tried to identify the most cogent issues a few years in advance (but it's impossible to look all the way to 2025 when talking about technology).

- We've looked at major issues and began with issues from the strategic planning document. We've now moved forward to phase two, where we've begun collecting...
data, talking to peer institutions, and looking at how technology is used in the community of learners.

- Our recommendations are intended to provide direction, not to be a total implementation strategy.
- We want to be consistent with other strategic planning priorities (global citizenship, use of space, etc.)
- We're trying to pin down costs (example: how much would it cost for a video conferencing center) and overall resource costs (not just dollars)

1 Some members may have come in late.

- Muzyka: We have a variety of different strategies; it's all happening very fast.
- Moore: The full text of the report can be made available. It has lots of detail. We looked at staffing levels and peer institutions and expenditure levels. There are interesting data out there. We have a lot to do, a lot to talk about, and a lot to build. There is a lot of work ahead for the committee, but we're getting closer to more definite ideas.
- Neiser: You mentioned that there needs to be a “total commitment” for the committee. Do you believe that one exists?
- Moore: We're fortunate to have a lot of support of faculty on our committee, but with the current economic climate and other strategic initiatives, we have much to do.

- Kagan-Moore: How do we compare to peer institutions?
- Moore: We're not embarrassed, but we're not satisfied either. (Gave example of video conferencing)
- Neiser: How much demand is there for video conferencing?
- Moore: There is a good bit of demand, but more for administrative than academic purposes.
- Holmes: Our requests for video conferencing double every year, but they still aren't too high. We get about ten requests per year.
- Moore: It also became very apparent early on that we didn't have enough library support on our subcommittee, so Leslie Jackson from the library staff joined our committee, and things are now going smoothly.

Campbell: Update on Library Budget and Recent Request

- Campbell: Managing the library budget has been more difficult with the current economic situation. Last year, we had to cancel print subscriptions, so we cut things that we had online access to.
- We also had to cut 5% from this year's budget, and we're still in that process. The faculty had to have some cuts on book budgets, and we're hoping that the 2010/2011 budget gives us more flexibility.
- Other libraries have to make similar or worse budget cuts; some are facing truly dire situations.
- Inflation on academic publications rises higher than the standard of living, so we're maybe looking at a $20,000 deficit.
- Campbell: The Student Senate also approached us about expanding the library schedule. We're currently at 103 hours/week and this is our maximum with the current staffing level.
- The College Library Report compares college libraries and shows that the average is open 90 hours/week, so we're already above the national average.
- The ACS (Associated Colleges of the South) average is right at 100 hours/week. There is an average of eight professional librarians and twelve support staff. We have five profession librarians and three support staff.
- Expanding service with limited number of people would be nearly impossible—the librarians would be too busy. We would like more service and hours, but it is hard
to do without expanding staff.

- We do head counts three nights a week, and we may make a recommendation to the Dean to add part-time staff to add additional hours. But we don't see anything being added right away.
  - Neiser: The students want more study hours—but where is the priority? Can we spend money in other places, where the library budget is more constrained?
  - Klosterboer: The Campus Center has helped to alleviate some of the demand for study space, but maybe we can look into opening more study rooms in the Campus Center, Young, or Olin?
- Holmes: This impacts facilities. We have to be concerned about trash left behind and the security of technology in place.

Holmes: Update on Software Budget and CTL Budget

- Holmes: There is an issue for math and statistics software packages—we've owned and leased licenses in several different formats, but professors are still asking for more or different ones.
- SPSS had been on a crazy trajectory of inflation.
- Half of the CTL budget goes to software licenses, and we're trying to evaluate which ones we still need. We're trying to find out which professors use which licenses.
- There is always an issue with new faculty—who want more programs, because they're used to different packages—but Stata, for example, would cost $23,000 for a class of 30
- Some professors have purchased Matlab with their own grant money. People still request me to buy it, but it costs $500 per user. We don't have a site or group license for it.
  - Neiser: How do we decide which program to purchase if they might be doing the same thing?
  - Moore: Going back to the charge—the committee in past years has advised the College Council to support as many platforms and resources as possible. It falls within the purview of this committee to make recommendations. The argument for being competitive to grad schools by training students in different packages has carried the day in the past.
  - Holmes: The ITRC could make recommendations about how request procedures could be handled. But the question is: who has the software money? Right now, the CTL and divisions share financial responsibilities.
- Neiser: Should software be like books—where they are all under the library? Or should it be like scientific equipment and under the purview of programs?
  - Holmes: Now it's a combination of the two.
  - Tapley: The divisions know better than we do what they need.
  - Neiser: Should we move to a divisional system?
  - Holmes: This would require more communication on a regular basis. The status quo is paying for what we've always been paying for. I want to reflect some of this some more.
  - Neiser: We'll reconvene on February 10th.

New Business:

- Staff to student Ratio (see attached documents). Staff Congress Members will continue to consider this issue. The statistics provided to Susan do not exhibit clear data in the comparisons made to other institutions.
• A suggestion was made that a survey be sent out to staff to gauge areas of strength and weakness in terms of staff support and compensation.

• Kathy Miles suggested that staff development be reviewed as part of the entire Centre package. Centre College is often touted as a “best buy” and perhaps this does not reflect adequate staff development.

• So that the budget constraints can be met, t-shirts will not be given this year. Staff Spring Madness will be discussed at greater length at the next meeting. Handout on Staff Spring Madness is attached.

Kathy Miles moved to adjourn and Gary Bugg seconded the motion.

Date and time of next meeting will be February 10 at 3pm.