

Minutes

Kansas State University Faculty Senate Committee on Technology Meeting

September 18, 2001 - 1:30 p.m. - Room 205, K-State Union

We continue to have no official action items. The following issues have emerged.

1. Web access for handicapped (Janelle Corkill Chair). A committee focusing solely on this issue was described to us. I have been invited to attend and passed this on to interested members of my committee. There are 3 and they will be attending for me and reporting back to us. Janelle has agreed to visit our committee on 10-16 and tell us what they are doing. Thus, more interest may be stirred up in our committee.

One of our committee members made the point that we are modifying to fit existing technology, and that perhaps the readers could also be modified to fit existing websites. After some discussion, we agreed that like shared governance there should be shared development between readers and web masters. This is likely to produce a product more acceptable to the handicapped. Also, it would be of considerable use to those of us modifying our websites to know just what the R & D of "readers" is being planned.

Further discussion revealed that many tables have problems, but line drawings have less problems as long as captions are adequate. This could again change the face of websites as we know them.

We may yet live in interesting times.

Issues emerging at FS meeting:

People can't load the newer types of programs or readers on MacIntosh. MacIntosh users (specifically Eric Motta) believe a much higher level of creativity derives from MacIntosh and that they're being forced into an IBM box. Helpers at "computer centralITAC" have duly noted the problem but done nothing. I suggested he make his case to our committee and gave him the date and location of our next meeting.

Our parliamentarian, a student worker expressed the opinion that this was a big waste of time, and might actually hurt the handicapped and didn't understand why we were doing it. I mentioned the mandate of Topeka and our federal government. Her reasoning went thusly, If we make it too easy in school, students who are not handicapped will not learn to survive in the real world. I didn't discuss it in depth, but gave her the time, date and location of the upcoming meeting and invited her. My thoughts are that we have had this argument in education as long as I can remember do we be tough and toughen our students up, or let them enter our world so that they can find their feet and get better (with a minor possibility of hanging themselves with the little rope we have provided). I'd vote for the latter possibility, but how we vote depends on our confidence in our students. Perhaps we should discuss it.

I'm expecting reports from all the attendees of the Web access committee meetings, so that we can formulate the plans which will most help the respective committees. I had asked for reports on the Monday

meeting after our last FSCOT meeting that 2 of 3 of you were to attend and worried about overwhelming the committee. These reports will be useful as well.

I believe Janet Corkrill will be attending our October meeting Tuesday.

One faculty member said that all this Web access would require greater home computer use, often exceeding the 10 hours as she had just done. She thought we should get the limits increased. What do you think???

Other Issues emerging at FS meeting:

No issues emerged for the remaining items from FS meeting. I do not think there is a clear understanding of schedule 25 or the choice of portal software. There appears to be some antipathy toward any portal software and there was very little interest in intellectual property, perhaps because of the lateness of the hour.

I'm expecting updates of your work on these committees so that we can consider and suggest how to approach these complex issues.

2. Schedule 25 (Ruth Dyer, Chair). We have one committee representative committed to attending these meetings and reporting back to the committee as a whole. They are foresworn to invite the committee chair to visit FSCOT meetings at their earliest convenience so that our involvement may be more productive.

Another committee member raised the issue of Technology Classroom policy that seems to fold into Schedule 25 with respect to little I understand about it. Their view is that the department put considerable resources into development of the classroom and now has no control on scheduling, because the classroom has become attractive for others.

Having heard the same discussion from Dr. Unger from an alternative viewpoint, VPAST has also sunk considerable resources into development, has control of it, and is taking the burden of scheduling off of our back. Both approaches sound laudable. Tiered eligibility could go a long way to solving this problem, as I am sure Schedule 25 is going to propose. We must be exquisitely careful not to discourage the people using it for the first time by giving them a low priority, and still make it worth the while of those who sunk resources into development. Again, we may live in interesting times, and I look forward to development.

3. Choices of Portal Software (Jane Rowlett Chair). I attended the original Portal Software committee meeting. We have a volunteer to attend subsequent meetings in my stead, and he will be inserting his name for mine on the committee. He has the slide handouts Jane thoughtfully prepared and showed to us, and will mediate between their discussions and ours on these and related issues.
4. We discussed intellectual property (main responsibility of Vicki Clegg, Chair FSFAC) informally at greater length than last time. Our committee believes that the true test of this well written policy will come at adjudication. We also understand the purpose of all the time and effort is to reduce the possibility of such adjudication. We were surprised that there is no exclusivity clause, stopping us from taking our expertise to a new location. Some members who vowed to send comments to Dr. Clegg or me (I will send them to Dr. Clegg) asked pointed questions about ownership of programs and freedom of movement of those programs. It would appear that they have different policies. I hadn't specifically noted this problem,

but can review it again if this is needed. Finally the committee suggested that we ask, "If I were a Nobel Laureate (eg. John Bardeen many years ago at UIUC, co-inventor of the transistor), would I sign a contract to come to KSU?" Again, I'd have to think seriously about this one, and can do so if needed. I'm forwarding individual comments to Dr. Clegg. Other committee members may do so as well.