

ITPAC Meeting Minutes: October 4, 2010

Agenda

1. Welcome and Introductions
2. UF IT Update
3. Videoconferencing Support
4. ICC Update
5. Distance Education Update
6. IT Update
7. Other

Call to Order

This meeting was scheduled in McCarty Hall D, room 1031B for 9:00 am on Monday, October 4, 2010. The meeting was called to order by Chairman Allen Wysocki.

Attendees

Members Present: Dennis Brown, Dan Cromer, Keith Gouin, Brian Gray, Joe Joyce, Mary Anne Morgan, Sheri Munn, Dave Palmer, Ron Thomas, Pete Vergot (via Polycom), Wendy Williams and Al Wysocki

Guest Present: Elias Eldayrie, VP/CIO and Steve Lasley

1. Welcome and Introductions (self explanatory)

Joe Joyce provided some background on the group's mission for Mr. Eldayrie's information.

2. UF IT Update

Elias Eldayrie explained one of his challenges for UF is to implement ITAP (Information Technology Action Plan). The ITAP consists of four important categories that will be used as a blue print to move IT on campus as follows:

- a. organizational structure
 - b. governance
 - c. funding model
 - d. engagement initiative
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- a. Organizational Structure - Membership will come from Academic Technology office, enterprise systems such as ISIS and Bridges, the newly hired Information Security Officer previously of Duke, and from Web Services for business activities in UF i.e. budget and HR staff member.
 - b. Governance (was explained last and included a handout) – The handout showed an organization chart. The chairs of each of the five committees for 1) Education & Outreach, 2) Research Computing, 3) Administrative Systems, 4) Web Services (for delivery, not content), and 5) IT Security have already been selected. Members of each of these groups will be picked though the various VP offices for a horizontal representation. Small groups with fair UF representation.

The Chairs purpose will be to flush out and prioritize suggestions brought by members of each group. Members of HSC ISAC and IFAS ITPAC would be invited to the IT Policy Council meetings as their input would be important. President's Cabinet would be responsible primarily for approval or decisions on recommended policies and setting priorities for campus based on the feedback from the IT Policy Council.

- c. Funding Model – Elias would like to move away from charge-backs and pull funding off-the-top so departments are not charging everyone for everything. Review one-time initiative as they do not have any permanent future funding. The RCM is a good model for doing this. Financial control is very important.
- d. Engagement Initiative – engaging campus to easily explain IT functions, support and new initiatives. Pete mentioned IFAS has 67 counties, approximately 22 research centers and IFAS offices at other locations. This task will need to look at engaging all these units as well as campus.

Elias would like to build on what UF and the existing IT committees already have established instead of starting over with all new committees. Pete invited Elias to view the extension world as the structure is different than on campus. Dave Palmer and Joe Joyce explained a few hurdles in dealing with some counties. IE Counties not approving opening ports to UF for IT services. Pete Vergot stressed that we are the only support for these offices because they are owned by the counties and some locations are in very rural areas. In some cases the local phone company is their only support.

The governance for IT advisory structure is scheduled to be set up by December 2010.

Joe Joyce asked if Elias Eldayrie could explain his vision for a Business Services office. Elias responded that a new office, Business Services will be set up as a one-stop-shop for a central IT organization. Potential staff would include one each of the following personnel: budget, procurement, human resources, training, and a liaison (audit – state, federal), etc.

Dan Cromer commented that he appreciated working with Elias every two weeks. Our (IFAS) issues are the same as everyone else, i.e. network connections, sharing files, video conferencing. Also we would need to know who will be on the five governance committees in order to know who to contact for issues that will need to be discussed.

Elias parting words: Transparency is good and bad. The college may be unique but the tools are not. What is the value for our money or the return on our investment? That's what we need to think about.

Dan Cromer is working on the last organizational category: Shared IT Infrastructure with Elias and will keep the group updated. Dave Palmer stated that we need to keep reminding Elias that we are not campus based; we have many locations.

3. Videoconferencing Support

IFAS will no longer pay maintenance agreements on all the Polycoms throughout the state. The 3-year warranty will expire in December and the Units need to pick up the cost. Dan Cromer stated IFAS IT will still support the video end-points. His office does not have a lot to do in managing email anymore because of the new technology therefore they can manage and support video conferencing better. Units can renew a one-year maintenance agreement for \$1,000 or 3-years for \$2,200. New Polycoms run \$5,700 - \$7,800. The lower end price may not be best as central video services management unit is not able to provide software support. Dan also listed the prices of a round camera - \$3,250, PC camera - \$61 along with a USB speaker phone for \$299. The \$61 camera works almost as well as the expensive ones.

Office Communicator – Joe asked if Dan could do a system by system comparison for the Units and send by email to Admin Council, District Directors and County Districts. Pete mentioned that the office communicator was fine with one-on-one but the small camera for teaching is hard. Joe suggested Dan and Pete work together on the comparison so it could meet everyone's needs.

