DRAFT

SIUC Computing Advisory Committee
Monday, February 2, 2004 – 2:00 pm
Administrative Offices Conference Room, Morris Library

In attendance: Bob Baer, Ruth Bernhardt, David Carlson, Howard Carter, Anne DeLuca, Larry Dietz, Tom Furby, Stephanie Graves (secretary), Jeff Holder, Duke Koch, Tina Logan, Don Olson, Amy Sileven, Bonnie Stoffel, Lichang Wang, and Neil Young

David Carlson opened the meeting at 2:00 pm. An agenda was distributed.

General Report from Don Olson
Don distributed a handout to the committee. It was a draft of a document to be placed on a website. It will list all of the computer labs and technologically equipped classrooms on campus and their hours of operations. Don was hopeful to finalize the document/website by the following week.

Don also discussed the draft email policy for students. His concerns were related to technical implementation issues and not policy issues. He also discussed the possibility of a policy that would limit the number of mass mailings that would go out on campus-wide listservs.

David Carlson asked Don how the last computer virus affected the campus. Don replied that the campus was less affected than the general public. In general, student accounts seem to be affected more so than faculty and staff accounts. Several committee members commented on being blocked from AOL accounts during virus scares. Don reported that AOL will block email from SIU due to a large number of virus-laden email that comes from our domain. The block will typically last 4-5 days. Many instructors are unable to email their students during such blocks. Don hopes to develop programs that will push virus updates automatically and regularly to campus accounts. He also discussed the possibility of installing virus software, such as MacAfee, when student computers arrive.

David Carlson and Don Olson reported on the status of the Undergraduate Student Technology Fee Committee, of which they are both members. All of the Tech Fee money has been allocated to the requesting units/groups. Letters regarding each group's allocation have been sent. Approximately two thirds of the proposals were funded. Very few were funded at 100% of the request. The committee decided not to fund full replacement of all computers in any of the requests, preferring to phase in new computers with the old so that a lab or group would not have to ask for 100% replacement again in several years. Don also added that additional monies for computers may become available once the requested computers are bought in bulk with the discount from the new computer vendor contract with Dell. Neil Young inquired as to bulk software package deals that might come available for those groups that requested software from the Tech Fee. Don will be looking into that issue.

Computer Vendor Contract – Jeff Holder and Tina Logan
Jeff Holder and Tina Logan from Purchasing were on hand to discuss the new computer vendor contract with the committee.

Tina expressed her thanks to the tech committee that reviewed the specifications for all of the competing vendors. Three or four vendors were under consideration, but the contract was finally awarded to Dell. The contract includes deals for students, faculty, staff, alumni, SICCM members, and IPAC universities. Some of these groups are new additions to this particular contract, such as alumni. Those wishing to purchase under the contract are to call 710 Bookstore.

The contract goes into effect on 2/2/04. It is a 6-month contract, with a renewal option every 6 months for up to 10 years. Prices will never increase, but the technology offered through the program can be upgraded when needed at every renewal period. After the initial 6-month contract, SIU can cancel at any time. The contract also offers free shipping. Deliveries will now be made to the ordering departments rather than Central Receiving.

Three desktops models, laptops, and servers are covered under the contract with a multitude of ways to configure the products for maximum flexibility. Purchasers can also look through the catalog if the specified products don't meet their needs. Jon Davey inquired about Tablet PCs and other hardware that Dell might not offer. Jeff Holder acknowledged that Dell does not currently offer a Tablet PC and that he would be happy to work with departments on other vendors. He also stated that, to date, there have been only a handful of inquires about tablet PCs. Dean Carlson stated that it was likely Dell would offer/develop a Tablet PC in the future, especially if they become popular devices. Jeff Holder agreed and indicated that they would then be included in the Dell contract at that time. Tina Logan said that departments can order outside the Dell contract, but must justify the purchase with Purchasing beforehand.

