
Information Technology
Student Advisory Committee
(ITSAC)

Annual Report

2009 - 2010

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I. Introduction

The Information Technology Student Advisory Committee (ITSAC) serves as an advisory committee for Information Technology (IT) on campus on matters dealing with IT programs and services for students.

In 2009-2010 ITSAC introduced a new system for refreshing the chair position on the Committee. The Chair is traditionally held by CCS a staff member who volunteers to participate in ITSAC. Beginning this year ITSAC had a Chair and a Vice-chair, each with a two year commitment to ITSAC. The Vice-Chair will become the Chair the following year and a new volunteer will take the Vice-chair position. This refresh cycle prepares each Chair for the role while allowing new ideas and energy to come in to ITSAC.

It is the role of the ITSAC Chairs to encourage students to volunteer their time, effort and investment in ITSAC. Their participation in ITSAC contributes to making IT at the University of Guelph meet the needs of all students. Gaining and holding student's interest in IT issues and future directions is always a challenge. To that end some small changes were made in the running of ITSAC meetings to give student representatives some immediate benefits from attending meetings. Meetings opened with a five minute round table activity or short video and discussion which brought the students together to begin the meeting and increased the team dynamic of the group. Later in each meeting the representative from the CCS Help Centre would share information or tips to solve one or two common problems coming into the Help Centre at that time. ITSAC hosted one panel discussion each semester to look at interesting opportunities in education presented by IT. In the Fall ITSAC discussed innovative IT and in the Winter, Web 2.0 in teaching and learning. The panel discussions allowed the students to examine what is available in IT at other institutions, possible uses for IT and to make recommendations for future directions. Finally the tradition of closing the meeting with IT Bytes, an opportunity for anyone to bring up any IT question or issue, was continued this year.

ITSAC hosted several guest speakers on a variety of topics in 2009-2010. Topics included a wide range of student interests from collaboration to WebAdvisor. As in other years, topics were selected by the student representatives at the beginning of the year. In addition, there were a few presentations made by CCS to ITSAC this year with the intention of spreading information to students, or seeking student input.

From these topics there were several themes that re-occurred in ITSAC's recommendations, including a request for official support for Macs, the need for a collaboration tool for students,

a desire for a D2L presence for all courses, a need for more publicity for CCS services and a desire for more extensive offerings for the Gryph Mail Calendar.

II. Membership

IT Student Advisory Committee: Membership Information – 2009-2010

Quin Shirk-Luckett

Analyst, CCS
Chair

Ann Cesar

Analyst, CCS
Vice-Chair

Shireen Noble

Student Senate Caucus (SSC)

No-representative

College of Biological Science Student Council
(CBSSC)

Ilanna Tamari

College of Social and Applied Human Sciences –
Student Alliance (CSAHS-SA)

Leigh Donaldson

Interhall Council

Anson Wu

Centre for Students with Disabilities (CSD)

No Representative

Central Veterinary Students' Association

Sunny Germ

CCS – Help Centre and IT Help Desk

Randy Oldham

Library and ITSIG

Kathleen Davis

Rituraj Gupta
Central Student Association (CSA)

Paul Vilchez

College of Physical & Engineering Science Student
Council (CPESSC)

Lisa Mooney

Students Federation of the Ontario Agricultural
College (SFOAC)

Talia Poleski

College of Management and Economics (CME)

Zachary Dadson

College of Arts Student Union (CASU)

Michael von Keitz

Grad Student Association

Sunny Dillon

Guelph-Humber Student Association

Rotating representation

ITSIG

III. Web 2.0

ITSAC hosted a round table on Web 2.0 in teaching and learning. Mike Ridley, CIO and Chief Librarian; Bob Dony, a Professor in the School of Engineering and Emily Christofides a Psychology grad student discussed their experiences and knowledge of using Web 2.0 in teaching and learning.

Emily Christofides has done research into the student use of Facebook. Emily particularly focussed on the attention that students pay to privacy online and what affects their attention to privacy.

Bob Dony demonstrated how he records his lectures as podcasts and transfers the MP3's to a website. Even though podcasts are available, students still attend classes and attendance has remained the same since before doing the podcasts. Students use it to go back and review things after class.

