Academic Computing Oversight Committee

Membership

Gonzalo Bacigalupe, Department of Counseling and School Psychology, GCE (2005-2008)
Jean-Pierre Kuilboer, Department of Management Science and Information Systems, CM (2005-2008), Committee Chair
Fred Johnson, Community Media and Technology Major, CPCS (2005-2008)
Eugene Gallagher, Department of Environmental, Earth and Ocean Sciences, CSM (2006-2009)
Eleanor Kutz, Department of English, CLA (2006-2009)
Celia Moore, Department of Psychology, CLA (2006-2009)
Mary Olesckiewicz, Department of Performing Arts, CLA (2006-2009)

Ex officio members

Richard F. Antonak, Vice Provost for Research (provost's designee)
Kenneth Campbell, Associate Dean, College of Science and Mathematics Mark Schlesinger, Associate Vice President for Academic Technology, UMass President's Office

CIO: Anne Scrivener Agee has been appointed as Vice Provost for Information Technology and Chief Information Officer, effective June 17, 2007.

UMass Boston Mission and Academic Technology Vision Statement

- The University of Massachusetts Boston is a leader in the use of technology to support the endeavor of teaching and learning for students, faculty, and staff.
- We are committed to the expanding role of technology in an ongoing conversation around the future of learning and bringing its power to the larger community through the development of innovations, relevant standards and full access.
- We are further committed to using technology to maintain the principles of our urban mission, enhancing and extending the ways in which that mission is realized.

In support of this vision, we assert the following principles:

- That the university commits itself to openness, flexibility and adaptability in using technology to shape learning environments that are driven by teaching and learning needs and purposes, informed by, but not driven by, tools presently or commercially available. Hence the university encourages and supports new and local initiatives at the college, department and program level that offer significant enhancement of teaching and learning in specific fields and learning contexts.
- That the university commits itself to a dynamic process of decision-making in the use and development of academic technologies that reflects the needs and expertise of relevant constituencies for e-learning—one that draws on the existing governance structures. Such a process will include faculty, IT, administration, and students; will be guided by this vision statement.

- That the university commits itself to meet the technology access needs of all learners, including those with disabilities and those for whom are English language learners.
- Teaching and research

A1. Information about current state of technology on campus

1. Personal Computing hardware - The majority of the installed based consists of Personal Computing (Desktops) with an increasing proportion of faculty replacement machine being laptops. Computer laboratory and Faculty/Staff computers procured from Dell.
2. System Software - The majority of the personal computers on campus are running Microsoft Operating systems with a minority of machines running Apple Operating Systems. The current Microsoft OS being supported by Computing Service is Windows XP. The plan for this year Replace program is to continue to get new Pc's with XP instead of Vista. Although we officially start supporting Vista in August 2007. Our desktop team and a few members of the lab staff have been trained on using and supporting Vista. More information about our roll out and support of Vista can be found at: http://www.umb.edu/it/hwsw/vista.html Once Microsoft releases a service pack that addresses issues within Vista, we will start ordering new pc's.
3. Security software - MacAfee has released version 8.5 which is compatible with Vista and older versions of Windows OS as well. Version 8.5 is also available via our distribution server: \\Apps\DistApps\McAfee or you can download it by following instructions at our website - http://umb.edu/it/secure/tools.html [we are in the process of updating the directions]. Once the user downloads the AV tool, it automatically checks against our local ePO server or the MacAfee server for updates. Version 8.5 is now the ONLY version that is available on our distribution server. Faculty members and staff are encouraged to update to the latest version of the software to obtain highest security level offered at this time. As of today, patches are not directly available on UMB software distribution server mainly because the AV application if set correctly will check for updates (virus definitions as well as patches) on a daily basis or weekly basis.
4. Productivity suite – Microsoft Office 2003 is the productivity used by most. The new Microsoft Office 2007 is presently available to all faculty and staff. The application can be downloaded at: \\Apps\DistApps\Microsoft Office or by sending an email to needcd@umb.edu and requesting for Office 2007. The desktop staff is in the process of getting trained so that they can support the application and we hope to have them ready by end of Summer (August 2007).

When exchanging document between potentially different systems faculty/staff are encouraged to insure compatibility.

5. Data center capabilities – Data Center include facilities and environmental infrastructure for 400 servers. Future growth only requires more servers or server consolidation and Ethernet ports. Current Number of servers = over 100. Type of servers = primarily windows with small number of Suns (ECOS) and about 15 Linux web servers (Web Services).
6. Storage total capabilities are unknown but faculty/staff e-mail supported by Microsoft Exchange is in excess of 2 terabytes and the Mirapoint implementation of student e-mail is more than 1 terabytes. Faculty have assigned quota for e-mail storage (max 140mb at this time).
7. Network bandwidth to labs is 100mbps to desktops and 1 GB to LAN edge switches back to backbone core. Availability to host software suites in the data center is unlimited as far as the facility is concerned but software storage and servers are missing piece.
8. Server Virtualization - VMware is being tested as this time for future deployment of the ESX solutions.
9. Last Fall (2006) our faculty and students encountered a number of performance issues relating to WebCT. UITS (Presidents office) which hosts the application as well as the servers has increased capacity to address some of the issues. Since November 2006, there have been fewer issues relating to capacity. There is also no limit in terms of content that the faculty can upload into Vista 3.7. However there is talk about imposing a limit when we upgrade to version 4.x - Upgrade to WebCT 4.x has been postponed to Spring 2008 to address compatibility issues.
10. Aside from the supported software configuration management database has no inventory of system/software on campus and their relationship and dependencies (e.g. license management, procurement, retirement).
11. Horizon Wimba - Wimba Live Classroom is a synchronous conferencing system embedded in the WebCT Vista 3 Learning Management System (LMS) used to deliver UMass Boston fully online courses. It has been adopted and is in limited deployment for CCDE courses.
12. Computing enhanced smart classroom – deployment has now wide reach on campus.
13. Wireless infrastructure – deployment is currently limited to three areas on campus (student center, partial Healey library, partial Quinn Building). No large wireless project was deployed this year.