David Carlson asked how price differentials were handled under the contract, for example specially advertised discounts offered all the time by Dell. The contract is configured by a bid and then a percentage is figured off of that bid. The contract can offer such a low price because of the volume sales that are expected. In past years, over $2.2 million worth of sales have been fulfilled. In addition to university sales, the contract allows faculty and staff to purchase the same computer that they have in their office for their home use. However, individuals must pay sales tax whereas the university does not.

There is also a new feature in the contract for security software installation on laptops. The software works similarly to OnStar in vehicles. If the laptop is stolen, its location can be tracked the next time the computer logs on to the Internet.

The news about the new computer vendor contract is up on IT's website. It will also be announced to campus P-card holders.

Student Email Policy – Larry Dietz and Anne DeLuca
Larry Dietz and Anne DeLuca were on hand to discuss a draft email policy for students with the committee. A copy of the draft policy was distributed via the CAC listserv several days before the meeting.

Larry Dietz provided some background on the draft policy. It was the impetus of the Budget and Planning Task Force, the Southern at 150 process, and discussion about enhanced services to students. The policy also has some budget implications and could increase the effectiveness of communications with students. For instance, Student Affairs currently purchases postage for its mailings to students. An email system would greatly reduce the need for postage and mass mailings.

Many other universities use email systems rather than mailings for their student information needs. SIU would be following that trend and can use the wisdom that other universities have gained through the implementation of such systems.

The policy suggests that students would be issued an SIU email account as incoming students. This account can be used to share information from Student Affairs, such as enrollment records, bursar accounts, financial aid statements, and housing information. All of these departments currently rely on postal mailings. Larry Dietz is hopeful that this email account can travel on with students once become alumni of SIUC. It will provide a lasting link to SIUC. There is no such mechanism to share information with SIU alums currently in place.

The policy has made the rounds with various campus groups and committees. The enrollment managers, academic advisors, deans, directors, and chairs seem to be supportive of the policy. Larry Dietz expressed concern that some students and graduate students were less supportive of the policy. The Computing Advisory Committee is only of the last groups/committees to add their input and Larry asked for the member's input and suggestions. If the policy is acceptable, implementation would begin this summer along with a program to educate students about the policy.

Anne DeLuca clarified one particular point on the policy. Students would be required to use the SIU email address for their communications with Student Affairs. Student Affairs has encountered problems with non-SIU email accounts such as bounce backs and blocks from the SIU domain. Anne reported as much as 20% bounce backs when trying to email large groups of students. Other institutions have experienced similar problems with outside email providers and

have suggested that SIUC use only SIU domain emails. If students wish to use a alternate email provider, they can forward messages from their SIU account to their alternate account.

The committee then discussed the policy. Don talked about the various implementation processes that would need to occur. Amy Sileven and Neil Young, the student representatives, questioned if the current email system could take the large load that would likely result. IT will be investigating and may have to upgrade the email system to accommodate the load brought about by the policy. The student representative also questioned where the money would come from for upgrades to the email system or to support the use of the email system by alumni. Would tuition and fees be used to support the policy?

Committee members were generally supportive of the policy with a few minor changes. David Carlson suggested that the policy define the terms "official email communications". He also suggested revising the 5th bulleted statement to acknowledge the university's responsibility to support the system as well as the students' responsibility to maintain and check the SIU email account. Amy Sileven suggested that the frequency with which the university expected students to check their accounts be defined.

Both the graduate student representative and undergraduate student representative were dissatisfied with the requirement that students maintain an SIU account. Both agreed that asking students to keep an email account on file with the university was acceptable. However, they believed that students should be able to pick their email provider and not be limited to an SIU account. Students are not currently required to have an email account listed with the university. They are only required to have a mailing address on file. Other committee members argued that the requirement of the SIU account was beneficial to ensure that announcements would reach a valid email address.

Larry Dietz and Anne DeLuca thanked the committee for their comments and suggestions.

Your Items
The committee had no items to report.

Dean Carlson adjourned the meeting at 3:02 pm.

Minutes taken by Stephanie Graves

Last Updated: Friday, February 20, 2004--*JPD*

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