Technology Liaison’s Meeting—October 15, 2002

Present: Bryce Vinokurov; Susan Rezen; Ramsay MacInnes; Robyn Leo; Maureen Power; June Allard; Dave Rawson; Richard Hunt

Summary: The primary focus of this meeting was to review recent and upcoming Information Technology initiatives.

I. Recap of this past summer’s development and implementation

- Upgrade to Win2000 (necessary to integrate user desktop machines with new network infrastructure; resulted in much fewer Windows OS service calls; approx. 1200 machines on campus needed to be upgraded, approx. 900 completed)
- Upgrade to active directory (enables greater range of user service and options, such as remote computer maintenance and stable/secure network storage)
- Initial testing of wireless connectivity (in ST and LRC buildings; wireless connectivity provides full network access at a much lower cost than cabled connectivity; allows greater flexibility in technology and network access; initial implementation is in anticipation of the Sullivan renovation, though this resource will have long term value and use)
- Initial testing of VPN connectivity (enables secure remote access to campus network resources; anticipated limited release to faculty/staff fall semester, 2004)
- Implementation of enterprise back up systems (part of the college’s disaster recovery process; additional benefit of enabling secure data storage for faculty and staff)
- Initial testing of Windows GUI for Colleague (provides Windows point-and-click functionality to Colleague; IT is in the process of rolling this out to the academic departments for advising purposes; faculty are able to retrieve student transcripts and course rosters in an easy fashion)

II. Upcoming projects; brief review of IT’s planning process

- Single user login for segregated systems (goal is for faculty and students to use their network login name and password for a number of our campus computing resources, thus simplifying overall usability; initial implementation should be students accounts and Blackboard)
- Limited wireless deployment (see above; initial testing should be completed by mid-November; wireless access will be available on most floors of ST, floors two and three of LRC, and most areas of the Student Center)
- Implementation of web-based Outlook (an easy to use web-based version of Microsoft’s desktop client; will provide access to email, calendar, tasks, and contacts; anticipated release is early January)
- Faculty/staff printing center (provides high end document scanning and color laser printing; established as a way to leverage limited resources; location is on the third floor LRC, off of the open computer lab; next location will be off of the open computer lab in ST; contact IT Help Desk for access and instruction)
Personal network storage (faculty, staff, students) (students have access to 40 MB of network storage space, which is not backed up; faculty and staff will have access to 150 MB of network storage space, which is backed up on a daily basis; network storage space is intended for the storage of critical data or data that needs to be accessed from multiple locations; network data storage is not intended to function as a default archive for all user data; IT will assist users in developing sound data storage practices; IT will make any necessary accommodations for heavy data users who have a demonstrated need for increased data storage; more information can be found on IT’s website—http://www.fac.worcester.edu/it—under the Policies section)

Network shares (similar to above, only enables multiple individuals access to the same storage directory)

Windows GUI for Colleague faculty training and development (see above; contact Roberta Sibulkin to schedule a training session for your academic department)

Pilot of Gateway laptop partnership (site will be available Friday, October 18; more info. forthcoming; service and maintenance will be handled by Gateway)

Upgrade to Colleague 17 (Colleague 16 support ends June 2003; this upgrade is mandatory; good news is that for most users there should be little change in functionality and process; this upgrade mostly targets Finance and Human Resources)

III. Departmental technology planning—how IT can help

See http://www.fac.worcester.edu/it/policies/pdf/hardware_software_development1.pdf for a working draft of software development planning checklist.

IT would like to move more toward a service orientation in which academic departments express their needs, and IT works with them in finding the best overall solution.

IV. General Discussion

Information Technologies will continue to work on customer service by expanding Help Desk opportunities, clarifying equipment load policies, and employing more interns for front-line support.

Next meeting will focus on academic department technology planning and establishing collaborative relationships with Information Technologies.

Next meeting is provisionally scheduled for Thursday, December 5 @ 2.30 in LRC 319.