

COMMITTEE ON COMPUTING AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS

Annual Report 2008-2009

To the Academic Senate, Santa Cruz Division:

The Committee on Computing and Telecommunications (CCT) met bi-weekly this year to work on several overlapping issues from the previous year as well as routine and new business.

The continuing issues included: Google Gmail for students, a possible student laptop requirement, dark fiber connection to campus, the new web transformation project, and an update on the Delaware Street Data Center.

CCT reviewed and discussed routine and new business concerning the final draft policy on security and electronics, which incorporated Senate committee recommendations, the white paper on creating a “Seminar Network” of lectures to be shared systemwide, charges for long distance telephone calls, campus support for the Sakai course and learning management system, and plans for the new Silicon Valley Center.

Google Gmail

CCT had several concerns about Gmail after carefully studying the draft contract. Most of CCT’s recommendations to UCOP were incorporated into the final contract, including the following: user retention of copyright and ownership of the data, privacy issues, and getting the data back in a useable form if or when the contract is terminated (the current contract is for 7 years). The motivation for the switch to Gmail is better service for the students and their ability to retain accounts after graduation; there is essentially no cost savings to ITS, only a savings of storage space. UCSC plans on rolling it out in fall 2009 for the students; whether the roll out will be incremental or universal (as at UC Davis) is still to be decided. Students will log on with their UCSC account information.

Laptop Requirement

The student laptop requirement was discussed as a possible benefit to students receiving financial support if a contract with several computer vendors could be set up at the bookstore. Apple representatives met with CCT and described similar programs at other campuses.

ITS held a town hall and conducted a survey for students about IT services on campus. Many students don’t want a laptop requirement on campus for several reasons:

- network for wireless infrastructure is not set up on campus to meet the current needs;
- a computer requirement could limit the models they can buy;
- funding options are also a concern;
- worried about lower income students forced to purchase laptops.

CCT was disappointed by the negative response students to a laptop requirement on campus. CCT learned later on that our goal was not fully explained to the students, how this program could actually benefit the campus and students. This discussion has been tabled by this year’s committee.

Dark Fiber Update

CENIC and CalREN worked together with the contractor, Sunesys, to bring high speed internet connection to UCSC, the only UC campus without it. The contract deadline was the end of 2008. CCT has now been told that the fiber connection will be here in fall quarter. This delay was caused by different utility districts that must issue permits for passage of the fiber connections, funding, and red-legged frogs. Some of the work is in the red-legged frog habitat. The endangered frogs are protected and none can be killed, so the trenching had to be postponed until it was safe. The good news is CENIC is bringing 10 Gigabit connections, and will order electronics equipment to light the fiber when the construction is completed. CCT also discussed with ITS priorities for improving campus connectivity, but were told that lack of funds continues to be a serious limitation.

Web Transformation

CCT met with IT Web Program Manager, David Turner throughout the year. Mr. Turner updated the committee each quarter on the progress of determining UCSC needs for a more consistent web presence on campus. Rolling Orange Web Consulting Firm was hired to carry out this project.

Rolling Orange has experience with Stanford and other institutions of higher education. Due to the many different programs, departments, units, etc. a university's web page can become decentralized around web organization. Rolling Orange can provide framework that is much easier for UCSC to update, like a design system, tools are all there with a Content Management System (CMS) in place. The consultants will use the data that Mr. Turner's group collected on our audience, how to market UCSC to this specific group and make it easy for them to get information. The work has already started on creating an easy to use template for all members of the campus community: faculty, staff and students. The web management system will be an opt-in centrally supported tool, and should be purchased before the end of the year with implementation occurring during the next academic year. Please visit the website for more information: <http://webprogram.ucsc.edu>

Data Center – Delaware Street

UCSC is now nearly out of space and cooling capacity on campus for new computer systems. The datacenter that was planned for Building C on Delaware Street is now ADA compliant. It is still on the capital plans, but as an alternative UCSC has been running a test model at UCSD where there is an 80,000 square foot facility that is available to UC campuses, including both rack space and computational capability. Right now it seems to be cost efficient to go with UC San Diego. The cost of utilities, rack space, and staffing is still being worked out.

Long Distance Telephone Charges

The rates being charged for long-distance telephone calls from campus phones to many foreign countries have been very high. CCT was told that new contracts are being negotiated, and that ITS hopes that the new rates will be so low that billing for most long distance calls can be discontinued.

Respectfully submitted,

COMMITTEE ON COMPUTING AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS

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