

**SUMMARY FOR STRATEGIC INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE**

**DATE: August 15, 2017**

**TIME: 2-4 p.m.**

**LOCATION: Dumke Room, Eccles Broadcast Center**

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

Cathy Anderson	Demian Hanks	Steve Hess	John Horel
Nancy Lombardo	Harish Maringanti	Rick Smith	Rob White
Amy Wildermuth			

**COMMITTEE SUPPORT:** Emily Rushton, Scott Sherman

**UNABLE TO ATTEND:**

Melissa Bernstein	Kirsten Butcher	Holly Christmas	James Elder
Aaron Fogelson	Bo Foreman	James Herron	Jakob Jensen
Mike Kirby	Ken Nye	Andrew Olson	Mary Parker
Kevin Runolfson	Ryan Smith	Mike Strong	Jess Taverna
Jim Turnbull	Jeff West	Joanne Yaffe	

**AGENDA ITEMS:**

- Student computing fee financial summary
- Student computing fee process evolution
- Open discussion about the fee and process
- Open floor

**Student computing fee financial summary**

Chief Information Officer Steve Hess presented a brief history of student computing fees, which were created in 1985, with approval by student government, to support the first student computer labs on campus. Student computing fees are currently dedicated to providing student access to technology, networking, software, communication and collaboration tools, as well as classroom technology, labs, and student study spaces. Hess explained that there are approximately 250 general-use classrooms in 34 buildings campus-wide that are not owned or managed by any college or department. Student computing fees are the only source of funds for these general classroom technologies.

The distribution of fees is as follows: 40% to University Information Technology, 43% to colleges and libraries, 7% to general-use classrooms, and 10% to centralized student software contracts. It was clarified that the remainder of the meeting and discussion would be regarding only the 43% allocated to colleges/libraries.

## **Student computing fee process evolution**

Teaching and Learning Technologies director Jon Thomas explained how the student computing fee process has evolved over the past five years, with the most notable change being the replacement of the Student Computing Advisory Committee (SCAC) with the Teaching and Learning Portfolio (TLP). The TLP established a set of strategic priorities by which to make funding decisions, including focusing on the number of students served and prioritizing central resources. It also began requiring colleges to submit one proposal, rather than individual department requests. The TLP also created an eight-person task force to interview requestors and clarify some aspects of the proposals.

Another change made was the removal of a default maintenance fund, which was allocated as a percentage of the annual award, and instead requiring each requestor to add maintenance as a line item in the proposals. One committee member commented that a non-line-item “miscellaneous” column for unforeseen maintenance costs throughout the year would still be helpful.

The TLP also opened up participation to interdisciplinary programs and centers, in addition to colleges and libraries. Thomas explained that overall, the current process has greatly improved accountability for each group requesting funds, because the portfolio is very clear about the scope of use for student computing fees.

Thomas said the task force interviews and deliberations currently take up 40 hours of time per person. At the last TLP meeting in July, the portfolio discussed the effectiveness of the current process and ways they might improve it and/or make it more efficient. One suggestion being considered is to make the task force interviews optional instead of required.

## **Open discussion about the fee and process**

SITC chair Amy Wildermuth kicked off the discussion by reminding the committee that the student computing fee distributions are not included in the overall budget process that every group participates in at the U. Wildermuth asked if that should change, and said consolidating funding sources into the overall annual budget process has often been done in the past. She explained that since the student computing fee process and the overall budget process are currently disconnected, there is a possibility for gaps to occur – either a college doesn’t get the funding it expected from either source, or it gets double funding from both sources.

Associate Vice President for Budget & Planning Cathy Anderson explained that the budget process, in addition to simply determining what a college needs for the upcoming year, is also a way for colleges to strategically think about what they would like to accomplish over time – something that’s difficult to do when there are multiple funding sources not tied into the same budgetary process.

Cory Stokes, UOnline director and associate dean for Undergraduate Studies, pointed out that many funding requests are for projects of a moderately technical nature, and that connecting the student computing fees process to the overall budget model would still require some sort of technical examination of the requests to ensure specific needs of colleges/groups are being met while also maintaining some standards (e.g. ensuring classroom technology meets approved specifications).

The committee discussed the logistics of aligning the student computing fees process with the overall annual budget process, and there was general agreement that it would make sense to tie the two together. The committee then discussed what is and isn't allowed to be funded by student computing fees, and there were some clarifications made on how UIT uses the student computing fee funds it is allocated.

One member pointed out that some departments have multiple sources of technical funding, while other departments rely solely on student computing fees for their technical needs. The student computing fund hasn't drastically changed over the years, but technology is rapidly becoming critical to every discipline on campus. There was general agreement from the committee that tying this funding source in to the broader budget process would better allow University leadership to strategically plan for the ever-increasing need for technology in order to better teach students.

At this point, the committee talked about timeline, and acknowledged that moving to meet the overall budget process timeline would mean fast-tracking the student computing fees process for the upcoming year. Stokes said that moving to the optional task force interview model could save time.

Stokes then clarified that the role of the TLP would change from being an awarding committee to being a recommending committee. Wildermuth added that the TLP would weigh requests as it has in the past, make funding recommendations to each college/group, and share those with SITC. The recommendations would then be included in the budget approval process that occurs in March/April every year. As in the past, TLP would need to stay within the amount of funds available. The committee agreed on this, and Anderson noted that how the colleges spend these funds would continue to be tracked.

It was also clarified that the recommendations from TLP would need to be included in each college or group's overall budget proposal regardless (i.e. it will *not* be left to the discretion of the college to include or not include TLP's recommendations).

There was further discussion of timeline and moving the process up to be in line with the overall budget timeline. Ultimately, the committee agreed that all student computing fee funding request proposals should be submitted by January 15, with all decisions/recommendations made by March 15.

Finally, Wildermuth made the official motion to change the current process by having TLP provide a recommendation to colleges/groups, which is then integrated and coordinated with the overall budget process for the University. The motion was seconded, with no opposition or abstentions, and approved.

Wildermuth ended the discussion by thanking the TLP and the task force for all the positive changes made to the student computing fees process.

**Open floor**

There was a brief discussion about the need to publicize a list of available workstations and labs on campus.

Action summary			
Action	Topic	Person/Group	Next step
Approved	Student computing fees process	Portfolio	The TLP will tighten up the timeline for the upcoming year’s student computing fees process and provide recommendations to each college or group by March 15, to be included in the overall budget request by each college or group.