

Report of the Library, Media and Academic Computing Committee

2004-2005

April 29, 2005

To: Faculty Senate

From: Matt Warning, chair

Charges

LMAC received the following charges from the Faculty Senate:

1. Review the committee's role and function as described in the by-laws (see Point 1 below, "Strategic Plan...").
2. Review the replacement process for faculty computers, with particular emphasis on laptop options (see Point 2 below, "Motions...").
3. Review the proposed list of items from OIS for discussion by LMAC (see Point 1 below, "Strategic Plan...")
 - Academic technology strategy
 - Laptops for faculty
 - Academic software acquisition and funding
 - Academic servers (BlackBoard, digital assets, streaming media, Projects, etc.)
 - E-texts for students with disabilities
 - BlackBoard/Courseware support and future development
 - Electronic (Smart) classroom design
 - Identifying and installing additional electronic classrooms
 - DVD playback in classrooms
 - DVD playback in classrooms for zones other than US (region 1)
 - Faculty project/programming support: Academic technology Consultant to Humanities and Social Sciences.
 - Wireless access points: future development and timetables.
 - Remote maintenance/troubleshooting of classroom projection systems.
4. Investigate more effective email filters to remove spam. (Our understanding of this that this is issue has been addressed independently of LMAC by OIS and that funding has been provided for such via the BTF process.)
5. Investigate procurement of anti-plagiarism software (The committee did not have time to turn to this charge. If the Senate wishes LMAC to pursue it, we request that it be forwarded to next year's committee).

Activities

1. Creation of a Strategic Plan for Instructional Technology
2. Motions on academic servers, software funding, and faculty laptops.
3. Discussion of Privacy and Security issues.
4. Discussion of library materials budget allocation formula.

1. Strategic Plan for Instructional Technology

The year began with an extensive discussion of the role of LMAC in technology planning and policy at the university. Some committee members were concerned that LMAC was merely a rubber stamp for decisions that were made elsewhere and brought to us for nominal endorsement. Some members felt that LMAC had been superseded by Technology and Planning Group, making much of the committee's work redundant. There was a general feeling that LMAC had been acting in an *ad hoc*, reactive manner rather than a forward-looking, proactive manner as we desired.

We thus decided to focus much of our energy on the creation of a Strategic Plan for Instructional Technology to express faculty interests, needs and priorities for IT. This document was created to serve as a guide for the future, preserving the continuity and direction of the work of LMAC despite routinely changing committee members. Over the course of several meetings we identified IT priority areas and then asked Associate Dean Bill Barry and Michael Nanfито of OIS to draft a statement reflecting the priorities identified in the discussions. Nanfито prepared "LMAC Strategic Planning, Part 1" (attached), which groups the themes from the discussions into seven categories. Nanfито and Barry then created "LMAC Strategic Planning, Part 2" (attached), which prioritizes these categories and further groups them into three main areas: Teaching Spaces, Access to and Development of Resources, and Faculty Development and Support. This document will need to be fleshed out to consider where we are now, where we want to go and how we will measure if we've gotten there.

These two documents form the outlines of the strategic plan (and cover many of the items in the Senate charges). LMAC will need to develop a process for consistently reviewing and updating the priorities. The idea was put forward that the Director of Instructional Technology (currently Michael Nanfито) be charged with taking the lead in this process. This individual would consult with LMAC on a regular basis to update the strategic priorities.

2. Motions on academic servers, software funding, and faculty laptops.

Early in the year (before focus turned to strategic planning) the committee passed the following motions:

- The committee endorsed as top priority the OIS budget proposal to purchase academic servers for streaming media and digital asset management.
- The committee endorsed as the second priority funding to cover increases in annual licensing of basic academic software (e.g., ArcView, ContentDM, Finale, and Shazam)
- On a split vote, the committee endorsed as a third priority the proposal from OIS to make laptops available to all ongoing faculty members. Some LMAC members felt that we needed more information on the laptop proposal before we pushed it as a higher priority.

3. Privacy and Security

OIS's use of a program to evaluate the software configurations on university computers raised concerns about the privacy and security of faculty computers. Most committee members were not aware of the changes in privacy policies (variously described as the "corporatization" of university culture and the implementation of "big brother" policies) that had been put in place under the previous Vice President for Finance and Administration and were troubled by the fact that the faculty had not been fully or explicitly informed of the changes. The committee felt that revisiting these policies was especially important in the light of recent well-publicized cases concerning academic freedom and faculty privacy. We subsequently learned that the Faculty Senate had expressed similar strong reservations about these policy changes and had drafted revisions. Through discussions with the Academic Vice President and others, the committee was given assurances that consideration of the revisions would be revived. Committee members urged follow up on this matter.

Randolph Bentson informed the committee that the above-mentioned software used by OIS had also led to a serious security breach that had left university computers vulnerable to malicious attack. The committee asked Bentson to have informal discussions with OIS to discuss methods of avoiding such security breaches in the future.

4. Discussion of library materials budget allocation formula.

Library Director Karen Fischer presented the Library's materials budget planning goals for 2004-2005 and its plan and timeline for drafting an allocation process proposal. The committee discussed the factors that should be considered to ensure that an equitable allocation of funds results.