4. ICC Update

- a) Video conferencing (along the same lines as previously reported above).
- b) Wayne Hyde working on new system for scanning. License may be an issue. Antivirus – MS may work, McAfee is slow. Al Wysocki asked if UF was changing McAfee and Dan Cromer stated the solution may be worse than the problem. Dennis Brown stated Dwight Jesseman left and was replaced by Luis Molina who will complete the upgrade to Exchange 2010. Steve Lasley mentioned that John Sawyer was also leaving.

5. Distance Education Update

Ron Thomas discussed the Lecture Capture Stations – purchased 15 (campus – 8, RECs – 7). Cameras, microphones, and computers all networked, except Vero Beach. They only encountered a few installation problems. Accordent is used extensively IE. Lake Alfred a big user. Who supports? Some RECs do and some don't support contracts. Three-year maintenance contract will expire in June 2013. Pete asked what Accordent is and Ron replied that it was a hardware device with software for fixed and mobile systems, IE. Distance education systems. It has a good interface and is easy to use. Ron will send some information out on software. The nearest Accordent user to Pete is in Milton. It also can use a "live chat" feature. Q & A sessions are available. The meetings moderator presents the questions when they are typed into the video display box.

Joe Joyce stated that Mark Rieger is very favorable to distance education. Ron Thomas stated we have seminars for DE mini grant holders for distance education efforts. Steve Lasley said more coordination is needed when new systems are coming on board or implemented. Dave Palmer asked if we needed to pay someone as the presenter. Dan stated ECES would be on the front end and can use any on-line learning module. Dave asked if there are any security issues. Steve answered they are ways to control it. Ron stated that Accordent can also do other centralized things, IE UF directory (for \$40K). Steve asked how many sites have been configured to write to web

sites. Ron answered all but three as most are using live feed, but they too have to be configured to write to servers. Dave asked about storage. Ron said he received funding for a storage server for video and content and we have a list of best practices on the web site. Joe Joyce asked who bought it. Ron Thomas stated the funds came from CALS. Joe said we, the group, probably should have known about it. Dan Cromer stated the funds were from year-end and time was critical. Pete Vergot asked if the system integrated with any other systems we have. Dan stated there was a supplemental package available for an option to record courses. Joe suggested a one page summary of the software's potentials. Ron said it exists on the web site <http://icsde.ifas.ufl.edu>

6. IT Update

ECES is the Extension Continuing Education Site, <http://eces.ifas.ufl.edu>, which can be the portal for all Extension courses. Elluminate can still be used for distance education. The Accordent system has higher resolution. The <http://icsde.ifas.ufl.edu/Accordent> site will show all IFAS recordings. Office communicators sister tool, called Live Meeting is easier to use. However it only works with windows, not Mac. Dan gave a demo of a newer camera and called Pete through Office Communicator. Pete reported that the resolution on the new camera had better resolution. Dan explained that both cameras in operation were HD however the network bandwidth was different. He referred to it as a "poor man's camera". Joe Joyce asked if you could see multiple sites on a monitor. Dan indicated the only video you see is of the person talking unless you use a 'bridge'. At this point we were all hearing voice feed- back. Dan said the USB speaker phone was only \$299. Net result, can use office communicator instead of Ploycom.

Keith Gouin stressed that it is hard for faculty to keep changing the way they do business and/or what should they use? Al Wysocki stated all the more reason to write up a one-page synopsis of pros/cons of new software/tools available. Joe asked if the faculty like Elluminate and should we renew the license and/or maintenance agreement? Dave reiterated Keith's concern that we (IFAS) do not have a good communication pipeline (for new software/hardware). Joe said, "We need one!"

Dennis Brown stated there was Elluminate training for new faculty. Dave asked if Accordent was for recording only and would we own data to review later. Ron stated it is just an URL and yes the video is saved on a web server. Dan suggested the saves go on a video server. Pete asked how much is the unit and Ron replied \$9,000 each or \$10,000 - \$11,000 for a mobile unit which comes with a case.

Joe Joyce suggested a new committee on how to address communicating new IT ideas to faculty and staff. Al asked for volunteers and quickly several hands were raised. The new group will consist of Ron, Dave, Wendy, Keith and Dan.

7. Other

Dan announced the following:

- a) OC to be renamed LYNC.
- b) Email Exchange server updated from 2007 to 2010.
- c) LOA1 Committee – can sign up for Gatorlink just like in Amazon.
- d) IT Wiki is here – search engine. Dan is the Green IT chairman. Task is to clean up web site.
- e) Discussion about moving from departmental to centralized servers will be discussed at ICC.

Dave Palmer asked if IT has been talking about offering a Blog on any system. Dan said, yes, talks have started. Need faculty to say what they need to match infrastructure, IE WordPress. Steve Lasley mentioned there may be backup issues. Pete announced that Agronomy has a Blog on their website which uses WordPress. Dave mentioned that the University of Miami is using Blogs for their web sites. Pete informed the group that LSUs Facebook gets hit three times more often. Dan reminded the group with a Blog on social media sites you don't own the content. Dave suggested putting the Blog on our own server so we own the content too! Joe asked Pete how hard would it be for a demo and can it be done? Pete said yes. Al requested Pete, Dave, and Dan to put something together for review.

Meeting adjourned at 11:15 am.