

Minutes from the iDeans meeting, February 8, 2009

At the iSchools Conference, University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill

John Unsworth

Jose-Marie Griffiths

Martha Pollack

Aimee Dorr

Bob Mason (in Harry Bruce's stead)

Seamus Ross

Ron Larsen

Hank Foley

Liz Liddy

Larry Dennis

David Fenske

Hartmut Mokros (in Jorge Schement's stead)

Maeve Reilly

Jenny Preece

John Unsworth opened the meeting and deans provided introductions.

John mentioned two items sent via email—the membership applications by Humboldt University and the University of North Texas and the suggested recognition process by ASIS&T—would be added to the agenda.

- Budget Report

Jose-Marie will ask for \$19,500 for the iConference.

Larry Dennis submitted budget. (see attached). Projected: take in more income than we spend.

David Fenske said Drexel's three-year commitment managing the funds will end in 2010. Drexel manages the money and Larry Dennis as treasurer at FSU distributes funds. The chair and the treasurer agree on expenditures. John Unsworth suggested we continue this method of disbursing funds.

Notifications for dues sent out in July—a couple are still outstanding.

\$228,000 cash on hand. Probably high because of lower iConference expense.

Balance can be used for special projects. Future spending plans: iConference, funding communications director, and meeting expenses (meeting space, meals; travel not included.)

John Unsworth expressed thanks to Larry and David for keeping the books.

Question asked regarding funding a project or retreat: consult by-laws, under "Revenue and Funding" for request procedure.

IPL subgroup is an example of a project between \$1,000-5,000 per participant, with not all iCaucus members participating—if there are other things we want to do, we should bring it up for a vote.

Larry Dennis mentioned a retreat that was discussed at the end of the last conference call. Maeve will implement a Doodle vote (per Seamus Ross' suggestion) and link it from iSchools deans page.

Discussion of dues collection—Larry gets an email from David at Drexel about who has not paid. Has to remember to follow up. Suggested that deans get copied individually as dues are paid, so they will know who has paid and who needs to pay. Maeve will work with Larry on how to do this.

Brief discussion about work with MBS.

- Conference
- Purpose. Conceived in terms of marketing—getting brand and word out. Felt that iSchools are now known. Martha suggested presenting a cogent statement of purpose.

Conference not currently perceived as a venue for research. Discussion of getting more faculty representation—not much junior faculty representation because conference does not count for tenure and promotion. Also, due to general lack of travel funds in the iSchools, this conference is not always a priority.

Schools that had good representation said the conference was understood to be good for networking, see range of what constitutes an iSchool, instill understanding of field in students. A group of doctoral students on the West Coast met last year and continued discussions from previous conference. Ph.D. students see networking as important.

Harty Mokros mentioned contradiction between meeting to bring people together for all to be heard and volume of “best” papers, which could be got by sending invitations to key people.

Discussed modeling future conferences on Gordon Research Conferences (GRC, <http://www.grc.org/>): present an opportunity to talk about research not-yet published. Vegas rules: anything that is said there, stays there. Creates an aura, drives forward the envelope. Felt it would be more inclusive and encourage risk taking. Selection decided upon by writing an abstract.

Discussion of de-emphasizing the conference as a research conference—no emphasis on published proceedings, not for tenure process.

Aimee Dorr, John Unsworth, Jose-Marie Griffiths, Hank Foley will be on committee to formulate call for papers and look at format. Also, John King from Michigan will be asked to participate.

- Current Conference

Jose-Marie presented information about current conference (see attachment). Around 260-270 people attending, from multiple countries. Number of contributors from non-iCaucus schools have grown.

Basic cost: \$95,000. NSF came through with half of what they had funded in the past (\$17,000). Student participation subsidized. She will request under \$20,000 (see budget above) from the iSchools.

All of staff time contributed.

Jose was congratulated for her work.

David Fenske asked who attended from non-iCaucus schools, particularly in these challenging economic times. Jose will provide that information. He has been approached by people asking him how they become an iSchool.

More women attended this year than last, many internationals attended, some through late registration. Jose will provide a more formal report to the schools.

- 2010 Conference

Illinois hosting. Space reserved at the I Hotel. Sign up from rooms early (link is now available for iSchools site).

Save the Date card will be sent electronically to the schools.

By March, John will have the program committee and keynote speakers lined up.

Working with the subcommittee on the Call for Participation (see above).

By April, the Conference theme will be set.

Suggested that application to the NSF go out ASAP for doctoral sponsorship. Looking for other sponsorship as well.

Jose-Marie said 2009 Conference had no local takers.

John Unsworth proposed to send out initial conference PR mid to late summer. Due dates for submissions October, November. Registration opens Dec. 1.

John and Maeve will put together conference planning web site with help from Wanda Monroe (UNC) and Ron Deitel (UCLA). It will be accessible from iDeans site.

Question about where materials should be archived. John will check into archiving at Illinois.

For the 2010 conference, there will be provisions for people to register for online attendance only. Events will be streamed and, with people's permission, be made available for free after.

Aimee Dorr suggested that the Michigan award (tile) and Von Dran award be added to timeline. Suggested that award nominees be actively solicited and that nominations be kept for three-year time periods.

Liz Liddy chairs SIG-IR —the five prior winners review and decide winner of Solomon award.

