

**A/P Staff Council  
Computing Advisory Committee Report  
May 20, 2009**

**Don Laur & Patty Cosgrove**

The SIUC Computing Advisory Committee met on Thursday, April 23, 2009 at 2pm in the Library Administrative Conference Room.

Howard Carter chaired the meeting in Dean Carlson's absence. As Dean Carlson is the Dean's Council representative on the committee, the question was raised whether or not Howard chairing the meeting was appropriate as he is not a dean.

**Google Apps transition** – Frank Scobby discussed this transition and talked about the benefits to SIUC. No advertising will be shown in the google email because this is the educational version of gmail. Four vendor options were investigated before selecting Google. There will be no cost to SIUC to use Google Apps and there will be a savings of \$150,000 per year in software maintenance contracts. This has been announced in the IT newsletter DawgBytes and in the Daily Egyptian. A large benefit is that the email quota will be increased to the Gmail quota of 7GB of disk space.

**Network ID/Identity Management** – Frank Scobby discussed the ID Management system that will come on line in June. This is an important change as Network IDs will be separate from E-mail addresses. Discussion about the new network IDs and that they will be SIUC and dawg tag i.e. SIUC851234567. This new network id will be a person's network/logon id to Salukinet for their lifetime and will not be forgotten. The SIUC was added to the dawg tag as a reminder to people after they leave SIUC as to what the logon id is. It will be very easy to look up on the SIUC website. Existing AIS and Banner logins will remain the same. This has been announced in the IT newsletter DawgBytes.

**Bandwidth Update and Status** – Frank Scobby updated the group on this topic. They are working with a consultant to define the project and to find the funding. It has been difficult to locate viable information between here and Chicago. They are trying to partner with ICN (Illinois Century Network). The current issue is finding the funding to pay for it. It is now on Kevin Bame's and Provost Rice's desks.

**Blackboard and Classroom Management Software Issues – Howard Carter.** The current system: Campus Edition 8 is not working well. It is at a point where it is past the saturation point for simultaneous users. The saturation point is 400 users. SIUC's normal levels are 700 plus and often goes up to 1,000 concurrent users at a time. The Library's Instructional Support Services staff is monitoring it. It is very slow and does stop at times. They are asking the faculty to be flexible. They are looking at storage, backup (snapshot) and also looking for redundancy and ways to backup the system. The reliability of the system with load balancing is not good. The current equipment is Dell

& Sun. The short term needs are stability and backup by fall semester as well as a new licensing level as the current level is not enough. There is an option that Blackboard could host it for SIUC at a cost of \$200,000 per year. The current cost of the software maintenance per year is \$45,000. New hardware to improve the service by adding one more server to create a server cluster will cost around \$150,000. Adding a second server and hosting the service ourselves will increase the per year software license to \$77,000, from \$45,000. Howard says that the administration is looking at it now and knows that it is broken. He is confident it will be fixed. A suggestion by the iTunes U campus administrator, Don Laur, was that higher bandwidth items such as video and audio could use the free SIUC on iTunes U podcasting service for video and audio hosting. Howard said that alternatives were not necessary because the problems are not related to bandwidth used within Blackboard, but that the numbers of concurrent Blackboard users are too high. Increasing the hardware to support more users and increasing the software licensin with the load being spread on two servers should improve the reliability.

**Banner Update** – Frank Scobby updated the group on Banner issues. The update to Banner is progressing and those application that have been were moved are working well. One of the next upgrades is moving all academic history over into the system. ARGUS is a reporting tool for Banner registration. In the future, faculty will submit grades to Banner.

**Tuition Surcharge for Technology Committee Issues** – Discussion – Frank Scobby discussed the process that the committee went through to solicit proposals and to make awards. Over 1.5 million dollars of proposals were submitted. About \$870,000 was collected and awarded. It is possible that a change in criteria is needed for submitting a proposal. The committee members are concerned that students do not participate and it should be managed by the students as it is their committee.