

Modesto Junior College
ITC Meeting Minutes
April 23, 2009
Approved Minutes

Co-chairs: Jim Clarke, Tobin Clarke

Present: Will Lotko, Dale Phillips, Mel Ainsworth, Josh Hash, John Chappell, Alice Nguyen, Yoseph Demissie, Shelton Patterson

Absent: Alex Cordova, Nancy Backlund, Lawrence Scheg, John Zamora, Ellen Dambrosio, Nancee Carrillo

Recorder: Jennifer Ahlswede

There needs to be representation from Media and Technology on the Swing Space Committee. Tobin will ask Gary to pursue this. This committee meets every two weeks.

1. Review of Minutes

The minutes from March 26, 2009, are correct as written and approved by the committee.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

2. What are you hearing?

The IAE starts off each of their meetings with a round-table discussion of what they are hearing. Jim suggested we start off ITC meetings with the same question.

Dale heard that we have two versions of software, EMS and ClassTrack, to track facility use. George Railey is the contact for ClassTrack. ClassTrack is used for instructional purposes, EMS is used for administrative/facilities purposes. They do overlap, but are used for different purposes.

Dale also wanted to know who call when the wireless network goes down. It's best to direct students to the HelpDesk. This is the best, and fastest, way to inform Networking of wireless problems. Helpdesk will call Josh if there is a problem.

Alice says that OmniUpdate users are relieved that the rollout date for the new Web site is pushed back.

Will Lotko hears that some of the instructors have been talking about how their email capacity is too low. They are given 50MB of storage and the students get 5GB storage and 25GB Cloud/Skype storage. The goal is to get everyone who has 50MB up to 200MB and eventually up to 400MB or 1GB. This has been an issue for a long time. We are expanding as requests come in, but not everyone will be upgraded at once. Educating people on file maintenance is the first step to our limited mailbox storage.

Josh touched on wireless. He thought that wireless had been open for about a month and should stay open unless something happens with the internal web servers. There was a day when wireless was down for a few hours, but it took too long to get the message. If students are still having issues, contact the helpdesk.

Dale asked about outbound VPN restrictions. We do not have restrictions on outbound VPN.

Mel asked if there was any reason channel 27 streaming video server can't be on a static DHCP? The IP should stay the same. It is broadcasting with DHCP. We should set a reservation on this. Josh and Mel will talk and set this up.

Tobin received a call from Mike Sundquist who has faculty member anxious about their FrontPage Web pages.

John mentioned that all SmartPhone (such as Blackberry and iPhone) requests will be routed to IT.

Yoseph mentioned that the new upgrades to Office 2007 have been overwhelming for many people. There are a lot of calls. Once users get the idea of how things work, people really like it. Lue and Mardi do great trainings, and are trying to get training available for 2007.

3. YCCD I.T. Issues

a. Update on new Web hosting architecture

Josh reported they went through the setup of the new Web hosting architecture which was clustered, requiring multiple servers. They created a new plan where Brian's layer will be at one level in a virtualized environment. Ace Engine is a hardware caching engine to help out with load balance. This is number one on Brian's list and he's attacking this full-force. Yoseph is working on the hardware portion of this project.

The plan is to have separate systems for separate areas of operation, such as Faculty, Administration, OmniUpdate, streaming video, etc.

If someone wanted to create a new site, they could use SharePoint designer, they just wouldn't have form support. There is a chance that if they create a new site with SharePoint, when the Beta site is migrated over, the site content may be lost.

What do we tell faculty about new Web site creation? Right now, wait. Margo is now working with Brian, so this will help speed up the process. Virtual will not drop dead until the new server has been complete. We will not stop supporting old Virtual pages.

b. Form support once FrontPage server extension are turned off

As soon as the MJC web pages are migrated over, the new server environment should be ready, that is when the FrontPage extension will not be supported. Alice said that if faculty needs form support for their page, we can point them to Google docs to create forms. Google docs is the best way to create forms. There are a lot of applications available. We were going to be creating generic forms that could be edited, but if we can point people to Google, that would be great. Building pages for faculty is coming second after the video streaming server. If this needs to change, we can communicate this to Brian.

PHP has been turned on, on one of our servers. However, the server still has to be configured. PHP is the preferred way to go because you have a secure script. Alice can look into creating some PHP forms and work with Brian on configuring the servers to support it.

Let's start pushing current FrontPage users to other resources by pointing them to Google docs and have them utilize it on their current site. We don't have anything ready for new site creation. Many faculty members want to work on their site during the summer. Margo needs to be involved with what to tell faculty and how to handle new site creation.

