



Minnesota
STATE COLLEGES
& UNIVERSITIES

**Minnesota State Colleges and Universities
Systems Development Steering Committee**

MEETING NOTES

May 6, 2008

12:30 PM – 3:30 PM

Conference Room 1802, UBS Building, St. Paul

NEXT MEETING: Date: June 3, 2008

Time: 12:00 PM – 3:30 PM

Location: Conference Room 1802, UBS, St. Paul

ATTENDEES:

Joanne Chabot, Art Lieble, Scott Sahs, Glen Guida, Ken Ries

ITV: Les Bakke, Mark Malecek, Deb Anderson, Bryan Schneider, Mark Malecek, Ra Nae Thompson, Ilya Yakolev

Phone: Dawn Syverson

1). Review/Adjust Agenda: Approval of minutes from 4/1/08 meeting: Approved with no revisions.

2). General / Housekeeping – Glen:

Committee Vacancy – Art Leible will be resigning from the SDSC as he will be relocating. Scott Sahs will serve as interim CIO at Rochester and will be attending SDSC meetings over the next few months.

We also have a vacancy in the student services area: John O'Brien has resigned and has made a pitch to the CAOs to recruit a replacement for himself.

New Governance Structure: This could cause some modifications to the SDSC. We may be taking on a bigger role which could make recruiting new members more difficult. We may want to revisit this once we have a better handle on what kind of role we need to fill.

Database Migration Update: The final cutover date is still October 6th and the preceding weekend. The Uniface Migration effort: On June 13th we would migrate to Uniface 8 on RDB for the MnSCU 1 region. And then on June 20th, we will migrate the other regions. The second option is to migrate MnSCU 1 on June 20th and migrate the other regions on July 11th.

-The idea is to schedule an hour of downtime early on Friday morning around 6 am. Uniface 8 would be up around 7 am. This should not impact any weekend events.

If campuses have issues with these dates, we should work with them on an individual basis. We won't be able to work around everyone's schedule.

Risk Abatement: We have taken some steps to minimize risk. Read-only programs are mostly converted now and running against Oracle. A number of other steps will be taken over the Summer. After the Uniface migration, we will start pointing some of the client-server read functions through Oracle so we can start putting load on the Oracle server and monitoring it to see if there are any issues. This process is fairly easy. We would like to do this step by August 1st.

We will also be engaging the quality assurance group to perform some regression and load testing this Summer.

We are also working on testing client server against Oracle back-end database. We have found that RDB and its implementation of dates is not consistent with any other relational database. We will have to make a couple of date changes to some field types.

3.) Communication Plan – Ra Nae: Some take-away items from the task force meeting was that we will be sending letters out to the Presidents regarding the assignment of key campus contacts. This letter would be drafted by the SDSC.

The other update is that Glen will send a status summary to Ken Niemi to keep him informed about the RDB to Oracle project using the assistance of the PMO.

Feedback on communication methods:

- People often do not get enough detailed information on projects and it is often not written in a way that the end-user can use. We need to come up with some new methods.
- No one really knows what we are doing that may be important to them.
- During the last year, the HR SCUPPS user group never met. Day to day issues were not addressed. We have a pretty major communication problem across the board.

St. Cloud State University had a similar problem. They created a position that focused on communication. All communication including emails, letters, status reports etc... were all funneled through this person. This may be something that would benefit IT. Joanne is willing to help in this effort.

Ken Ries suggested evaluating various applications such as Emergency Notification apps as communication filtering tools. Right now we are relying on a variety of listservs going out from different organizations. This conversion is approaching quickly, it may not be a good idea to open up a huge communication project now, but rather make sure we are doing the best job possible in our given environment to get information out.

The current understanding is that the PMO will maintain a basic monthly status report for the conversion. This will be in a place where the general audience will have access to it. We have a communication plan that specifies how specific pieces of information will go out to groups outside of the PMO process. We are also asking campuses to identify campus contacts.