Mike Ridley discussed the opportunity for new communities and interactions that are available online. In particular he discussed the power of being able to take on a new persona when online. He posed some further questions to the group. What is the distinction between U of G space and the outside world online? How much should we institutionalize or 'corporatize' online spaces that already exist? How can we create pathways to existing online tools? Mike focused on some of the promise offered by Web 2.0 – in particular classroom time could be used for debate of material, discussion, synthesis of material, not only presenting material.

General Feedback:

Web 2.0 is all about sharing content online- creating, finding, using, re-using, mixing, 'mashing-up', etc. Both presenters and students were interested in what opportunities this might offer for in-class and out of class teaching and learning.

Students have individual learning styles. Using a variety of different methods for course delivery would appeal to the differences in learning styles. Web 2.0 technologies could be used to complement the regular course delivery methods.

Beyond opportunities, the discussion centred on online privacy and security. Students and presenters agreed that there is a place for the University to provide guidance to their students around online privacy and security.

The student reps were clear that they wanted their professional/student online space to be separate from their personal space – they don't want to use applications like Facebook as a classroom requirement but may choose to use them for connecting with classmates on their own. The students suggested that there could be an educational version of LinkedIn that would

provide some of the benefits of Facebook while remaining a 'professional' site. ITSAC was interested in further online opportunities for students to participate, connect and contribute.

It was discussed that D2L could be a great space for group work and sharing, as D2L is used by many students and faculty. Currently class pages are created by faculty, but students could have access to add material and contribute. Some ITSAC members suggested that perhaps students could be given more access to create content in D2L based on performance or success? ITSAC felt that professors/faculty should be strongly encouraged to use the additional web 2.0 capabilities within D2L. Currently the use of the technology is based on the enthusiasm of the individual faculty themselves. ITSAC suggested that there should be a template that could be created for every class and used as a starting point.

Recommendations:

1. Create a D2L page for each class automatically which contains the class syllabus that could be used as a template or starting point to guide faculty to create web 2.0 content. Faculty that still do not wish to add to D2L could leave their class site with just the basic template and class syllabus or allow their students to update the site.
2. Give students access to contribute to D2L content.
3. The challenges around courses, such as math which require sharing of formulas, and the use of special symbols in an online forums etc. should be considered. Currently there is no good way to work with advanced math symbology online.
4. CCS should provide information about online security, including guidance around Facebook privacy and security, and more dynamic content around other security issues such as phishing.
5. Develop or adopt an application, perhaps twitter-like, for students in large classes to be able to share and contribute online during, and outside of, class delivery.
6. Provide more ITSAC-like activities so that interested students can contribute to the IT environment on campus.

IV. Collaboration

ITSAC representatives brought up the issue of student collaboration several times during the year. The students discussed what they required or desired in collaboration tools. Gayleen Gray, CCS Manager, attended ITSAC to discuss Web Conferencing tools which allow users to connect and collaborate from a distance. In particular Gayleen discussed Adobe Connect which is provided by CCS to departments and Colleges who are interested in using their Organizational account to get a license. Gayleen pointed to the CCS website which provides information on Adobe Connect and other free tools that are out there that provide similar service, such as DimDim (<http://www.uoguelph.ca/ccs/learning-resources/web-conferencing-tools>). Gayleen explained how some departments are using Adobe Connect and that to be able to use it students may be able to request a session from their department.

General Feedback:

ITSAC representatives wanted more tools and opportunities for collaboration. They wanted their tools to be centralized, easily accessible and customisable. In particular students discussed getting more out of their Zimbra calendar, including social and class information available to be turned on or downloaded into their calendar if they wanted it. Students were interested in being able to access their email and calendar on their smartphones.

As representatives of student groups and government, ITSAC also would like to see access to D2L for use by these groups.

ITSAC would like to see Web Conferencing available for Distance Education courses and also felt that it is a good option for students with disabilities, especially mobility issues. Web Conferencing also offers opportunities for guest speakers to attend classes, groups or clubs that might not otherwise be available.

Recommendations:

1. Make Web Conferencing available for DE courses where appropriate.
2. Create a central access point for student information including email, calendar and class information.
3. Provide Smart Phone compatibility or integration.