4. Distance Education Issues

a. Blackboard (WebCT) Issues – Jim

Because we have a 5-year licensing agreement, we can upgrade to the newest platform. Blackboard has purchased WebCT and they came up with a new tool called Blackboard 9. There will finally be a common, single, product for both WebCT and Blackboard. We would like everyone to migrate to the new Blackboard 9 system. It has the capability to link from one page to different management systems, such as Moodle or Angel. They are building in all kinds of notification support when updates are made on their Blackboard site, such as a text message to a cell phone, when an update has been done to the site. Blackboard recommends co-production and running parallel for a period of time, so from the user point of view, it will look the same. There is an additional cost to do co-production. Currently co-production \$29k a year. If you don't run parallel for a while, moving over to the new Blackboard will cause some loss of content. If you run parallel, migration of material should be much more seamless.

Do we have to use Blackboard 9? We could move to something like Angel, but then you would have to move everyone to a new LMS with new features to use. We have three more years on our contract. If we are considering a new platform, we should start looking and testing now. If there is a benefit to move to a new LMS, we should make a recommendation to the community of users.

Considering the growth pattern of online education, we must have a dedicated committee to address the current and future needs for Distance Education. The future will bring far more online and hybrid courses.

It seems more ideal to do co-production, do training, then cut over. The early adopters can inspire the old users to move over. CE6 will be supported until 2012.

5. Web Site Design Project: Update – Alice

We had some accessibility issues that needed to be worked out to make sure that users can see everything before we launch. Content is still yet to be completed, as well. We have been making a lot of improvements. We still do not have the Flash working yet. It is being hosted on YouTube. The RSS feeds are working. We did the soft launch and received a lot of feedback. Many people want to see their link on the MJC homepage, but this is not possible. We received a lot of positive feedback from students. We will be using Google analytics and the data to make changes to the site. Flash support is on Brian and Margo's list.

OmniUpdate and preferred web browser was discussed at the last meeting. It is now okay to update to IE 8. It's been out for over a month and tested. Firefox is preferred with OmniUpdate. Firefox and Omniupdate work on Mac computers.

6. Technology Services Issues

a. Interim Technology Manager – Update

The committee met, made a suggestion, sent paperwork through, the President got word yesterday that they will not allow us to fill the position at least until the May revise.

b. Smart Phone Support

Gina and Tobin have been discussing the possibility of selecting several versions of smart phones that we will support, such as iPhone, Blackberry, etc. We should stay away from specific models. Josh suggested make a list of phones to stay away from. If it has Windows Mobile operating system it is easy to set up. Blackberries are great for personal use, but when connecting to our server, they also have to connect to the Blackberry third party server. All the deans have smart phones and use it for their work. When IT sets up exchange servers/systems they do consider the smart phones.

To create a list of items that do work well with our systems, it would be an ever changing list. We try to support what we can, but it is not our responsibility to get your device working. We have limitations. Most of these items are personal items. There is also a liability issue because District property is now available on personal items.

We need to have another discussion at the Technology Coordinating Meeting.

It is difficult to make suggestions for phone purchases. How do we suggest a personal phone purchase? We do not mind having conversations with individuals who want to make an educated decision about a technology purchase, but we cannot be held liable for their decision. We can let them know what has worked in the past but if we cannot support a purchase, sometimes, "no" is an acceptable answer.

TS recently received a touch-screen HP laptop that they were handed to set up the user's software and Outlook on it. When we set up laptops, we wipe it out and set it up with our licenses. The technician who had the laptop wisely called HP and asked them about this. They said it could compromise the touch-screen features of the laptop if we set it up. Purchases like this must be approved by Technology Services. Karen, Rich, Gary and Tobin discussed this issue last week. The deans need to realize this is an issue. At least we can stop the purchase and research the item before purchasing the item. Spence did warn the purchaser about this type of laptop, yet they purchased it anyway.

c. Lab Computer Replacements during summer

We will start to replace the computers in labs. Will Lotko's CAD lab will be receiving 22" monitors. We do have a list of labs that will be replaced this time around. Jennifer will send this information to Will.

d. Computer Sale

We will be having our computer sale on May 4th and 5th. We have an abundance of monitors and computers. We will have to recycle old monitors left over. You will be getting a notice about the sale.

7. Library Remodel

The Library did not make funding for the bond issues. The bond issue did not get on the ballot last go around. The amount of space we have available for use brought down our point value for bond money. The President and VP decided to renovate as much as the Library as we could without having to tip the scales to make everything ADA compliant and seismic compliant. We do not have a budget set, but Tobin has been given permission to hire a Library consultant who will submit a proposal, which we may, or may not, have to scale back based on the money earmarked for the Library.

ADJOURNMENT