



President's Letter

George Pyo, President

The 2007 annual conference, "Looking Back Charging Forward to Educate the Next Generation," marking the 40th anniversary of ASCUE, in Myrtle Beach last June 10th - 14th, was a great success! A wide variety of attendee presentations, roundtable discussions, and a memorable keynote presentation provided plenty of anxiety for the Board and stimulation for the conferees. We also chose to recognize the service

of Mr. Jack Cundiff at the conference. Jack has been a member of ASCUE since it was founded 40 years ago. He was presented with a plaque as a sign of our appreciation for his long-standing commitment to the organization.

The beautiful environs of Ocean Creek Resort and Myrtle Beach enhanced everyone's stay. If you were unable to join us last June, we trust that you will make every effort to be there for ASCUE's 41st annual conference, June 15 - 19, 2008, at Ocean Creek Resort and Conference Center.

The theme for the 2008 ASCUE annual conference will be "Academic and Administrative Technology Issues and Innovations in Higher Education." Please mark your calendars!

The ASCUE Board met in late September to work on planning next year's conference. Your ASCUE Board is a dedicated, hard working group. It has been a pleasure working with them over the years. Using the feedback received in the conference evaluations, the Board is making every effort to integrate a number of valuable ideas and suggestions into the next conference.

ASCUE has maintained the same, reasonable conference fees for next year. The registration fee (which includes annual membership) will remain at \$200. The Board decided to offer half-day pre-conference workshops only and the cost will be \$75. We are working on the details of the workshops topics, as we consider the feedback obtained from the evaluations.

We urge you to visit the ASCUE organization web site to stay in touch with up-to-date information regarding the conference. Email addresses on www.ascue.org that will be of help to you are: Fred Jenny, Program Chair for the 2008 conference: conference@ascue.org and George Pyo, President: president@ascue.org :

The ASCUE Board would like to encourage the membership to make greater use of our listserv. The ASCUE discussion list was established to facilitate dialogue between ASCUE members. It is a great place to ask questions and share ideas with colleagues. The discussion list will be the primary mechanism for e-mailing conference information to members. Please visit the ASCUE web site for more information.

Again, I hope you are planning to join us at the 41st Annual ASCUE Conference, June 15th -19th, 2008.

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ASCUE '08

June 15 - 19, 2008

Ocean Creek Resort

Myrtle Beach, South Carolina

Dress is Resort Casual

Highlights

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The conference program chair is Fred Jenny from Grove City College, and soon he will be sending his announcement for the call for papers. I encourage you to consider presenting a paper or participating in a panel discussion. As you think of ideas for topics please feel free to contact Fred at conference@ascue.org or FJJenny@GCC.EDU. Have a great year! I'm looking forward to seeing all of you in Myrtle Beach in June 2008! George

ASCUE LISTSERVE

We have recently moved the listserv from Gettysburg College to Philadelphia Biblical University and it is now managed by website coordinator Blair Benjamin. Everyone who was signed up under ASCUE-L is now enrolled on the new site. Please note that you must be a subscriber/member in order to send messages to the listserv.

To send an e-mail message to the Listserv contact:

members@lists.ascue.org

For subscription or membership information please go to:

<http://listinfo.ascue.org>

Keynote Roundtable – Campus Security

Facilitated by Martin Ramsey

The recent tragedy at Virginia Tech changed a lot of policies at schools across the country. This roundtable looks at changes made by ASCUE schools in response to this tragedy.

The main problem is notification of everyone on campus of the emergency. One approach is to broadcast information on student cell phones using E-2 text messaging software. One can't rely on cell phones alone since a large blast can take out all cell towers in the area. Also, faculty discourage use of cell phones in class and students may be reluctant to giving their numbers to campus officials. It is important to promise them that the numbers will only be used in case of an emergency. Until recently, students changed cell phone companies and thus numbers frequently, but now they can keep the same number when they change. It is important to couple sending a message via cell phone with use of a siren or church bell ringing so students know the cell phone message is valid. Currently, such signals are only for severe weather warnings but they can be expanded to signal other emergencies. Several schools depend on students to register their own cell phone numbers.

