IT Meeting

 April 2, 2013

Attending: Nadeem Hamid, Christine Anton, Victor Bissonnette, Christopher Diller, Andrew Bressette, Sherre Harrington, Jeremy Worsham, Lynnwood Belvin, Penny Evans-Plants, Cameron Jordan, Jerry Trammell, Faraj Daoud, Tom Hocut, James Ross, Preston Willis, and Nadeem Hamid.

Dr. Hamid, Chair called the meeting to order at 11: 02. The minutes from the last meeting were quickly approved.

New Committee Chair: after a brief discussion, Dr. Christine Anton was elected as next year’s committee chair.

VHS to DVD policy and procedures: the committee discussed the draft of the fair use policy drafted by Berry counsel Danny Price and the conditions and procedures for digitizing VHS material. Questions and discussion points included:

* All schools but Evans have signed off on the drafts; the Evans faculty will review and, if necessary, discuss the drafts at their meeting on Thursday April 4
* The fair use policy and procedures involve faculty and staff but not students; in other words, requests must originate with faculty or staff
* Although VHS players are not being replaced when they fail, players are available in the library for faculty and students
* Faculty should be proactive as individuals or departments in requesting the digitizing of priority VHS materials and ordering DVD replacements. Usually, a single transfer request can be honored within a day.
* Foreign language tape transformations may lose subtitles. Jerry Trammell and Faraj Daoud stated they would look into this matter.

Email Privacy Policy: in light of the recent controversy regarding the covert searching of faculty email at Harvard, IT committee representatives received a request to review Berry’s own policy. The following discussion points and questions ensued:

* Penny Evans Plant presented relevant excerpts from Berry’s Email Policy in the context of excerpts from the policies of seven other institutions: University of Missouri-Kansas City, Oakland University, Birmingham Southern College, Centre College, Millsaps College, Oglethorpe College, and Rhodes College. In general, these schools had more explicit and detailed policy and procedures descriptions than Berry.
* It was noted that any of these policies can be superseded by legal requirements (such as the Patriot Act).
* Unlike Berry’s policy, most of the other policies explicitly endorsed the principle of privacy before qualifying that principle in light of stated exceptions
* Berry’s current policy does implicitly provide faculty with a greater degree of autonomy in its statement that “Email on Berry College servers belongs to Berry College, except when superseded by the College’s Intellectual Property Policy.” Could and should faculty have a higher privacy expectation than staff?
* In light of this comparative context and discussion, the committee asked Penny Evans Plant to draft a revised policy for consideration early next year. Any draft and committee recommendations would then be directed to Faculty Assembly.

Office of Information Technology Updates:

* As discussed at the last IT committee meeting, and as part of a mandatory Microsoft upgrade, student email has been upgraded from Outlook Live to Office 365.
* OIT recommends that Berry discontinue offering free Office downloads to students, as they will have access to Office through Skydrive and other means, and to utilize the cost savings of some 30K to fund wireless upgrades and to double our current bandwidth from 300 MEG to 600 MEG. Wireless upgrades are almost complete on most of the campus.
* Information for students about the change will be provided at the Help Desk, in the Campus Carrier and Viking Fusion outlets, and at summer orientation (perhaps with the help of BCC mentors), and on Viking Web.
* Cloud email has been used by the students for the past four years and that will still be dependent on internet availability. SkyDrive offers a desktop application which stores a local copy of files and keeps the desktop and cloud in sync. Computer labs will still be available with full desktop installations of Office.
* It was noted that a hardship policy does exist for students to purchase Office and that faculty can continue to purchase it for a small fee.
* Penny Evans Plant noted that many software providers are going from purchase to recurrent subscriptions; Adobe is a case in point and the College is hoping for a licensing agreement with them.
* FSSWeb: OIT is interested in faculty feedback regarding current or future use of the server dedicated to instructional purposes (it allows instructors to allot web space to students for course projects).

Respectfully submitted,

Christopher Diller