- When we establish key contacts, they may tend to talk to people mainly in their own area. Some areas may still be left out of the loop. Laying out our expectations very clearly to the campus contacts would help.
- Would a real-time status website/blog/wiki be possible? This could be done in conjunction with the regular communication plan.
- We have engaged a consultant to help clean up our website. We need to continue with our communication plan as it is assuming that the re-designed website will not be available in the time that we need it.

We want to start creating awareness of the SDSC and our role. We should include our names and contact numbers when communication goes out. When communication goes out, people tend to feel better about it when they know that campuses have had a say in it.

The first step is to get the initial letter out to the Presidents requesting candidates for campus contacts.

Support for Under-Represented Groups:

In 2006, a major registration enhancement occurred. The Registrar group and the Customized Training group made a lot of requests for features and changes in registration. We decided to cooperate and make some changes. In the end, we brought in consultants to make some changes in Customized Training at the same time that we were making registration enhancement. We added Shopping Cart functionality and a few other things that were wanted by everyone but a priority to the CECT. This was delivered and has been in use. Hundreds of thousands of registrations have taken place. This worked better in the credit world than in the non-credit world. During the past couple of years, customized training users have become increasingly frustrated. The Presidents requested that we survey the users and get back to them with our findings. A focus group of CECT users was held yesterday. The problems are partly related to ISRS and majorly related to business practices to support CECT needs as well as campus needs. For example, CECT needs to bill people right away. If payment is not made right away, seats will be opened up. At campuses, many times, the business office opens the tuition calculation window based on a semester. CECT courses are set up months in advance so that if the tuition calculation window is not open in ISRS, tuition cannot be calculated right away. This is incredibly frustrating. CECT users need a much easier way to create accounts and register accounts. There has been a lack of communication in the past couple of years and many issues have built up.

Normandale has purchased the Lumens system which is tailored to meet the needs of customized training models. The problem is that the data needs to go into ISRS for strategic regions which means that campuses going with Lumens are taking on the burden of double data entry. We are going to have some reconciliation issues. These campuses may even need to bring on additional staff but they feel it is worth it. We will be forming user groups and holding regular meetings. Normandale, St. Paul College and North Hennepin will pilot test Lumens. Each will pay a substantial amount of money up front. Hennepin Tech, Century and one other campus will pilot test ISRS since many changes have been made to it.

The big issue here is that two years went by without discussion on this subject. We have not served their needs well and we need to work on communication and coordination. We don't want to end up spending money on purchasing multiple system or approaches that serve the same function. The topic of underserved groups is emerging as a huge item for us and we are making progress.

Glen stated that the amount of effort that it would cost us to integrate would probably not be worth the quality of the product that we end up with. The support and development costs would be ongoing. Integration projects are incredibly expensive. This could easily turn into a \$2 M expenditure. However, timelines are short and campuses are willing to spend more out of their budgets in order to meet deadlines.

We need to get some communication tools in place between departments so we can eliminate the silos that we are currently working within. Ra Nae has support analysts assigned to each campus. Joanne suggested that these individuals could serve as contact points.

4.) ISRS 2009 – 2011 Roadmap:

Glen made some changes according to the feedback he received at the last meeting. He split up the goals over the three years. Anything that comes out of this Roadmap will have to go through the

EIC process. Ken Niemi has been very successful at bringing required projects to the EIC. It may be a good idea for us to put together two general EIC business cases. One would be for required system maintenance and one would be for system development programming over the next three years. The Security Steering Committee took this approach and it was very well received.

We will send out the Roadmap out to CIOs the week after Memorial Day and request feedback.

Other Items:

We have been doing production releases on Mondays for the past 10 years. There has been a request by our internal server group to look into moving these to Wednesday. Our production services person, Rod Gerads, indicated that this is a bad idea because classes are in full swing on Wednesdays.

-Joanne noted that Monday releases aren't the best for us because it is difficult for users to come back to work on Monday and find things different. Maybe we could pick another day where we could remind users a day in advance of what changes will be made.

-We will discuss this further at the next meeting.

5). Next Meeting – June 3rd, 2008. We will have a pre-meeting to discuss the database migration.

Meeting adjourned at 3:00 P.M. Meeting notes submitted by Smitha Pennepalli,
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