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INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

February 19, 2024

TO: Members of the Information Technology Advisory Committee (ITAC)

FROM: Sweety Law, Chair, ITAC

SUBJECT: ITAC Minutes of Meeting (Manpreet Chadha and Sweety Law with partial assistance from Otter AI free trial version)

MEETING DATE: Monday, February 19**,** 2024, **12-1:30pm through Zoom**

PLEASE CLICK HERE FOR ZOOM LINK

https://otter.ai/signin (only by host)

ITAC Meeting & Communications Norms: All committee communications will be collegial, respectful, and non-personal. Our communication should be open and full for every member to be able to participate equally.

Attending: Sweety Law, Levent Ertaul, Christina Chin-Newman, Ian Pollock, Taejoon Kim, Meaghan McCollow, Surendra Sarnikar, Manuel Saldanha, Roger Wen, Jake Hornsby, Keri O'Neal

Guests: Manpreet Chatha, Dan LeGate, Kara Finch, Andrea Low

Minutes of Meeting

1. Land Acknowledgement (short version) - read by Taejoon Kim
2. Appoint committee secretary [secretary sign up] – *(Used beta of Otter ai for today's meeting 2/19)*
3. Approval of the agenda (Moved/Seconded/Passed)
4. Review of meeting minutes - Draft of 2/19/2024 Minutes (Moved/Seconded/Passed)
5. ITAC chair report
    a. Otter AI and Read AI are approved for limited use (by ITAC only) - Implications of using AI technology for meeting minutes and related Article II (Section1) - still need a human secretary of record to review Minutes for accuracy and improvements-edits
    b. Members will help to recruit at least one more student representative on ITAC - Levent asked whether student rep needs to be undergrad student or grad student. Christina: Either is okay. Ian shared a recruitment email template on Chat (see copy in Appendix of this Minutes).

c. Given some major policy updates and changes needed in the near term, a proposal to committee to make ITAC a standing committee, change from its current ad hoc status was presented - to be discussed at next meeting.

6. Business

a. **Redesigning the university website** - Surrendra asked *what might be a timeline for the CSUEB website redesign; specifically because members who are working on WASC accreditation content need to provide the links to the website.*

Jake reported the university is quite a bit off of that. For one, the Communications Office is finishing up the project to get a wireframe. He doesn't know when that's gonna be complete, but judging by what he has seen so far, it won't be that long, maybe a couple of weeks or something like that before there's something out there. Then after that, we would have to do a full procurement to get implementers to reconfigure the site. He doesn't imagine a huge amount of the infrastructure changing; certainly not the platform itself, but just the front-page, one or two layers content design and sort of that. That initial impression we're trying to give to new students from the landing page and maybe a few pages below.

The URL structure shouldn't change hugely. If it does, then that's a whole other project where we'll map it all out, and then go to every single customer for every single link and verify that, that'll be the approach, as usual. If we do in this case, he will be recommending that we get full consulting support all the way through instead of trying to be sort of semi DIY, because that rarely works and website redesigns got to be quick, fast, get flipped over and then clean up right you know, instead of let's drag this on forever. Are we still using five year old templates five years ago, right? And everything looks disjointed. So trying to figure out how to avoid that.

But again, still not even funded. That's that's what will those were so an idea to redesign a great but we might have to be them. We don't have enough money. To do anything.

And we just do the front page only. And then nothing else changes. But at least then we have an opportunity and also all of our user tracking and things like that and marketing, tracking and getting all that stuff set up. We're definitely going to do that. But that doesn't affect you. But it will affect the front page. You might affect some links downstream. But I don't think too many changes unless you're referring back to the home page for some reason.

b. Question: *what is the license for Google Services - is it CSU wide or is it CSUEB specific? What are other campuses doing that have both Google and Microsoft?*
Jake will be finding out this week; that's on the agenda item for the system meeting that will be starting Wednesday. It's a big topic right now. If anybody's if they can't afford it, or for other reasons. He has many other reasons besides money. It's not that if we did it, then that they would stick with it; they would go to Microsoft that I know for sure. There's quite a few if's. We're sort of in the minority on the Google front, which doesn't make it difficult to kind of get any visibility in front of Google with any of your issues. You know, and our support models are not great. You know, they don't fix things on our behalf. We can customize a lot; what we can do is just kind of very limited. And there's, it's hard enough to even talk to a Google rep ever. It's not like you know all of our other reps that cling on to us every day. It is a struggle.
To the question if there was any cost analysis, Jake reported that Google raised their rates for everybody regardless of CSU inside or outside. We are not special, we did not and we don't get a special deal from Google. Like most campuses in the country, don't. Just the way it is, because they don't, they don't deal like that. They are kind of like take it or leave it. And they kind of click-bait as I said with a free service for a while and then realize how much it actually costs and then try to recover and I don't blame them.
And the price of charging is not horrible. It is just what do you have to gain to have Microsoft too?
Now you have that, it sort of makes it difficult. It makes it a difficult conversation from a cost point of view, but from a regular point of view, like the more smart strategic point of view, there are some things that we have benefited from, you know, tactically and other reasons, but we I think I covered some of those last time. So but we haven't even talked to the cabinet about that thing that's coming up soon and they'll lay out the essentially pros and cons for and then also opportunity costs for not investing more into Microsoft potentially because if anything, we probably should anyway, you know, to get access to the AI tools and the other things that work really, really, really well. You know, give students the tools they might use at work or that kind of thing. Probably reduce our license costs because they own a bunch of stuff we already buy like like death, etc. I mean, there's all kinds of opportunities that are there. And phone systems and video chat, Teams and all those kinds of things that might be better for us in the long term. Painful in the short term. Obviously, it's it's not fun, but that's the kind of situation we are in.