4. Review software solutions for Math students to allow them to collaborate online (something that allows easily typing formulas).
5. Provide access to D2L as a tool for collaboration for student groups and class groups.
6. Provide website development assistance for clubs and student government.

V. Math Prep, the Numeracy Project and the Data Resource Centre

Jack Weiner, professor in the Math department, spoke to ITSAC about the Math post-secondary preparation package - MP3. MP3 is currently sent out to the parents of all in-coming UofG students whose major may require math knowledge. Jack indicated that there is a perception that students are not ready for math when they come to university. The package is meant to clear the 'mental math cob-webs'- a refresher before they start. The package is also offered for sale online to students from other Universities through studentawards.com and \$2 from every sale goes to UofG Student Awards. The package is now delivered on paper but the answers and additional help are provided online.

Michelle Edwards, Data Resource Centre Co-ordinator- talked about the Numeracy repository available at <http://www.uoguelph.ca/numeracy/> and the services and data available through the DRC. Michelle demonstrated the database of answers for numeracy assistance and the links related to learning objects. There are 54 different modules covering basic math and stats (some chemistry). The Numeracy group would like to get other faculty involved/aware of the resource. They tried to populate the resource with examples that are related to courses.

Michelle also talked about the DRC- the Data Resource Centre in the library. The Data Resource Centre (DRC) acts as a central repository for statistical/numerical and geospatial data collections available on campus. The DRC teaches workshops on statistics and GIS software and visits classes by request. It is provided as a joint venture between the Library and CCS.

General Feedback:

Many students had not heard of MP3, the Numeracy Project or the DRC and felt that these were useful resources that should be more widely publicised. The ITSAC Committee also felt that the concept of preparing students ahead of coming to University might be transferable to other disciplines.

Students were interested in whether 2nd and higher year students could access MP3 if they didn't get it coming in to University and would like to refresh their math skills. Jack agreed that any UofG student could request access to MP3, but the Numeracy Project and the Data Resource Centre could also provide support. The committee was interested to have MP3 and Numeracy modules available through D2L so that they can be included on a class page by a course professor.

Recommendations:

1. Increase the publicity of the Numeracy Project, MP3 and the DRC so that students know these services exist.
2. Give students who didn't get the Math Prep package (and need some refresher) access to MP3 from an easily accessible location.
3. Build on the Numeracy project and make it more visible to faculty. Encourage faculty to include links to relevant Numeracy modules in their course outlines. Perhaps put info about the Numeracy Project in Start Online.
4. Include MP3 and Numeracy modules in D2L.
5. Create connections between MP3 and the Numeracy project to allow for seamless Math help.
6. Advertise the DRC seminars more widely.

VI. Student Government and IT

Gayleen Gray, CCS Manager, attended an ITSAC meeting to find out what student government needs from their IT resources. Gayleen and the ITSAC committee discussed what IT services are most necessary and important to student government.

General Feedback:

The ITSAC committee identified collaboration with their groups and committees as a key use of IT. Student governments would like access to some of the UofG business side services such as higher quota in their personal inboxes and the BES (Blackberry Enterprise Server) service. In particular the students were interested in ways to collaborate other than email, such as D2L. The student representatives felt that a one-stop place to access their on-campus IT such as email, calendar, news, clubs etc. would be useful. In addition ITSAC members discussed the difficulties with web page creation and maintenance for student government. Often groups hire someone to create their webpage and then that person is not available the next time an update is needed so the page has to be completely re-created each time. Student groups would like access to assistance in web page creation and maintenance.

Recommendations:

1. Allow student government leaders (presidents) to have higher quota on their personal email accounts and give them access to the BES service
2. Provide a web-page creation service to student government.
3. Review the possibility of a one-stop online location for student IT needs.

VII. Security

Gerrit Bos, IT Security lead analyst, talked to ITSAC about IT security on campus. The overall goal of the security office was that people feel secure when they are online and that their sensitive information was protected. Their focus was confidentiality, integrity and accessibility. Gerrit indicated that an overall security framework had been approved by the president.

Components of ensuring security include the acceptable use policy, wireless network policy, vulnerability assessment, incident handling, external audits, etc.

Gerrit presented some good common sense best practices regarding passwords and safe online browsing.