A2. Using technology to enhance teaching and learning—Goals

1. Increasing student engagement in academically challenging work within the classroom and beyond (add examples of current technologies that

support this)

a. Creating effective learning portals that integrate various modes of learning and connect students, faculty, and resources
Current best practices: Smart Classrooms; WebCT and other interactive websites for classroom and distance learning activities
Emerging trends: enhanced Smart Classrooms, etc.
b. Inquiry and research
Current best practices: library electronic resources, electronic reserves,
Emerging trends:
c. Collaboration and teamwork
Current best practices: Web CT discussions and chats, course-based Wiki's and blogs, student posting and response capacity on English/Gen Ed website; synchronous course meetings
Emerging trends: teleconferencing
d. International and intercultural understanding
Current best practices: use of www resources (such as Words Without Borders); email, blog, and wiki exchanges of paired classrooms across different settings (En101 students at UMB and UNC/Greensboro); any current projects that link to the surrounding UMB community?
Emerging trends:
e. Creativity, design, composition
Current best practices: use of visual images, video and audio for study, analysis, and critique and in student projects; availability of Media Space resources to students as well as faculty
Emerging trends:
f. Applying learning in real world
Current best practices: e-portfolio; online degree programs
Emerging trends:
g. Assessment/self-assessment
Current best practices: E-portfolio project; assessment and survey functions on Web CT (if used effectively for ongoing classroom assessment)
Emerging trends:

2. Extending faculty use of technology in teaching to support such engagement
a. General faculty development. Department/program and course-focused as well as technologies-focused, for faculty at different levels.
i) Supporting and designing programs for department/program and course-focused faculty development
current examples include CIT faculty seminar on teaching with technology; English dept. and general education seminar website with support and workshops

ii) introducing and expanding faculty understanding of how to use currently available technologies. Introducing new technologies as they become available
Currently through IT workshops, with significant focus on WebCT; IT Media Space with instructional help and a range of software; GRC with instructional help focused primarily on WebCT and related technologies;
iii) integrating a focus on technology with other teaching concerns, such as addressing the needs of diverse learners
Currently CIT seminars and workshops
iv) pilot industry emerging technologies; podcast, webcast..

b. New faculty development.
1) developing a teaching-focused induction experience for new faculty with teaching with technology included as an integral component
Nothing currently in place that targets new faculty
2) recognizing the time-intensive nature of work with technology with appropriate credit and rewards through the annual review and tenure processes. Articulating standards and expectations for the recognition of such work so that junior faculty can be confident in pursuing it.
Currently—some recommendations may be contained in a forthcoming document from the system-wide SAT (Subcommittee on Academic Computing)

3. Improving processes of decision-making and communication re. technology within institutional governance and decision-making structures and between academic and technology professionals
a. increased collaboration and communication between IT and academic departments and programs
current initiatives: (e.g. department technology reps)
emerging directions:
b. a long term collaborative structure that brings together representatives of faculty governance, IT, others for ongoing planning and a voice in decision-making about technology and teaching/learning
c. identifying a core of representatives of a technology and teaching/learning to participate on other relevant committees/initiatives on campus

4. Enhancing resources
a. Identifying, testing, and purchasing relevant software (through process identified in 3.
b. Updating faculty computers and other hardware
c. Ensuring student access through labs, a laptop program, expanded wireless
d. Enhancing smart classrooms and continuing to create other

appropriate facilities for teaching and learning
e. Expanding connectivity
f. exploring shared resource solutions (thin clients, clusters, blades, expanded remote storage)

B. Using technology to enhance community and student retention

1. Creating a subcommittee of the group created in 3b above to focus on these issues. Drawing on NSSE retention data for UMB to assess whether student engagement is enhanced with teaching/learning technologies
2. Enhancing the ways in which students can connect to each other and the university community (email, virtual forums, etc.)
3. Identifying representatives of technology-oriented faculty to serve on relevant task forces and committees

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In preparing this preliminary outline drew on several resources that may be of interest to the committee:
Arthur Chickering and Stephen Ehrmann: " *Implementing the Seven Principles of Good Practice in Undergraduate Education*"
http://www.tltgroup.org/programs/seven.html
Stephen Ehrmann: " *Improving Teaching with Technology: Learning from Past Mistakes*"
http://www.tltgroup.org/resources/Visions/Improving_Outcomes.html

Reports from the National Survey of Student Engagement (available from UMB Retention Task Force; UMB participates in this survey)