Faculty Senate Information Technology Committee
March 1, 2006

Chair: Stephen Aley

Attendance:
Stephen B. Aley, Chair, Mary Duffy, Library, Helen Foster, at large, Brian Giza, Education, Susan Leech, Health Sciences, Ken Pierce, ITS, Emil Schwab, Science, Jeff Shepherd, Liberal Arts, Holly Denney, Asst. Registrar, Eddie Wei, Economics, David Williams, Engineering

Guests:
Gerard Cochran, Jr.(Network Security), Shawn Miller (ISS)

Minutes were approved.

1. *New Issues:*
    a. Goldmine. If a student has two minors can that information be input into Goldmine? Answer: The Ass't Registrar indicated that the secondary curriculum field could be used for this data. She will check to see if that field is being used and if not, if it can be used for this purpose.
    b. New Member. Bill Roberson, ISS, has been added to the FSIT membership.
    WEBCT.
2. *WebCT, D2L and Blackboard*. (Shawn Miller)
    a. There is a new product, Desire 2 Learn (D2L) that is trying to crack the market (against WEBCT and Blackboard), especially Spanish language markets. UTEP would be able to get a very good deal. Blackboard has bought out WebCT. This may have implications for UTEP. Shawn Miller presented a proposal that would change the landscape: Course Mine would be used for Technology enhanced courses; WebCT or possibly D2L would be used for hybrid courses and blackboard would be used for online distance education courses.
    b. Course Mine is easier than WebCT. It has a SACS driven syllabus template among other features. It also automatically incorporates UTEP ID photographs into the instructor's class list. It does not have integrated email. Because this is a UTEP designed and built product, we can specify enhancements as needed. You can see the current test version of Course Mine by going to http://coursemine.utep.edu/ and logging in with your UTEP ID.
    c. WebCT and D2L. WebCT and D2L do the same thing but are different approaches to organization and development. WebCT is a standard CMS. D2L is and enterprise class CMS. Among other things, faculty need to know who withdraws/drops a class and why. Goldmine doesn't provide this information. There are 700 UTEP courses that use WebCT. Another issue with WebCT is that repeating courses are not carried over to the following semester. Each course must be reentered each semester it is taught. [The Ass't Registrar indicated that she would investigate why] [Note added by SA: Mike Sifuentes indicated that this is being addressed, with a tentative plan to begin automatic rollover of courses in Spring of 2007].
    D2L differs significantly from WebCT in that it can add more institutions, has content

repositories (both course and student). One aspect that the committee would like to find out more about is whether or not D2L will allow faculty to add accounts for non-students (mentors or others) Ideally they would be able to add an equal number of accounts as there are students taking the course. D2L will also allow faculty to import/migrate Webct materials into their product. It is SCORM compliant so migrating the information should not (but you could be right) be a problem. UTEP currently has access to a demo course on D2L, including an instructor and four student accounts. Stephen Aley will forward login information to the committee members.

Another issue is whether to continue paying for the WebCT maintenance contract. This allows the university to use the newest release. However, if the contract isn't renewed the university risks falling too far behind the current release (WebCT) and being unable to get any vendor support. By the way the newest release of WebCT is very different than the current release and will take some retraining to get faculty used to it. The constant changes are off putting to some faculty members. They don't want to have to learn a new version or product. Several issues need to be decided: Should UTEP stay with WebCT? If so, should UTEP implement the next version of WebCT or stay with the current version? Should UTEP change to D2L altogether?

3. Network Security. (Ken Pierce, ITS)

a. SPAM. UTEP changed to Brightmail during the summer of 2005. It is blocking 12 million spam messages per month. 86% of all email is spam. Users need to check their quarantine list periodically to make sure that legitimate email isn't lost.

b. Antivirus. UT System contract went to Symantec. UTEP continued with McAfee until they insisted that UTEP couldn't have the same contract unless the entire system also signed on. On the bright side, Symantec is cheaper than McAfee. This system can be centrally administered for all computers on the Miner's domain and is available for UTEP computers on other domains (including laptops) by contacting your college TIM. Once installed, the system can be configured to update itself automatically from any internet connection. The new software will minimize individual service disruptions when a virus is detected.

c. Passwords. UTEP policy (http://admin.utep.edu/Default.aspx?tabid=6826) sets the standard for acceptable passwords. Passwords should include: letters, numbers and symbols and should be at least 8-9 characters long. Passwords should be changed at least every 90 days, 45 for administrators. Although this policy hasn't been enforced in the past a recent audit will require adherence to the policy. Weak passwords are dangerous. The current policy will most likely change to mirror the EID password requirements set by UT Direct. In this case the rules are managed by UT Austin. It is recommended that UTEP users use their EID password for their local (UTEP) accounts.

When using laptops off campus, especially on open wireless connections, it is essential to be certain that you are on an encrypted connection BEFORE entering any ID or password information. The recommend procedure is to first establish a VPN connection to UTEP. Making sure that a browser is in secure (https) mode is also reasonably safe.

d. Shibboleth. This security authentication system is managed by UT Austin and works throughout the UT System. UTEP is trying to setup a wireless Shibboleth. The ideal situation will allow UT faculty, staff, and students, to login regardless of their location. Shibboleth determines what rights and authorizations each has when the individual logs

in. Login locally, act globally.

UTEP IT will implement a campaign in April/May publicizing the password policy and that adherence is required. Auditors will check compliance after.

e. Social Security Numbers. If any department, or college, uses SSN's we have to maintain strict security of that data. The law also requires full disclosure if there is any compromise of the information.

f. New portal. There is a new portal in BETA, My2utep.edu. Although in BETA all the data is live (i.e. current/accurate as the departmental/college owner makes it).

4. Next Meeting. The next meeting will be on March 28, 2006 (Tuesday), at 3:45PM. Location will be in the Academic Services building, specific room to be announced.