

Annual Report of the Information Resources Council 2001-2002

1. John Berman, Dean of the Faculty, assembled the Council members in September 2001 to discuss formulation of a technology plan, an outline of aspirations and objectives for the deployment and use of information technology at Skidmore during the next five years. The following major issues emerged:

§ The need for effectively delivered discipline-specific support for faculty, for students, for laboratories and for technologically enhanced classrooms that strengthen teaching, learning, and scholarship.

§ The need for reliable information technology in classrooms and laboratories and the pedagogical consequences of falling short in this arena.

§ Training of faculty, students, and staff in the applications of information technology to the solutions of problems.

§ Rights and responsibilities for all members of the College who use campus information technology.

This plan, which expresses these concerns in detail, was conveyed to the DOF/VPAA with understanding by the Council that these issues would be considered during the then ongoing development of a comprehensive strategic plan for the College.

2. In the fall of 2001, IRC formed a subcommittee and charged the group (called STEIS) with providing advice to the Council on matters of technologically enhanced instructional space on our campus. Professor Alice Dean led this group as it planned, first, for a wireless classroom to be built in the coming year with construction costs to be paid by funding from the Booth Ferris Foundation. Subsequent to this work, STEIS explored several issues concerned with deployment and use of technology in classrooms and laboratories. The subcommittee reported its recommendations on the design of the wireless classroom (Harder 108-09), which were endorsed by IRC and subsequently implemented by CITS and by facilities services. STEIS was less successful in fulfilling its larger mission as it reported conflict and confusion over which issues to deliberate in order to fulfill the charge of IRC to the subcommittee. IRC needs to appoint a new chair for STEIS and to provide guidance that helps the group select and deliberate particulars that place substance within the framework of the mission for the subcommittee.

3. IRC formed the IRC Web Working Group to formulate policy that guides the development of web pages by all campus organizations and departments. The Working Group provides expertise, recommendations, and enforces IRC endorsed policy related to the design and deployment of web sites by all who use the campus computing system. This policy has been published and will be found at the campus web site: http://www.skidmore.edu/irc/docs/Web_mgmt_policy_8.htm

4. The Council reviewed and endorsed capital budget requests for fiscal 2003 from Scribner Library (\$987K) and from CITS (\$2.27M).

5. IRC responded to the report from Ann Henderson about progress in the deployment of the Oracle Student System (OSS). This system will deliver opportunity to use campus information technology in support of advising, course registration, scheduling, tailored web portals, grading, and data retrieval that greatly exceeds our capacities in these areas now. On the other hand, effective use of OSS requires training and acclimation that will be challenging for all members of the campus. The Council acknowledges this matter and stands ready to help the Registrar convey to the community information about the opportunities and obligations that OSS presents.

6. The Council chose not to limit membership of its e-mail list to current members of IRC. Now and then members of the community ask for access to irc-list, and just as all members are welcome to attend IRC sessions, we concluded that we should also welcome those who wish to read IRC e-mail communications. The number of people who wish to do so is not large, and management of irc-list remains easily accomplished.

Members of IRC Committee 2001-2002

Ruth Copans
Alice Dean
Robert DeSieno
Deborah Hall
Ann Henderson
Bret Ingerman
Michael Marx
Patrick Rafferty
Corky Reinhart
Pierre von Kaenel
Susan Zappen

RPDS
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