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Information Technology Committee February, 2010 Report

The Information Technology Committee met January 29, 2010.

The report from CaTS included that CaTS is planning for the migration to Windows 7, the 64 bit operating system. CaTS has done six months of testing and it's been stable. Starting with new machines ordered in June, Windows 7 will be the installed operating system. Over spring break, 026 Library Annex will operate with Windows 7. 026 LX is an open lab with 19 seats. Its proximity to the Help Desk will make it convenient to track any problems. If the use of Windows 7 goes well, then student labs and classrooms will have Windows 7 beginning fall quarter, 2010. Office 2007 will still be in use.

The main agenda item was an Information Security Issues document submitted by CaTS and forwarded by the Faculty Senate Executive Committee to our committee. Our committee is charged with making recommendations on the proposed security policy changes to Faculty Senate. The Executive Committee has also recommended that additional college representatives with specific relevant experience participate in the discussion. Dr. Mateti attended from CECS and we are anticipating more participants at our next meeting. The discussion of issues follows:

Emails leaving WSU's system

One of the threats listed was unencrypted emails leaving WSU's system. The recommendation to stop auto forwarding emails needs further discussion. A number of faculty/staff use this feature.

Sensitive data stored on local hard drives

CaTS recommends adding encryption software to university purchased laptops. Individuals would be able to purchase the software for their personal laptops. The software could also be added retroactively to university laptops.

WSU's wireless network authentication

WSU is looking at a new system for authentication of WSU's wireless network. The big change is that a software client would be downloaded to the wireless machine. The client scans and checks viruses among other functions. Students would have to install the client once and authenticate every 23 hours. Questions were asked about handling of guest accounts. As true before, with Safe Connect, guest accounts can be created immediately for short periods of time. If a person were visiting for longer, e.g. a quarter, then the normal process should be used to request a longer term guest account. Some areas on campus also have a public wireless access through HarborLink. The question was asked about iPhones. The software would detect the use of a mobile device and not install the software.

WSU's wireless network transmits data in clear text

Users would be required to use a VPN for sensitive data. They could still access the H: drive on MyFiles.

Controlling rogue wireless access points on the wired network

CaTS is proposing implementation of authentication on the wired network.

The committee recommended that the CaTS document be reworked to explain the recommendations further and specifically explain the impact on the various user groups, faculty, staff and students. Committee members can then solicit feedback from their constituents. There will be further discussion of these recommendations at our next meeting.

Dan DeStephen reported on the status of replacement of WebCT, WSU's current Learning Management System (LMS). Fall quarter, the committee that looked at the WebCT replacement options of Blackboard and Desire2Learn unanimously recommended Desire2Learn. The university issued the RFP and received bids from Blackboard, Desire2Learn and Dell. When Purchasing approves, the software will be purchased immediately. The timetable is to pilot the LMS in spring to volunteers with additional faculty volunteering to use the systems for their classes in summer and fall. WebCT will be turned off January 2, 2011 and the new system will be in place.

The next meeting of the IT Committee will be Friday, February 26 at 2:00 pm in 342 Library.

Submitted by Barbara Denison, IT Committee Chair