

BUSINESS DIVISION

CIS DEPARTMENT MEETING

**Wednesday, September 10, 2008
2:00 p.m., Division Office**

PRESENT: Tom Paine, Walid Ghanim, Steve Cook, Javier Gutierrez, and Val Rodgers

CALL TO ORDER

Val Rodgers called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m.

SLOs

Val informed the group that Student Learning Outcomes need to be written for the lab. Val will send the forms to Steve and Javier and work with them to develop outcomes.

TECHNOLOGY ISSUES

The following technology issues were discussed.

Room 801

Some computers are still randomly locking up or refusing to boot. Tom reported that this is especially a problem in classes that are near capacity. Some brands of flash drives will not work under Vista Limited User settings; they need to use the Administrator account. The student PCs are set up as Limited Users. Steve said the new image he is creating to clone the computers will set up all users under the Administrator account. He also told the group that all problems should be resolved or reported to NPC by Friday, September 12.

NetSupport does not work. An instructor cannot push a screen to the student's PC and the students sitting in the back of the room are too far away to see the code on the overhead's screen up front. With NetSupport not working, an instructor also cannot turn PCs on and off remotely, or block Internet use during class time. Javier informed the group that we will have to buy a new version of NetSupport so that it will work with the Vista operating system. He volunteered to investigate the cost for the 28 new machines and also the cost for upgrading all classrooms and labs in our division. Val asked him to check if the software is available through the consortium, or companies connected to the consortium. Steve told the group the ICOE uses a similar program, and it was decided to investigate the cost/effectiveness of their program also. Walid and Tom will contact ICOE.

Lack of floppy drives on the new machines still creates a problem collecting and grading student programs in the Visual Basic course. Most email programs will not allow folders to be attached, only files. Tom thought a work-around would be to compress the 9 folders and 27 files that make up each program assignment to .zip or .rar, but many email programs will not allow compressed files to be attached for security reasons. He also considered that students could compile their programs to executable (.exe) files, but again many email programs will not allow these to be sent for security reasons. Other Community Colleges get around this issue by using a shared, password-protected file server for their students that is accessible by the instructor. Val reported that USB drives had been ordered until a better solution could be found. Our division needs 901 and 902 hooked up to the new network; those rooms are still on the old network. Rooms 801 and 803 are on the new network. If all rooms were on the same network, we could set up a server on which students could store their assignments and on which teachers could access them. That process would resolve the "collection and grading" issues not just for Tom but for other instructors as well.

Tom also reported that VB2008 was not completely configured on the disk image that was installed on the student PCs. Each time VB2008 is started, it takes several minutes to go through an initialization routine before it can be used. Steve said the new image will take care of the problem.

Tom also asked that the Vista Folder Options be set to allow students to see file extensions. Steve said he will make sure that option is checked on the new image before he clones the machines.

Room 1705

I.T. mandated the use of DeepFreeze and students cannot install their lab programs, hardware drivers, or network management tools on the student PCs. Tom asked if DeepFreeze can be remotely controlled by the instructor to allow this. Steve said he would work with Tom to develop the process to unfreeze remotely.

Tom told the group that it would improve classroom management considerable if NetSupport was installed in 1705. Javier agreed to install it.

Eight new PCs arrived and are ready for install, but they are pre-installed with Vista. The existing PCs run XP and the A+ and Network+ tests that the class content focuses on is based on XP. For consistency, the new PCs should have XP installed. Val reported that she had spoken with Marilyn Boyle and confirmed that XP would be installed on the new computers.

Other

The group discussed the instability of our email/exchange system. Tom said that this morning, he was able to access the exchange from his home, but from his office this afternoon neither Outlook nor the exchange is working. Val agreed and added that the instability of the email system is particularly frustrating in online classes. The exchange was not working last Saturday or Sunday. During the first few weeks of a semester, communication with students is critical. Every semester, we have difficulty with the system. The group wondered why the new lines haven't taken care of that problem.

PERKINS

Walid, Tom, and Val reviewed and updated the 2007-2008 VTEA activities information for CIS and Computer Programming. Val will make the corrections and send the final version to Gonzalo Huerta.

Walid, Tom, and Val, also discussed the 2008-2009 Perkins Peer Mentor/Tutor request. Val will follow up with Gonzalo and make a report at the next CIS department meeting.

Also at the next department meeting, the 2008-2009 Perkins activities will be reviewed and assignments designated.

OTHER

Walid, Tom, and Val discussed the number of CIS 102 sections that should be scheduled each semester. Because of low enrollment, one of the three sections offered this fall had to be cancelled after the semester started. There didn't seem to be optimism about enrollment increasing enough to warrant more than two sections each semester – one for office tech students and one for CIS students. Tom and Walid will meet to discuss and document lab duties necessary for CIS 102 instructors. They will also make a decision about who will teach the CIS course each semester.

The air conditioning problem at the computer classroom at Calexico Extended Campus was also discussed. The classroom is uncomfortably hot. Val will report the problem to Efrain.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 3 p.m. Next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, September 24, 1 p.m., Division Office.