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Roundtable on Academic Computing Issues

Facilitated by Dave Fusco

We agreed to omit the discussion of course management systems because there was another roundtable dedicated to this subject.

The first topic was a request for a quick survey of who still had split academic and administrative computing services reporting to different division heads. Kent State has a VP of IT and computer services at each of the 8 schools in the Kent State system report indirectly to this VP and directly to the provost at the school. There is an info tech person directly under the VP of IT who has really improved the training of faculty at each of the 8 schools.

Maryland CC observed that this is a long-term problem. Their computing departments split in the late 80's and came back together in 2000. At Baltimore CC the Vice Chancellor works closely with the faculty. Both AV and Distance Learning are now under academic computing.

The survey of hands showed that most schools had combined or recombined their computing services departments.

On the topic of classroom technology it was observed that the richer schools can build smart classrooms, same setup with podium in each classroom, but poorer schools have to piece things together. At Moravian college, support is a problem. Faculty arrive for a 8:00 class and the equipment does not work. Computer services staff don't arrive until 8:30 or 9:00. There are three levels of classroom: no media, place to plug in laptop to projection device, and smart classroom. IT, which is under the VP for finance, has not hired any new staff in years. A college in Ohio mentioned that their IT staff arrives at 7:30 and they use pixies on the wall as control media hardware. Also, there is a computer installed in the podium.

Gettysburg hired staff to go through the classrooms at 10pm to make sure that the room equipment is all put back together after the students have torn it apart to do their gaming. Then the classrooms are locked. A Com-

munity College locks all their classrooms when not in use for classes. They have public labs available for students. Another school hires lab assistants to check all machines at 11pm and lock the rooms. One school is planning to create a room for gaming – others make facilities available in their student centers. Schools at which students have gone into gaming in a big way doubt that these facilities will be adequate. Allegany College of Maryland hires part time people to take care of labs. They keep a technician in the video classrooms all during the class.

Saint Mary's questioned whether funds were allocated to upgrade smart classrooms after they are put in. Baltimore CC does plan for replacement. Allegany can get money to buy the original equipment from grants but no money to repair or replace it.

Some schools are installing wireless smart classrooms. Blackbox makes an interface unit. There is a bluetooth device the teacher can carry around in his or her hand and can write with a stylus that hovers above the surface. There is a software package that interfaces with powerpoint and can save the written information to create notes later. One can have a background graphic of hard copy under the device and write on top of it. These devices cost about \$100 apiece and up to 3 can communicate with the same laptop simultaneously.

The question was raised about giving faculty laptops instead of desktops for their computing needs. At some schools they can apply for laptops giving justification – how the laptop will help with their teaching and research. Since classrooms have desktops, is giving laptops to faculty a good model? One school has laptops for everyone and finds this easier for faculty. What about adjuncts? – we can't give all of them laptops. Juniatta replaces laptops every three years and gives the old ones to adjuncts. One school gives faculty a choice but the department has to make up the difference in cost. The departments were not able to do this, so IT took over the funding process.

It is important that faculty who teach in computer classrooms where students are on computers have the same software that the students have. Even more of a problem is faculty who teach in three or four classrooms and have to change their settings each time they change rooms.

Academic Roundtable Continued

Most schools agreed that it is important to have faculty advisory committees but be careful that the faculty on the committee are truly representative and not just out to help themselves.

Most schools had a full-time instructional design person, but these do different things at different schools. Some help faculty create lessons. Others do training for faculty. Others guide strategic development of technology on campus.

Security Roundtable continued from page 2

Another approach is collecting the email addresses of students at the start of the year. If the college uses this list to spam students with extraneous messages, it will defeat the purpose and students will be reluctant to supply their addresses.

A campus portal is perhaps the best approach. Make it useful enough so that students will go to the portal frequently. There are monitor devices that mount on the wall flashing headlines and can be used to broadcast an emergency message.