By request of the Committee, Gerrit talked about security and social networking. In particular he discussed the importance of reviewing privacy policies; maintaining privacy settings; and which actions might compromise security such as adding applications on Facebook (e.g. 'see everyone who has viewed my profile'). Gerrit reminded ITSAC that everything you put up on a social networking site is owned by the corporation; it is totally public and potentially exists forever.

General Feedback:

There was some feedback about how CCS is communicating security information to students. ITSAC discussed ways to increase the knowledge of key security information among students. The students asked if CCS could create a poster campaign, for example, on phishing. The students inquired about Ironport- the external spam filter that Gmail uses - had it been tested to see if real messages are considered spam? Gerrit assured ITAC that, yes, it had been tested and there were no false positives that have caused concern.

Recommendations:

1. ITSAC recommended that the Security office to find more creative ways to educate people about security, such as YouTube, StartOnline, etc. Something that is catchy or funny might get student attention and get them to pass the information around to each other.
2. Should a mass mail be sent telling users to change their password, perhaps twice a year? This could be tied to changing the clocks.
3. Educate users on how to create a strong password.

VIII. Innovative IT

ITSAC hosted a round table on Innovative IT at one of its Fall meetings. Kent Percival, CCS; Bo Wandschnieder, CCS Associate Director; and Quin Shirk-Luckett, CCS ITSAC Chair discussed different aspects of innovative IT in education.

Kent talked about structure and associations in higher education, what different resources are available from these associations and how to use them. He discussed higher education IT associations such as CUCCIO, ACSD and Educause and conferences such as OUCC, Educause and Canheit. These are a large source of resource information, published online and in trade magazines.

Bo discussed the ethics and usefulness of new and neat IT, what do we need from IT. Bo discussed some neat tools up and coming or being currently used in Higher education such as gapminder.org, swivel.com and ways that other universities are using Zimbra for student retention. In particular the Internet has changed the Peer Review process and the process of doing research to real-time input from colleagues rather than the former closed process. Bo concluded by posing an ethical question: what if there was a tool online that would allow you to fill out a form with the particular's of an academic paper and then it would write your paper – what are the academic/ethical considerations?

Quin highlighted some examples of new and innovative IT that are being used in education. Included were two programs from Purdue, HotSeat (<http://www.purdue.edu/hotseat>) and Signals (<http://www.itap.purdue.edu/tlt/signals/>), D2L-GO used at Wilfred Laurier, virtual desktops, and the University of Alberta's New Taylor Digital Library.

General Feedback:

There were lots of good discussion around the various topics presented and other areas of interest.

One student noted that a lot of technology for education is geared toward people having difficulties, what are the advantages for people who are doing well? Kent replied that access to advanced software provides more opportunity for advanced students to dig deeper.

Online systems such as Pear (which allows students to peer-review their papers) and Hotseat add value by students talking to each-other and answering each-other's questions. This makes courses more animated and allows for deeper learning.

The ITSAC representatives noted that they hear about new technologies through their friends and social networks, there is no structured organization to share information on new IT among students.

Although many students use the same social networking sites, they all use different tools to meet their academic needs. Some use Doodle to schedule meetings, others Zimbra. Some students have Facebook groups, others use Google document sharing. ITSAC members observed that the ability to customise their online spaces is important to students – they want to be able to add colours, games, newsfeeds.

The students commented that a drawback to using Zimbra for group-work is that whoever hosts the group's documents spends their quota on it.

Recommendations:

1. Create awareness of the tools that are available at UofG (e.g. survey software).
2. Create collaboration space for students - however it may be difficult for some subjects (i.e. Math, Physics). The space also needs to be holistic allowing for the inclusion of extracurricular activities and social activities.
3. Create awareness of what Gryph Mail can do. Many students are not aware of the use of the Calendar and the Briefcase.
4. Create awareness of what D2L can do. Perhaps pull feeds in from Flickr, Twitter, etc.
5. Populate Gryph Mail Calendar with more info so it gets used. Create different calendars for different purposes (D2L schedules, events, etc.) and make them available for students to add.
6. Ask TSS to approach profs to put together calendars for their courses in Gryph Mail.
7. Review whether applications like Hotseat and Signals would be useful at UofG.

