Administrative Advisory Committee on Computing
Meeting Minutes

March 14, 2006

Members Present: Colvard, Elfrink, Maraviglia, Mason, Ramirez, Ross, Sprague, Stewart, Stover, Yelland

Members Absent: Barr, Brar, Goodman, Harris, Holleran, McCall, Melvin, Sparling, SC3 and IACC Representatives

Guests Present: Kearns, Schultz, Shaffer, Warnick-Wait

1. Approval of Minutes
The minutes of the 2/14/06 meeting were approved as written.

2. Feedback from the IRMPPC Meeting
There was quite a bit of discussion on PolyComm and CMS which follow. Two other items were discussed that require input from this committee:

   a. Security Risk Assessment Process – Stover distributed copies of a draft high level guide which came out of the Information Security Committee. Members were asked to review and comment on the draft at the next meeting.

   b. Survey Policy and Practice – Linda Dalton presented a draft proposal on how to address survey requests. Shaffer will email a link to the draft document to AACC so members can review and comment on it at the next meeting.

3. PolyComm Update: Email Performance Problem
ITS has been working with Oracle for the past few weeks, gathering and analyzing data. On Sunday, changes were implemented to restore the system to performance levels before the patches were applied in late January. ITS and Oracle are still trying to identify a root cause for the problem. Mass mails have been sent successfully and the system appears to be stable and reliable. A new load testing tool will be installed and the test environment will more closely match the production environment. Moving to 10g is expected to resolve the performance issues. Summer is the earliest timeframe to do this, but ITS should know more in a month based on testing.

   Mason asked if there are indicators available to detect more quickly what problems are occurring, e.g., early warning signals. This should be in place with the 10g upgrade. However, the more difficult question is how to instrument the heart of the system so as to identify and resolve problems more quickly. It is not clear whether a coherent performance management/tuning tool exists, but Oracle is working on it. Kearns said the problem appears to stem more from the general complexity of the system than to be a reflection on Oracle or the campus. The latter recognize a need to document and address the testing, patching and troubleshooting process. After talking to other universities, the problem appears to be unique. There are many variables so finding an “apples-to-apples” comparison is difficult. Cal Poly is one of the largest OCS implementations. Kearns is optimistic that the system will be stable through spring quarter. If not, ITS has already started investigating options. However, migrating to another platform would be a painful and time-consuming process. Only a few vendors (IBM, MS, Oracle) offer an integrated collaboration environment.
4. SPAM Update
Now that IRMPPC has endorsed the plan, ITS will be implementing new rules to try to reduce SPAM distributed via campus aliases. Mirapoint will be on campus in a couple of weeks to discuss current and future product features to reduce SPAM.

5. CMS Data Center Migration Update
Yelland reported that CMS Central chose to implement new security measures at the same time as the migration to a new HOSS data center. This led to problems with specific functions (e.g., interfaces to servers, ftp, developer access, etc.) that needed to get through the firewall. The router based VPN solution had to be discontinued after a week. The migration went relatively well, resulting in improved performance. However, the second problem was infrastructure related not security. CMS Central had been migrating software components between environments for campuses. RepliWeb was developed as a self-service tool for campuses but its configuration and support was never fully tested. When used, it wiped out some environments and has since been removed. CMS Central is once again handling the migrations for the campuses. Yelland distributed and reviewed a chart showing current activities, e.g.

- Current SA activity through December 2006 - Financial Aid is the next to go live.
- Reporting Tools – creating/updating inquiries will be tied to SA rather than SIS
- Finance 8.9 upgrade is occurring at the same time
- HRSA 8.9 upgrade – Cal Poly is considering pushing this out and starting in September instead (Proposed 8.9 Upgrade), but timing may be an issue since it impacts both HR and SA
- Retrofit Campus Data-warehouse (in conjunction with 8.9) – Cal Poly hopes to take advantage of CMS baseline warehouse extracts and the work done to date. 8.9 must be in place first. This represents a complete redesign and should be done once if possible.
- Staff burnout and resource issues were noted. Once the upgrade to 8.9 is done, the campus can move to Oracle Fusion. 8.9 should provide some stability.
- State Controller’s Office is revamping its payroll software. The interface requires the campus to be on version 8.9.

6. Infrastructure Status
Ross said a critical priority has been to focus on creating a robust infrastructure. In the past two weeks, there have been five disk failures. Despite that, there has been minimal impact to production services and an ability to recover quickly due to built-in redundancy. Without that, it could have been much worse. The disk failures were across the campus and very unusual. High volumes are hitting the portal these days due to a new process for authenticating applicants.

7. Other Announcements
a. Portal Upgrade – A new portal framework will be implemented in early April.

b. Antivirus Site License Status – Schultz said the current license expires at the end of the summer. ITS is working with LAN coordinators to get feedback and advice on critical features and products which will then be shared with other committees. The consensus seems to leaning towards staying with Symantec, but how it is deployed on campus may need to be adjusted. Mason is on the working group.

Minutes prepared by: Mary Shaffer, Information Technology Services