One communication method which is not likely to be successful is the use of in-room phones. Most students have disconnected them and rely on cell phones exclusively. Many schools are pulling land line wiring out of dorm rooms and putting a few phones in common areas. One school offered to rent phones to students, but only one student took them up on it.

Perhaps the only communication device that may be working in an emergency that knocks out all cell phone towers in that area might be satellite phones but no campus present was using these.

It is important to involve the community in creating a plan to meet emergency disasters. Ohio held a statewide gathering after the Virginia Tech disaster.

Another problem highlighted by the Virginia Tech incident was the problem of locking residence halls. Many schools have card access systems, but often students will allow other folks to enter buildings when they enter. Also some schools have classes in their residence halls

so the doors have to remain open during the class hours. There is cheap software for reading card entry RFID. Doors can be alarmed so that if they are propped open the alarm will sound

Someone suggested putting phones in classroom for emergencies, but you have to post the emergency phone numbers prominently if you do this.

All agreed that the best security measure is the knowledge and awareness of the people at the college.

On an extraneous topic, folks talked about how many students are posting embarrassing information about themselves on Facebook. Administrators are looking at this information as are potential employers

Roundtable on Administrative Computing Issues

Facilitated by Jim Workman

The top ten information technology issues for 2007 as defined by Educause were the topic of discussion.

Three of the top ten issues were decided upon for the focus of this discussion: Strategic Planning, Disaster Recovery, and Leadership for Information Technology.

Strategic Planning – This is a challenge due to ever-changing technologies and costs associated with them. Some schools also face the challenges of the campus community collectively not giving feedback to the IT office on strategic planning that it needs. This should be a campus-wide initiative and not just an IT driven/decided piece. There are a couple of schools present that have 1-3 year plans that are working and have a representative voice with the cabinet on the direction of technology within strategic planning that does include representatives campus-wide. It was also suggested that schools look at technology resources as a utility (such as power, etc.) and is not an option (bandwidth, computers, etc.). Routine replenishment of hardware and software and the reassessment of bandwidth must be performed constantly and consistently.

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Course/Learning Management Systems Roundtable

Facilitated by Kim Breighner

Many schools are facing increased costs since Web CT and Blackboard have merged and are raising their prices. Olympic College in Washington State are finding that Blackboard service is getting worse especially for those who mount their sites on Blackboard servers. They are looking at alternatives and would like advice from others at the roundtable. Sharepoint is one of the alternatives Olympic is considering. Participants responded that Sharepoint is an online collaborative tool, not a CMS. It won't have tools like Blackboard or Moodle. Loris College recently switched from Sharepoint to Moodle.

Depauw University has used Blackboard for 5 years and lots of faculty are on board. Two years ago, they evaluated alternatives such as Moodle, Sakai, Angel, and Jenzabar's Learning Management System. Faculty helped them review these CMS products and it is essential to get faculty involved in the selection process. They chose Moodle and will run Moodle and Blackboard in parallel for the next year and switch to Moodle at the end of Spring semester 2008.

St. Francis is worried about breaking the news of a CMS shift to faculty. Allegheny College of Maryland is also scared to tell faculty they have to change. They are still using the cheap version of Blackboard. Other participants advised having a training program in place – it can't be just a few sessions. This program would involve a demonstration session for the new CMS, a full-day training session, an on-line training course in Moodle with quizzes. Do a pilot test for one semester with savvy faculty and give the rest of the faculty one semester notice of the change. (this all was suggested by a blond long-haired guy named Tom)

Saint Mary's recommended a training program as above and also reminding faculty what they had to do to get started in Blackboard or WebCT and what it is costing per faculty member to maintain a Blackboard license.

Ashland Technical College tells faculty that we ask students to learn new stuff – what about faculty doing it.

Faculty claim that their reluctance is a time factor. It may actually be a fear factor.

Another school mentioned failed negotiations with Blackboard for use of ePortfolio. Their site is hosted by Blackboard. To get ePortfolio they would need to commit to 100 gig of managed storage at \$22K/year.

