STUDENT TECHNOLOGY FEE ADVISORY COMMITTEE (TFAC) MEETING  
Friday, Dec. 9, 2011, 10:00 a.m., Memorial Union, Room of Nations  
Meeting Notes by CeCe Rohwedder  
Approved on April 26, 2012

Present: Bonnie Neas, VPIT; Rian Nostrum, Chair; Jake Bechtold, Anne Denton, Gary Fisher, Jim Hammond, Sydney Hull, Tanya Kramer, Galen Mayfield, DK Yoon, CeCe Rohwedder  
Guests: Provost Rafert, Jean Ostrom-Blonigen, Janet Stringer, Marc Wallman

Rian called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m.

1. **Motion (Denton/Hammond) for approval of the minutes of the Nov. 30, 2011 meeting as presented. MSC unanimously.**

2. Introductions were made.

3. Bonnie thanked all who has worked on this committee during the past few years, particularly Rian for his leadership, and added that she has been impressed with everyone’s support and dedication.

4. **Action Plan Recommendations:** Bonnie announced that she accepted all of the committee’s recommendations for the fall Action Plan proposals, and letters to the project managers will be sent soon. She added that she also concurs with the group’s decision to keep the unassigned funds available for the spring semester and the new VPIT.

5. **Student Technology Fee Increase:** Bonnie provided background on the need for this increase. Meeting the campus IT needs has been a growing challenge; changes to our partnership with NDUS have contributed to this challenge, as have new technologies. Funding for Help Desk services is going away, but the need for the services is not and will not. The $1.5M current shortfall has resulted in the ability to hire fewer student employees than we have in the past; we currently have 56 student employees, and we have had as many as 85. In consultation with the Provost, and after having met with student government leaders on Monday on this issue, Bonnie asked TFAC for support of the request to increase the student technology fee.

6. **Student Technology Fee Increase Request Presentation (attached):** Marc gave this presentation and noted that NDSU is funded below its NDUS peers; the question arose of whether our student technology fee would be reduced if that changes. Marc noted that fee-for-service projects are not included in the NDSU funding totals. In 2010, a presentation was given to President’s Cabinet that included the fact that we are not funded to refresh our Ethernet network. This network’s useful life is five years, so we need $900,000 per year to be able to refresh it. Aging networks are vulnerable – this was identified by the Foundstone assessment, too. Half of our switches have overloads; if they go down and we have no spares, the repairs will cost much more than if we had purchased enough so overloads are prevented. Most academic buildings have been upgraded with EPSCoR and Northern Tier funds. In terms of how the network is operated, research buildings are considered academic buildings. Of the
$1.5M shortfall, $1M is for the Ethernet network, and $500,000 is almost equal to the funding NDUS pulled out of NDSU. The shortfall for next year is anticipated to be $600,000, so the trend will continue. If we delay refresh, the costs are higher for maintenance labor.

Bonnie added that the ND Legislature may increase funding to NDSU, but there is no guarantee of that; utility funding will be requested for behind-the-wall technology, but there is no guarantee that request will be approved, and, in any case, the need is now. Student government leaders expressed concern that this request is coming on the heels of the students’ tuition increase adoption, so it may present a political challenge. The last time the student technology fee was increased, it was at a request initiated by the students. Regular small increases over time may have better helped us keep up with increased costs. Bonnie has, in fact, recommended over the past two years that the CPI be used to determine fee increases from year to year.

Since the 75% increase being requested is more than 1%, it will need SBHE approval. The figures presented are based on flat enrollment, but even a growth of 1,000 students would only bring in about $20,000 in student technology fee funds.

7. **Provost Rafert’s Comments:** Provost Rafert stated that all institutions are having similar discussions, and conversations of our distribution model are underway. Student expectations for technology are growing exponentially with no end in sight; this is inconsistent with no student technology fee increases since 2004. An annual small increase of .70¢ per credit per year would have prevented our current shortfall. In his recent memo, SBHE President Grant Shaft focused on finding additional efficiencies in IT use at NDUS, so it is unlikely that the ND Legislature will provide additional funding for IT. Procurement and refresh strategies for switches is vital.

[Janet Stringer left the meeting, at 10:58 a.m.]

The Larsen Allen Risk Assessment identified the need for more faculty and IT at NDSU.

[Anne Denton left the meeting, at 11:00 a.m., first submitting to Rian Nostrum a Proxy Vote Agreement, designating Jim Hammond as her proxy.]

The minimum amount to advance the student technology fee to achieve stability is 75%. The Library and Research building leases have a similar problem, and both have been asked to consider solutions.

8. **Discussion:** Bonnie proposed that a vote be held on the fee increase request; then, next year being a legislative session year, we’ll see how the funding goes. It is not right for students to be paying for infrastructure, but there currently are no other options.

[Provost Rafert left the meeting, at 11:06 a.m.]

Student government leaders have invited IT Division representatives to their next meeting to give this presentation to that group, but their next meeting is in January 2012, and the deadline to submit fee increase applications is December 20, 2011.
9. Motion to support the request for a 75% increase in the student technology fee, with the condition that the general student body also supports it (Hammond/Hull). Motion carried: 5 yes, 1 abstention (Mayfield).

Bonnie thanked everyone for the support.

10. Motion to adjourn (Fisher/Yoon). MSC unanimously.