

**UNR Faculty Senate
BRIEFING PAPER**

Agenda Item Title:

Year-End Committee Report: Technology Committee

Action Requested:

Recommendation of the Faculty Senate Technology Committee that the Senate go on record as supporting adequate ongoing funding from the University to support the Campus Desktop Replacement Program and that the current four-year desktop/laptop replacement plan be changed to a three-year replacement plan.

A Vote in Favor Means:

The Senate supports funding for the Desktop Replacement Program.

A Vote Against Means:

It is not will of the Senate to go on record as supporting the funding of this program at this time.

Faculty Senate
Technology Committee
2006-07 Year-End Report
Submitted by: James A. Curtis
April 13, 2007

Committee Membership

Jim Curtis, Chair	Judy Calder
Brenda Eldridge	Howard Goldbaum
Araby Greene	Alexander Kumjian
George McKinlay	Kile Porter
Ravi Subramanian	Clint Ulrich
Virginia Vogel	Linda Kuchenbecker (Ex-Officio)
Ron Phaneuf (EB Liaison)	Aron Smetana (IT Liaison)
Steve Zink (Consultant)	

Committee Annual and Standing Charges

1. Examine the perceived quality of technical support provided to faculty by the University Help Desk and Support Center. Are faculty receiving timely responses and are they satisfied with the quality of information? Are multiple platforms receiving equitable support (for example, are Mac users receiving equivalent service to PC users)? Provide a summary of faculty perceptions of quality and recommendations for improvements, if appropriate.
2. Review how the Desktop Replacement funds are distributed. How are needs identified and prioritized?
3. Appoint a liaison to the Chancellor's Technology Task Force. Provide representation to the Task Force regarding the needs of faculty as an ERP system is purchased and implemented. Report decisions and actions of the Task Force to the Senate through the Technology Committee as needed.
4. Provide a mid-year report in November with the final report and recommendations due in March.

Standing Charges

5. Serve as a sounding board for the Vice President for Information Technology. The chair of the committee should maintain regular contact with the senate executive board, to report on the committee's work with the VPIT. Contact Robin Gonzalez to request meetings with the Executive Board.
6. Conduct the software application process. Review and prioritize software applications for awards in the fall. Submit the call for 2007-08 applications in spring 2007. (The senate office will organize approved applications, notify applicants of the disposition of their requests, place the order(s), and distribute the software.)

Annual Charges

1. Examine the perceived quality of technical support provided to faculty by the University Help Desk and Support Center

In April 2006 the Technology Committee in partnership with campus IT services distributed an IT Survey to all faculty. The purpose was to gather faculty perceptions of a range of IT services. The results of the survey were reviewed by the committee in a session led by Howard Goldbaum at its March meeting.

Some findings of the survey were acted upon by IT immediately. Notable among these was the implementation of a single Help Desk support number and improved training for phone responders.

The majority of respondents to the survey were "satisfied" or "somewhat satisfied," with few "unsatisfied" or "somewhat unsatisfied" responses. There were no unifying threads in the responses pointing to significant problems with the services provided by campus IT units. However, there were several common responses to certain questions, one of which points to an important issue. Representative comments included:

- Concerns that the Help Desk starts by asking the caller's name and opening a help ticket
- Request for more Web CT training
- Questions and issues about the computer replacement program. **Funding for this program is a major concern.**
- The need for more smart classrooms
- Difficulties with using campus wireless
- Concerns about charges for checking out equipment
- Negative comments about the appropriateness of some training programs in regard to audience level addressed; some too high, some too low
- Confusion about the campus network, including issues with the amount of storage available for email
- Some negative comments about access to electronic resources and journals from off campus, authentication and complex interfaces.

A summary of the survey results is attached to this report.

The committee will engage in further discussion about repeating all or parts of the survey.

2. Review how the Desktop Replacement funds are distributed

The Technology Committee has not addressed this charge specifically this year. It is our understanding that there is no stable funding for the Desktop Replacement Program in the university's budget. The charge to review the process for distributing desktop replacement funds should be ongoing.

The committee is very concerned that the Desktop Replacement Program receives adequate ongoing funding. This was a major finding of the IT survey conducted last year.

3. Appoint a liaison to the Chancellor's Technology Task Force

At its meeting on September 22 George McKinlay was elected by the committee to fill this post. He has since reported to the committee on the work of the task force.

4. Provide a mid-year report in November

Since the committee only began its work in September a mid-year report in November seemed premature. The mid-year report was drafted in January and submitted in February.

Standing Charges

5. Serve as a sounding board for the Vice President for Information Technology

The Vice president for Information Technology regularly attends meetings of the committee, reports on his activities and those of the IT units reporting to him, and responds to questions from the committee members.

The chair of the committee maintains regular contact with the Faculty Senate through the assigned senate staff member, Linda Kuchenbecker. The chair also met with the Executive Committee once this year in December to discuss the issue of funding for the faculty software award program.

6. Conduct the software application process

Between formation of the committee and its meeting on October 13 the committee reviewed and rated 56 applications for software grants. The total funding available for these grants was \$20,000.00. The total cost for all applications was approximately \$93,000. The committee was able to fund the 21 applications that received the highest combined ratings. With the exception of two funded applications, Ms. Kuchenbecker completed the orders for the funded software by the end of November. The remaining funds related to the two awards that were problematic have been awarded or will be carried over to the 2007 cycle.

The committee has reviewed and revised the application process, application instructions, and the award criteria. A new award cycle was initiated on April 11, 2007.

The committee has also approached the Executive Board of the Senate with a proposal to increase the funding available for these awards by raising funds through the Campus Development office. This proposal is under discussion.

- Research and findings
See the results of the Faculty/Staff IT Satisfaction Survey and the IT Survey 2006 Representative Comments that are attached to this report.
- Actions taken
The chair of the Technology Committee has discussed with the Executive Board of the Senate a proposal work with the Campus Development office to increase funding available for the software awards program by raising funds from donors. This idea is under discussion pending a meeting with the Vice President for Development and Alumni Relations.
- Recommendations (if applicable)
The Technology Committee recommends that the Faculty Senate go on record as supporting adequate ongoing funding to support the Campus Desktop Replacement Program and that the current four-year desktop/laptop replacement plan be changed to a three-year replacement plan.

