**Academic Technology Council (ATC) Meeting**

**February 21, 2022**

**Minutes Prepared By:** Nicole Carlins

**Attending**: Richard Fuller, David Bennett, Jon Radermacher, Phillip Miller, Natalya Bromall, Arif Sirinterlikci, Lawrence Tomei, Yao Zhang, Jessica Kamerer

**Regrets:** Jianyu Ma

**Approval of November minutes:** Rick Fuller presented the meeting minutes of the November 11, 2021 meeting to the board for approval, whereupon motion made by Lawrence Tomei, seconded by Jon Radermacher and unanimously adopted, the minutes was approved as presented.

**Reports:**

* **Lawrence Tomei, SNEHS** – Larry discussed four different topics/issues. The first topic discussed pertained to upcoming summer hardware and software updates/upgrades. Phill stated each year there is an allocation of capital dollars for replacement of faculty/staff and lab computers which have reached the 4-5-year-old range. Unfortunately, those dollars allocated do not always cover every computer which needs replaced; however, Phill stated they replace faculty laptops first, followed by labs and classrooms. On the other hand, if any dollars are remaining, they are used for staff replacements or emergencies. This fund is used to replace projectors and Extron systems as well. Furthermore, Phill said there are no plans to do any major software upgrades like Office 2019 last year. However, the Adobe suite is upgraded each year. The helpdesk is available to provide guidance to anyone requiring help with the latest upgrade. Moreover, Larry asked about Blackboard upgrades and Phill stated he was not aware of any major upgrades at this time.
* The second topic Larry mentioned he was the readiness of RMU classrooms to continue to teach virtually. Phill stated he and his team are continually working to make sure all video conferencing equipment is working the same as it did when it was installed. Additionally, Phill said there are no plans to remove the equipment. Larry asked about university policy with regard to teaching with the VR equipment/online and Jon answered up to 15% of the class can be offered not on ground. However, if a weather delay is called from the Provost office which moves the classes remote, this does not count towards the percentage. Furthermore, Jon said if a faculty member chooses to use their 15% they would need to be granted permission from their department head.
* The third topic Larry mentioned was the status of Patrick Henry 308. Phill indicated he has not heard anything with regard to the removal of the lab from the education department. However, he will touch base with Jimmy Chiaramonte and find more information. Furthermore, Jon mentioned he has not heard anything with regards to the lab.
* Finally, Larry asked about the tech budget for this academic year and how the budget is being distributed. He said there are items his school would like to purchase; however, they would like to know if it is possible with the budget. Phill stated the academic technology budget (1190) has $410,000 to purchase software used by the various schools. Regretfully, this budget is currently oversubscribed by $111,000. As a result, Phill stated he uses other funds within the IT budget to cover the overages at this point, but this is not sustainable. Currently, he is working with the finance team to find a solution. Some of the major line items are Blackboard, SPSS, Turnitin, Bloomberg, and OCLC for the library to name a few. Unfortunately, Phill indicated the budget is fixed and he is not able to add dollars; so, if a faculty member is interested in a software application, he suggests asking their department head for funding. Larry asked Phill for a line item on 1190 to share with the schools and Phill said he would provide it.
* **Yao Zhang, SBUS** – Yao reported her school’s question pertains to the online monitoring proctor function. She stated the lockdown of website still works; however, the monitor does not. Rick stated the online monitoring she was describing was Respondus Monitor. See “Respondus Utilization and Contract”section below.
* **Arif Sirinterlikci, SEMS** – Arif mentioned the John Jay extension project and software tools which are supposed to be purchased by the project such as Festo automation software. He asked Phill to check on the status of any remaining software items on the building expansion project.
* **David Bennett, Library** – Dave said he had no issues to report at this time.
* **Natalya Bromall, SIHSS** – Natalya indicated she created a shared spreadsheet and asked everyone in her school to express any technology issues they are currently experiencing. Natalya shared the document with the group and discussed the most common issues. One of the issues mentioned numerous times was slow Appstream. A second area mentioned by multiple faculty was better communication about software needs from faculty prior to the start of the semester. As well as, informing faculty of changes in labs. Additionally, Natalya mentioned lack of space on laptop hard drives was another issue stated by several faculty. Natalya will share the spreadsheet with all the faculty issues with Phill. Finally, Natalya asked about video editing software availability. She purchased Screencast-o-Matic and has been using the software. Rick stated the CIT uses it as well. Luckily, it is not very expensive to purchase individually; however, Jon stated they can look into some type of volume/package licensing.