c. Question: *there's been a discussion or plan on reducing duplication of multiple systems like Slack. And that's also ongoing. Is that kind of discussions going on at the system level of the CSU system? is it trying to get ahead of duplication with system wide contracts?*

Jake reported that CSU admin talked about this a lot. There's a lot of bifurcation. I think when if you talk to the system and the CSU CIOs, there's a lot of opinions back and forth on certain things. And at a minimum we try to do things in buckets like maybe like five campuses, Florida, we can leverage right in some cases. All campuses got on board with certain things like ServiceNow and then we start thinking about that in their current time. And probably that's a mistake to continue. You know that product you know, for example, but why? Half the campuses are with Microsoft, Google any way? Why do we have all these extra tools floating around? And I think part of it is there's also that administrative and academic overlap, Academic and Student Affairs. So that's in the CO live world, those two groups, you know, student affairs and academic affairs are combined. So they come up with a lot of their own things and run their own initiatives, which is actually a good thing. It's like a healthy part of that. Push and Pull. So they bring out a lot of things. You know, we end up with multiple student planners that we're rolling out like three now ours is where the load is online, and then campuses are split on water to others.

We have all kinds of things like that happen all the time. You know, some people are EAP, some people are not. And it is difficult to know the conversations that certainly the ITAP X CIO level is always trying to combine our role into contracts. Right now it's huge conversation with the Calvo group, which is a Financial Group includes all the VPs of finance from all the campuses and I think Presidents are often included in that. And that's their focus is on shared service again, but also sort of that, that shared cost structure, maybe even sharing talent across campuses, for certain products, so we don't have to all like, spin up a product but then we have our own support functions for it. Kind of like what we do called consolidation on campus level. Think of it like at a bigger level where we borrow individuals from other campuses for periods of time to help us out, we pay them extra and people borrow my stuff. But for periods of time the same way, we do it on a micro level. But hopefully we can find something like maybe one topic.

Actually, currently as a system-wide network operations center which would integrate a bunch of the security individuals together so we can be much more responsive to security threats and the tech ecosystem around the tools we need to use to protect all of our assets are very common. So why are we always going different directions and why? Why is it, it's not fair to have some campuses that have a whole bunch of staff and they can afford it. And then other campuses that deal with it. I always talk about this at these meetings. This is the let's focus on the have nots versus the haves and making sure that we're balancing out because, in my opinion, like security is

a good example of students that have a less rich campus. And ours, let's say, I don't know, their time. Their security is just as important as our students' security. Right. And how do we balance that out? In a way that's fair?

d. Comment: Meaghan and Keri reminded the Committee about keeping in mind accessibility and to include folks from that office to understand their needs.

Jake explained more about assets duplication and administrative and academic overlaps. How accessibility would be another good target. So many of that is what's going on. Now that budget pressure is the unfortunate reason for certain groups to look at it. But the real reason is, how do we make sure that we're giving equal access to modern tools to our students? But, again, sometimes it is different. It's difficult, like some campuses won't even look at Slack because Salesforce owns it. Right? Are they are right they like their tool and that they have to read yours and it's hard to get around?

e. Comment: When we talk about a website redesign, it can't just be window dressing like that's not the problem, right? The problem isn't that we have a red banner and not a blue one or something. The problem is that I think the information architecture is really clunky and there's a lot of kind of dead links and sort of missing directions and things that are hard to find. So I think actually the energy is needed more in that area and not so much in the kind of the look and feel of things. It's really not the look and feel so much as is actually the structure.

   Jake agreed that the question is how can we make sure that when a prospective student or current one walks through our site, that everything is laid out nicely. That, they don't get lost in the mix, which means killing dead links, killing very nested things, and making very pointed links toward the purpose of our website, which I think we all agree is to market our operations. Secondary is information. Third is our likes, where people put their documents and things like that. Unfortunately for the moment, right now, but that target is number one.

f. Comment: Where the information sits, may be something that should be higher on that list? There might be a sort of, maybe a survey there in terms of marketing.

   Jake reported that would be the next stage two, is when what goes where. And what we were/are defining are the buckets, right now. Like, it could be like, when students care about money, right? Right now students have to know what a bursar's office is, where are financial aid offices, what are student finances; which is different than what the cashews, cages, all that stuff are, but it's just money, right? Like, I'm used to that word,

but I don't remember where they use it in their lives. The designers are looking at, but it's, that is where 60 different.