IX. Ask Gryph

Jeff Overton from Registrarial Services gave ITSAC an overview of Ask Gryph. Ask Gryph is a 24/7 self-service help database that provides answers to students on their website. Students often try to use it like a Google search, but it works best if you enter a search in the form of a question. Jeff would really like to see it be adopted by other departments on their websites. This would require a site license and it would be easier for groups to develop this way. Abandoned searches do occur: users ask a question, and a number of links are provided in answer but the user leaves at that point. Jeff indicated that they have made some improvements to guide users on the screen to improve phrasing searches in the form of a question. If there were separate interfaces for various groups (site license) then there could be better granularity in answers provided and that might reduce abandoned searches. Ask Gryph requires ongoing maintenance to clean up and reduce circular problems: finding resources to maintain the database is an ongoing issue.

General Feedback:

The students would like to see an improved searching methods and search returned. There were some suggestions to make it more accessible, and a request that answers be more specific to the time of the question (registration of the current semester etc.) A question form of asking is unfamiliar and students often think it is a Google style search. There was discussion around returning one link or one answer if possible instead of multiple links. There were also concerns around circular clicking, where the user is returned to a page that they have already seen.

Recommendations:

1. Review accessibility in Ask Gryph. Review colour choices and consistency in access points (links in some places, a bar in others).
2. Improve question responses:
 - a) Make the answers more relevant to the specific time of the question. For example, an answer about registering could refer to the registration time for the current semester.
 - b) Try to return a response to the question on the first page returned and avoid excess clicking.
 - c) Try to avoid circular responses- coming back to a page you have already seen.
3. Try to get more resources allocated to maintaining the search so that it is relevant and working smoothly.
4. Students are familiar with Google style search. 'Asking in the form of a question' is outside of what they are used to. ITSAC proposes adding a '?' on the webpage, at the end of the input box to give a visual cue to the user on how to format the search.

X. Gryph Mail

Rob Foster and Drew Macpherson from CCS outlined where Gryph Mail is currently and what may be coming for Gryph Mail. Gryph Mail is known commercially as Zimbra. It is an open source product which means that UofG may be a bit at the mercy of the developers. Zimbra was recently acquired by VM Ware and as VM Ware is known for being very good about product quality we should hopefully see some improvements in Zimbra. Rob discussed recent phishing attempts and a recent block by Hotmail. CCS continues to make efforts to reduce spam and phishing problems. Rob discussed new features expected in an upgrade planned for Summer 2010. Highlights include: the use of tabs, the sending of read receipts, and calendar enhancements. There is an opportunity with the application to develop add-ons called Zimlets which may allow CCS to add unique functionality. The Zimbra 'chat' tool remains in beta, so there has been an idea to tie Gryph Mail into MSN chat.

General Feedback:

There was lots of discussion surrounding the general functionality and features of Gryph Mail. Students aren't really sure of the extent of student use. The student representatives believe that most students keep their outside accounts for personal use, and Gryph Mail strictly for school. Some students are forwarding their mail to these accounts, but there is no count of how many are doing this. There was discussion about publishing more information about students so that we can determine identity, i.e. differentiating two students with the same first and last name. Drew indicated that there are privacy issues with what gets published and made publicly available. There was some discussion around students keeping @uoguelph.ca address after graduating. However, Alumni Affairs is going to be offering email accounts using a separate email system.

Recommendations:

- 1) Suggestions by students to do a survey to see how many students are using Gryph Mail and what features they are using.
- 2) The students would like to keep their account once they graduate. This would increase confidence in the account and use of it. Further it would be a form of advertising for the University.
- 3) Provide more examples of calendar use and thereby more potential for student use. Generally, create more awareness of existing features in Gryph Mail.
- 4) Provide student organization leaders and RA's with larger quota for their own personal accounts.
- 5) Make more calendars available to students. Import semester undergraduate calendar with key dates into Gryph Mail, also allow/assist faculty with doing the same for course schedules Publish University events in an event calendar in Gryph Mail.

- 6) Students would like to synch their Blackberry's with the Gryph Mail Calendar (BES).
- 7) Review accessibility of Gryph Mail (i.e. of upcoming releases).