Warren Wilson College recommended the more transparency with faculty the better. One needs faculty buy-in for any change of CMS. They trained 4 faculty to try out Moodle and present their results at a faculty retreat. Remember the personnel costs of going to Moodle. They argued that they needed to hire a person to manage the CMS and help desk. What about the bandwidth problem if you go with an external CMS.

Tri County Technical College is a Banner site and WebCT is populated directly from Banner. Other schools mentioned their CMS were populated similarly. Depauw built a batch program that populates Moodle. University of Indianapolis is a Banner and Blackboard site and will pay the added costs regardless if the faculty insist on staying with a familiar CMS.

Philadelphia Biblical University is running Moodle. They had been using an ABT web module with some CMS features. Washington State is running Moodle. They have some great software to auto-fill a Moodle database. Faculty are hearing about other schools running Moodle. Have to get good information to them.

What does it take to run Moodle? The basic installation requires Linux, Apache, PHP. It depends on whether the IT staff has the expertise to implement it. Powweb out of California offers a MySQL server with Moodle. You can go directly to www.moodle.org and log in as a teacher, a student, or an administrator and play with a sample course.

Augustana has been running Moodle for two years on Windows, not Linux. They have a package you can download.

One consortium of several colleges supports both Blackboard and Moodle and wants to use IT funds to support faculty to convert. The distance learning person at AB tech refused to let faculty use Moodle. They are a Blackboard campus.

Course Management Roundtable continued

Another school installed Angel for pilot projects during the spring semester with good response from faculty. They used a batch file to construct data for every faculty member and course.

Depauw found that faculty had set up their own server running Moodle without IT knowing about it.

Moodle is very open to collaboration. Version 1.8 has a networking feature that can connect different installations and give rights to users to access other installations, so faculty can keep their old courses on one installation and current courses on another. It has the ability to cluster.

Another concern in switching to Moodle is getting old content put into the new system. Moodle lets you import Blackboard data into new courses, but the format may need tweaking. It may not be more than what you would ordinarily expect to do to revamp a course. The faculty may not have kept content on their own computers – just on the Blackboard server. Need to emphasize backing up your materials. One can google “Blackboard to Moodle” and find a dozen schools who have set up a conversion process. There are 200K Moodle users in 75 countries.

What about training for students using a CMS. One faculty member says it takes one or two complete class session to teach students to use their CMS. Gettysburg teaches Angel in their 1st year orientation training. Another suggestion is to set up workshops for faculty and students. There are on-line training tutorials using Camptasia, one minute in length, for just in time learning.

The Moodle community is so large that you can get feedback and bug fixes in an hour where it may take days for the same results from a proprietary CMS.

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Disaster Recovery – About half of the school present have a disaster recovery plan that is updated annually. Not having one is setting up your institution for either a hardship or drastic failure. It was identified that IT should be just one piece of the comprehensive disaster recovery plan (emergency response plan) for the campus. Are there offsite locations for backup redundancy on our campuses? Two schools have “cold sites” for disaster recovery. Perhaps associations we are affiliated with would be a good starting point for developing “cold sites” with each other. Defining how that would work is the challenge (legal, etc.). Craig Gray is available to share what Lee University has done to address the issue and share with other institutions.

Leadership for Information Technology – Five of the schools present have a cabinet-level representative for Information Technology. There was one school represented (Emory & Henry) in which the Director of IT is also the Director of Library Services. The schools represented were about 50/50 on those falling under the Business Affairs/Finance umbrella versus falling under the Academic Affairs/Dean umbrella. Two schools reported that they were Directors of IT and were recently named Chief Information Officer/VP for IT at their schools. It was suggested that perhaps Educause is emphasizing that the need for a technology representative at the cabinet level is imperative in today’s educational setting. How are schools handling succession issues with an aging senior/leadership position IT workforce? Some schools do not have a plan. Other schools noted that they are actively preparing someone else within the technology staff to serve as a “backup” to that leader within the IT office. Finally, a couple of schools reported on similar situations in which someone was promoted into an assistant or associate director role.

[Link to ASCUE '08 Call for Papers](#)