Comment: About customer acquisition - talking about new students and recruitment - I think that, like industry, we would build like smaller sub sites, right to funnel into the larger thing and so I think that there's some other ways of maybe addressing the marketing component. I think that a lot of people just have a hard time finding things on the website that changes a lot. And so I think that information architecture as you said, the navigation, not understanding of where things are I think that's really the important part.

g. Question: Since the Google people were in the minority, is there some kind of documentation that we could see in terms of, like, who uses Wi Fi on campus, and where are the people most invested based on existing data? I didn't mean other campus, the CSU. As we have all of those discussions, I think, having a good sense of who's using what and how many people are using a particular thing? Like how many people are using Google Docs instead of Microsoft Word might be an important piece for this conversation, right? Like, who is using what is required, who's being asked to change? What are the opportunity costs that you mentioned? Like, what are the sort of things that we could save, and I think the faculty should have some understanding of that at least, and I think part of shared governance would be that faculty also should be weighing in on that discussion, right. It shouldn't just be the executive level, like the cost part of it, there is also the instructional component.. And then the last thing is just so you know, having these discussions right. I remember that San Francisco State rolled out a huge Moodle, DIY package in 2010. I mean, documents and support and things like that the then CIO went on to I forget what I studied with him for a moment. But, there is a lot of open source software that could reduce our cost if we invested in being able to basically support our software in that way. Right. And I think that I learned I think that San Francisco State is still on, and I don't know how it's going for them, like 20 years down the line, but that might be something to think about.

Jake replied that he would ask, how do we move away? Yes, it'd be interesting to. I mean, we can. There's still going to be a Microsoft group of users, will need to pay the Microsoft licenses as well. Because they have to put their learning management system in open source, right? I mean, technically ours is but it's not right. Supposed to be but doesn't work out like that. But it's still .. Yeah, I know. I know. Like we did, like the Sakai project, right. We had never before been around that kind of thing, as we did at

Cambridge University when I was there to help build that. But that's different. And you'd have to look at the costs really closely, like how many people would I have to do it? What about my cloud infrastructure that are the support, the backups, all that stuff? That total cost, it's, you really quickly hit to enter that decay with a point one and a half employees and Cloud Data Center cost super quick, you know, so is it a good deal or not? That's always like we do look at open source stuff. We believe in that too. And we do use a lot of open source stuff, just not the front facing things. The interesting I mean we could do that too.

But I think having the conversation going back to number two a little bit, yes, faculty should be involved. I'd be interested to know what they think of when it comes to instructional video, what the impact would be, for sure. Yeah, and I agree. Roger, sent me a direct message - we should have communications present to this group once they get the website map framework sort of roughed out better than it is. I would say okay. Yeah, I would I would release cards with with stakeholders, not just communications. I don't think that there would be like, have the best understanding of the entire university I'm not gonna disagree. I was reading Sweety's comment here. In terms of content and sub sites – like for example, we have a prospective student portal that holds all of our marketing directions, to where we can focus on information, showing our step-by-step to a sub site no one sees, but at the same time, that is, our statistical point of entry and has been from our website. Currently, even our marketing columns or bus sites, the bus stop signs are automatic, texts are collected as when a student walked by a billboard, right, all that stuff, directs them to our site where they fill out a form and then they get dropped into that other world. But it's like getting into that other world. This is where it gets difficult. We could do a cell full name sub-site and chain CSU East Bay website to be only that and then have everything else is like a bounce off from that site. That's also on the cards. I'm thinking. It might be exactly the same website, but it kind of feels like you're flipping between worlds. That's also an efficient way to do something quick and cheap and meet the mission. So again, it all depends on I don't know where or though. How much, how many cycles we can put into doing this, etc., budgets and how many people we can get the help from, you know, like faculty, things like that, too, will be an important factor. You know, if we're going to do this, this is like, kind of a long term thing. It's going to, it takes time. And they have to, we have to find a way to keep that engagement on if we're gonna do something like that.

h. CSUEB Emergency Operations Plan (September 2022)

Jake provided an overview of the Veoci system. Members discussed the need to update the EOP data, improve and test current notification systems, and possibly conduct a drill like the fire emergency drill, as emergency situations especially weather-related natural emergencies are becoming more common than rare..

Action Items

- Review meeting notes produced by Otter AI to see how it works
- Discuss making ITAC a standing committee on upcoming meeting agenda
- Get faculty input on redesigning the website and other potential impacts of changing instructional technologies. Release website redesign ideas with stakeholders, not just Communications
- Look at usage data to see who is using what technologies and how much
- Recruit at least one more student representative on ITAC
- Have Communications present to ITAC once website map framework is ready to be rolled out

7. Meeting was adjourned at 1:26 PM (PST)

APPENDIX

Draft message to students from Ian Pollock:
Dear Students,

We invite you to join the University's Information Technology Advisory Committee (ITAC). Your perspective as a student is invaluable to us in shaping IT services and infrastructure to better meet academic needs. As a member, you'll engage in policy, strategy, and service discussions, with a commitment of just 4 hours per month.

This is an excellent chance to develop leadership skills and influence the technological resources on campus. If you're interested or have questions, please reach out to me *(ITAC member name and email*).

Best,
ITAC members