XI. MAC OS Support

Over the past few years there have been increasing numbers of students coming to University of Guelph with Mac (Apple) computers. The student representatives felt that campus support for Maccomputers should be an item for discussion. Gayleen Gray, IT Manager within CCS agreed to attend our meeting to address this topic from a CCS perspective. Gayleen indicated that CCS does not officially support Macs, although CCS always provides a best effort to assist with getting services to work with Macs. CCS tries as much as possible to be non-platform specific in their support. For software distribution and the software made available to students, if CCS can and there is enough demand or need, it will be provided for the Mac.

General Feedback:

The general feedback from the students is that Macs are becoming more and more prevalent on campus (usage ~30%) and as a result should be better supported. The students indicated that some classes require programs that only work on PC and not Mac. They also indicated that the Residence Life application doesn't work well with Macs. Students felt that it would be good to know in advance what classes required programs that won't run on the Mac platform. Randy Oldham, from library staff reminded the students not to forget the public machines, library, lab computers, etc. may have the program that you are looking for. However, the reality is that some software is only available for PCs. Perhaps there could be more education to students about this, especially prior to purchasing a laptop before coming to the University. Accessibility on public computers was raised as a concern for why someone might not be able to use public computers.

Recommendations:

1. ITSAC requests that professors provide information to students about what OS is supported for course software.
2. ITSAC suggests that there be more information about Mac support on the CCS website and also on department/program websites. ITSAC requests that academic departments create a policy around platform support by program (which platforms a department or college supports) and put it on their website. Students would like to find this information collected in one central location.
3. ITSAC suggests that a Mac option for anti-virus software be available from the CCS software distribution website.

XII. Accessibility

Athol Gow, the coordinator of the Library Centre for Students with Disabilities (LCSD), was invited to address the ITSAC group on accessibility at the University. The Library Centre for students with Disabilities offers a range of services, software, and technology that enables students with disabilities to read, write and research more effectively. Athol shared the results of accessibility testing of Gryph Mail and Courselink. The advanced version of Gryph Mail is not accessible to screen readers; however the standard version is, but needs improvements. Courselink was reviewed and lots of feedback was given. There are Adobe Reader challenges but you can open a new document and work with it.

Athol shared information about the Aiming for Accessibility conference at the University of Guelph in June. The conference has grown and will be a two day event this year. Athol discussed the new Accessibility for Ontarions with Disabilities Act (AODA), in order to create a barrier- free province by 2025. Athol explained that the customer service standard is the 1st standard that has passed into law. All staff/faculty must do customer service accessibility training at the University of Guelph. The information and communication standard will likely be the next standard for compliance. This standard requires that all documentation and communication tools be accessible. It will have a larger impact and changes will likely take place within three years of the standard being put into place.

General Feedback:

There was general discussion around how the provincial accessibility legislation would affect student groups on campus. The university would be responsible for ensuring standards enforced. Any official role at the university would need to fall under the need to meet requirements. There was some discussion around ensuring that clubs/groups involve more people/accommodate more people with disabilities. The digital library at the University of Ontario Institute of Technology was also discussed.

Recommendations:

1. Find ways to make people more aware of what accessible options are available to them.
2. Mandate that clubs and temp hiring (such as student consultants) have accessibility training- such as the customer service training for accessibility.

XIII. Courselink (D2L)

Kyle Mackie and Richard Gorrie from Teaching Support Services (TSS) attended ITSAC to share updates on Courselink(D2L). Courselink is the Online Learning Management system in use at the University of Guelph. There are now over 800 courses in Courselink- however this is still less than 50% of all courses. Instructors who use Courselink have been provided training and they can also contact the TSS help desk, use existing help files, or drop-in to help desk for support. TSS has been working on several integration projects with Courselink, such as RSS feeds, iclickers, common cartridge, web access management (Single Sign On), final grades export, the physics teaching room, D2LGo, and ARES. Kyle demonstrated some examples of some course usage of Courselink. Some have embedded videos, used RSS feeds, used online discussions, quizzes, and other customizations. Richard explained that some departments do have Teaching Assistants or other resources that can help with setup but others do not. Training has been well received- they have reached out to about 400 instructors, some instructors have picked it up without training. They are not really doing any major push in terms of advertising.