**New/Old Business:**

* **Respondus Utilization and Contract:** Rick indicated the university no longer has the same access to the Respondus Monitor software as they did during the height of the pandemic. However, faculty can still utilize Lockdown Browser. Phill added the university has had Respondus Lockdown browser for a long time and is included in the 1190 budget. Nonetheless, Respondus Monitor was added for one year when the university was doing virtual rotation. However, when the subscription ended, Respondus offered a free trial of 100 seats to entice people to purchase a new subscription. A seat is defined as one student in a course in a semester. Furthermore, he stated the cost to reinstate Respondus monitor would cost roughly four thousand dollars for only a set number of seats. However, once you hit the cap, the cost will increase. Jon added only sixteen people utilized it last year. Therefore, Phill stated they are currently evaluating the need and utilization to determine if it is worth reinstating. Moreover, Jon discussed alternatives to Respondus monitor such as using Google Meets and recording the meeting. In addition, Jessica shared a document with the group which compared Respondus Monitor vs Google Meets features and discussed the pros and cons of each. She, also, stated they have a best practice sheet in the school of nursing which can be shared with anyone who is interested in proctoring with Google Meets. Jessica mentioned and Rick explained another alternative involves the students paying $15 per year to take an unlimited number of tests with monitor activity throughout the year. This option could possibly be listed as a material required, like a book, for the course. Overall, this topic of Respondus Monitor is currently being evaluated based on need and utilization to determine if it is worth being reinstated as well as possible alternatives.
* **IDC VR equipment**: Rick asked Phill the status of installing the VR equipment which was in Yorktown into the IDC. He stated the CIT would like to conduct in person trainings/seminars in the near future which would have a Google Meets option for those who cannot attend. Phill said he would like to meet with Rick and possibly a library representative in the IDC to figure out the most functional and aesthetic location for the equipment. Rick asked Phill to let him know what day/time works best in his schedule.

* **Cielo24 Utilization and Contract Status**: Rick stated Cielo24 is a product which assists with ADA compliance by providing transcriptions for students who may be hearing impaired. Unfortunately, the cost of Cielo24 has recently increased by 25%. As a result, Rick stated the CIT explored the utilization of Cielo24. They found little to no utilization due to the fact YouTube and Google now provide quality transcriptions and closed captioning for ADA compliance. However, Rick stated there are occasions which arise where Cielo24 is needed. Therefore, Jon stated there is an “on demand” option Cielo24 offers. Instead of one base price, you can be billed for only the number of minutes that need transcribed. He is currently working with a Cielo24 sales representative to transition to this version. Overall, this switch will still provide access to the product, but at a drastically reduced cost.
* **Banner Status**: Jon stated he is currently working with the school administrators to examine all the check sheets. Thus far, the School of Business is complete. Jon declared they are on schedule to open Banner DegreeWorks to students in time for the upcoming advising season. Additionally, he mentioned they hired a new part-time employee in the registrar’s office. She has experience with both Banner and DegreeWorks and has been assisting in all the four-year and two-year course planners for undergraduate and graduate degrees respectively. Finally, Jon indicated this semester will be the last semester they do the current roster confirmations. They will probably switch to the attendance tracker feature which is located at the bottom of self-service. He hopes this feature will be implemented for the Summer 2022 semester, but this can change. Additionally, he indicated information on how to use the attendance tracker feature will be added to the Banner training manual.
* **Ally Software for ADA BB Compliance**: Rick stated he and Phill will need to talk more about this topic offline in the near future. Also, Ally software will assist faculty when it pertains to making courses ADA compliant.
* **Current Technology Issues**: Rick asked Phill if the IT department could send some type of communication such as a newsletter or bulletin to faculty/staff when major technology changes occur. Additionally, Phill mentioned Dell has come to the university with an opportunity to create a “per school” or “per program” page for recommended hardware for inbound/existing students. He, also, stated at dell.com/rmu you can specifically list items that would be appropriate for a student to obtain. The items on the list would be considered recommendations. Lastly, Phill said he would send out information and be in touch with the schools regarding this opportunity.

**Next Meeting Schedule:** Nicole indicated the next meeting will take place in early April.