General Feedback:

The students had lots of questions and feedback regarding Courselink. The students wanted to know if it was mandatory for a professor to use an online component for their course. TSS replied that no, this is not the case, though there is interest from senior management to have an increased use of the learning management system. Other questions included:

- Accessibility (yes it has been tested),
- Statistics on usage (no, but there is a D2L analytics tool that they are starting to use),
- Can groups get a space on Courselink?(yes, if they are an official club or group they can send an email to courselink@uoguelph.ca to request).
- Are there any plans to integrate with student success software, e.g. 'Signals' out of Purdue? D2L analytics is headed that way, but not there yet.

Students also questioned why the University changed from Blackboard to Courselink. TSS responded that there were two learning management systems in place and it was directional to only continue with one system. D2L(Courselink) is a hosted environment, it is also easier to scale and more secure. Students generally felt that Courselink had a lot of potential.

Recommendations:

1. Try to encourage Courselink use in more courses.
2. Create a template for all courses to use as a starting point for instructors.
3. Encourage groups/clubs to make use of Courselink.

XIV. WebAdvisor

Tim Frank attended the ITSAC meeting to discuss WebAdvisor. WebAdvisor provides the following services for Students and Faculty:

- Search for Sections (**No Login Required**)
- Course Registration, Class/Exam Schedules
- Billing, Account Summary, Payments
- Application Status, Documents Received/Required

Tim explained that WebAdvisor is a Datatel product. As such, there was only a moderate amount of customization available. Some future planning included changes based on the 2008/09 ITSAC report recommendations which have not yet been implemented but are planned for including; integration with Colleague and D2L systems on campus and integration with Gryph Calendar.

General Feedback:

The students would like calendars that they could choose to opt into. Tim indicated that integrating Gryph calendar into WebAdvisor is a work in progress.

The students raised concerns around WebAdvisor resetting (timing out) and cookie errors. Tim indicated that licensing is an issue and during busy times they max out on the use of licenses. If they increase the time-out it may affect other user's ability to access. Cookie errors may be caused by users clicking the X to close their browser and not the Close button. User education or communication is required.

Recommendations:

1. Implement some integration with Gryph Mail calendar
2. ITSAC recommends that the registration final click should be a checkbox, and then all checked options would open a mock schedule to look for conflicts.
3. Investigate frequent resetting problem, seems to happen every 5 minutes.
4. Investigate frequent cookie errors and be sure to communicate how to avoid cookie errors.
5. Show up to date list of courses offered for semester outside of WebAdvisor. This would reduce traffic to WebAdvisor for the sole purpose of viewing availability of courses.
6. Review how the dates appear in the calendar for exams.

XV. Informative Topics

Gayleen Gray and Leo Song attended various ITSAC meetings in order to provide information to ITSAC or to seek ITSAC's opinion on IT issues.

1) Wireless 802.11b

Leo Song, CCS, attended an ITSAC meeting to let students know about the decommissioning of Wireless 802.11b. ITSAC requested that the date be moved from to later in January so that students are back before it is decommissioned.

2) Frontline Service

Gayleen Gray, CCS Manager, gave an overview of CCS Frontline Service. Gayleen discussed Footprints and hiring students for frontline staff. ITSAC was interested in the possibility of including online chat and remote assistance in frontline support. Services Support is considering how to leverage crowd-sourcing to allow students to support each-other.

3) Resnet

The ITSAC students were generally pleased with Resnet this year and felt that it ran smoothly. Gayleen Gray, CCS Manager, discussed Resnet with ITSAC. Students appreciated the Resnet desks in Residences during move-in weekend. The student representatives had some concerns about using CCA in Residence but acknowledged that new students who have never used anything else are not concerned about CCA; in fact they don't even notice it. Students also discussed Software Distribution and access to anti-virus and other software. ITSAC recommended that there be links within the Software Distribution site to any recommended outside vendor if a given product is not carried in particular OS's or versions by UofG. This allows students that need the other versions equal access to the software even if they must get it from another vendor. Students also asked if it would be possible for CCA updates to be done sooner, when they are released.

XVI. IT Bytes - General IT Issues

At the end of every ITSAC meeting, committee members have the opportunity to bring up any IT issues or questions that they would like to discuss or get an explanation or answer to. If the issue cannot be answered immediately it is the responsibility of the chairs to take the issue to members of CCS or the University community that should be able to provide info or an answer.

WebAdvisor Cookie Error

Question: CASU Rep expressed that there has been problem again regarding cookies while signing in for courses. The system returns a cookie error, too many cookies and does not allow the user to continue.

Answer: Tim Frank mentioned during his presentation to ITSAC that this can be caused by using the 'x' close button rather than the actual close to leave windows. The system may not recognize that you no longer have all those windows open. It was suggested that the student email Tim Frank if the problem continues to occur when windows are properly closed

Recommendation: Publicize this solution if it is the general cause of this error.

WebAdvisor crash

Issue: WebAdvisor crashed again when people were trying to find their classes.

Recommendations: Email classes out to students to avoid crashing WebAdvisor.

Phishing and SPAM increasing

Issue: There seems an increase in phishing and SPAM emails going around.

Answer: Please inform your constituents on how to avoid falling for phishing and SPAM.

Recommendations: See recommendations in Security section regarding dynamic security communications.

Wifi in MacKinnon week of Dec 4

Question: Wifi reception in Mackinnon has not been good for past two weeks, it okay now.

Answer: Students should call ext. 58888 with wireless issues when they arise.

Services for Student Leaders

Question: Can student leaders get BES service or more quota?

Answer: Ann raised this question with CCS management. ITSAC had Gayleen Gray attend a later meeting to address the question of services for student government.

ITSAC outside of ITSAC

Question: Is there a way for interested students to be involved in ITSAC after graduating, between meetings or on an off semester?

Answer: There are online communities for software support. Ann (ITSAC Chair for 2010-11) will consider how interested students might be further involved next year.

Anti-Virus for MAC

Question: Is there an anti-virus for Mac that could be available on Software Distribution?

Answer: There is not at this time.

Recommendation: Provide an anti-virus for Mac on Software Distribution or provide some online information on what Mac users should do about Anti-virus.

Wireless down

Question: The wireless was down for a short time at lunch on Feb 4.

Answer: Quin checked the CCS notifications: this outage was due to virtual server environment problem, which affected wireless authentication.

Recommendations: Create a Facebook page with CCS service updates. Link service updates from the UofG front page. Publicize where students can find service updates.

XVII. How Can We Make ITSAC Even Better?

The 2009-10 ITSAC made a number of suggestions for improving ITSAC. Some of these suggestions were attempted for the 2009-10 year.

Increase student awareness of ITSAC

- Create a website for ITSAC at www.uoguelph.ca/ITSAC
- Formalize with each group a process for ITSAC information to get back to the group/government and back to the constituents
- Write a regular column for on campus publications such as the Ontarian and Herd the Word with interesting information gleaned from each ITSAC discussion

Increase student involvement and interaction with ITSAC

- Meet with presidents and group leaders to emphasize the importance of ITSAC and ensure that all member groups send a representative to ITSAC meetings
- Keep the meeting time on Friday evening so that busy and involved students can attend or find a more suitable time for meetings, so that there is more student participation.
- Use Adobe Connect to publicize the ITSAC meetings and make them available to other students – the Library can assist in this
- Find ways for other students, alumni or former reps to ITSAC to continue to contribute or make suggestions for IT improvements (e.g. an IT suggestion box or other avenue for providing input).

XVIII. Conclusion

The topics discussed at the 2009-10 ITSAC meetings raised a number of important questions and lead to many suggestions for guiding IT direction to meet the needs of students.

The 2009-10 year saw an increase in cohesion among the group of ITSAC representatives and an increasing interest in contributing to IT on campus as the year progressed. More than one representative communicated a desire for a venue to contribute outside of ITSAC, between meetings and when they are not in student government.

However ITSAC still has an ongoing challenge to increase visibility and increase the ability to connect to students. The ITSAC 2009-10 committee hopes that the implementation of some of the recommendations for making ITSAC even better will contribute to this endeavour in following years.

ITSAC would like to extend a thank-you to everyone who gave up a Friday evening to attend or speak to ITSAC. Your contributions are very important to the continued success of ITSAC.