Liz, Jose-Marie and Jenny Preece will head up awards committee. John Unsworth suggested that they use ConfTools to email those who have attended the conference in the past for nominations. The committee should follow up and bring nominations by the end of March.

The tiles located in Martha's office in Michigan are Motawi tiles and are use to recognize "intellectual forebearers." It was given once before to John Seely Brown at the iConference held in Michigan. The awards committee will also consider nominees for that award. Martha will send out an email with more specifics about the award.

Liz suggested that we be more supportive of including funders at the conferences.

Harty suggested that strong sessions be built into curricula product distribution, and help in creating new sponsors and materials to go out to other institutions.

Discussion of sending video and audio of speakers to alumni and distributing them widely.

- ASIS&T Recognition

Martha Pollack provided background on the letter and her personal feeling that the accreditation process was not worth the time. She had a strong sense that most people were unhappy with a certification program of some kind.

Martha has drafted a letter (see attached) and wanted iCaucus consensus to make a strong point.

Discussion of definition of iField. Discussion of motivation behind letter from ASIS&T. Discussion of iCaucus vs. iSchools—iSchools should be inclusive, while the iCaucus promotes the institutions and the field.

Question regarding accreditation: do employers find it valuable? ALA accreditation, yes. Discussion of professions requiring accreditation.

Letter reworked and sent.

- Discussion of where to hold iConference after Illinois. Suggested that institution heading the iConference should hold the conference sometime during its 2-year term. University of Washington would be next. (Bob Mason contacted Harry Bruce during discussion. Subsequently—after meeting—Harry agreed to host the conference in 2011.)

- Membership

 - Discussion of Humboldt University

 - Discussion of UNT Denton

 - Discussion of membership generally. Two membership models proposed: 1) relatively elite—major research institutions. Carries more weight when approaching university administrators; 2) big tent—bring everyone in.

Decided to revise charter and admit anyone who meets criteria to become an iSchool. Certain members, paying more fees, will be part of the governing body, the iCaucus. All iSchools will be listed on web site and will send applications to Maeve. Schools will be invited to become iCaucus members and sit in on deans' meetings. Full charter at <http://www.ischools.org/site/charter/>

Both UNT Denton and Humboldt will be admitted as iSchools.

- Coordinator-elect needs to be identified, to succeed Harry

Will be done via email.

- Discussion of academic programs

Larry Dennis began by discussing his undergrad information technology program, master's in LIS (technology focused) and how to make PhD programs not so library focused.

John Unsworth asked for information on the undergrad side, as Illinois is establishing an undergraduate program.

He shared a proposal for an informatics program on the iDeans site. Wanted to know what mistakes to avoid.

Larry Dennis suggested that an undergrad program not resemble a PhD program. Provide a clear track for undergrads with only a few electives.

Have admitted unfunded students

Typically student-directed research; may not be what faculty are interested in

In physics dept., let in just the right number—funded TAs.

Jose-Marie said they had 50 undergrad majors, but 350 students take the courses and her unit receives nothing in return.

70 PhD students, once a year admissions

79 doctoral students/55 according to ALISE

6-7 years to graduation

Students comfortable working on faculty-funded research.

Liz Liddy: 1100 undergrads taking courses/400 of them her undergrad students. Recruitment can be a challenge. They take the top "alternate admits," (students who can't get into first choice of school.) Students know that they can get jobs,

high salaries. 25 transfer students. 90 undergrads in the fall. Works closely with admissions folks.

70 PhD students

Enrollment mostly up

Professional master's

telecom/security—up 30-40%, LIS—flat, others up 20%

Executive PhD program—applications up. Professional doctorate, not research degree. Final project is a publishable book. No faculty resistance to executive PhD

Push to get students out earlier.

Hank Foley: undergrad program : 2,050

40-50% graduate in college

50-60% come in through engineering or undecided—don't declare major until end of 2nd year

Problem-based learning, good for small numbers of undergrads

Do have reduced costs per credit hour under \$400

Uses undergrad TIs for lower-level courses

Blending of CS, business, etc.

Overdetermined enrollment 10 years earlier.

Mostly white male students

Wants to get more intellectually diverse student body

Wants to institute BA

Told to admit PhD students who are unfunded.

Aimee Dorr: No undergrad program

Faculty developed intellectual program—couldn't keep costs down

Would've provided funding for 100 FTE

Great program but at unsupportable level: way too many courses, requirements, tended to feed PhD faculty interest.

Five years average for degree. More closer to 7 years

Bob Mason: undergrad informatics degree—junior and senior level

Sold in on basis of growth.

Marketed well: not clear to undergrads what the program was;

Not clear to students or employers what they could do.

Created tracks: HCI, info architecture, social computing/informatics, networks/information assurance (security)

Recognized by university—4 courses in one area considered a “track”

Better clarity on what they can do.

Finds PhD students are “higher quality”

Harty Mokros: Similar program declined through time

Too many credits

A couple of required courses that no one could pass (serious CS courses)

Need to know your audience

60 students

600 that graduate from other majors: communications, journalism

Tendency to overdetermine majors

Communications and journalism majors benefit from informatics

Opening up those majors—tried to break down barriers

Global media/health and wellness/social networks

Wellness of communities in broadest sense.

Different classes of people unfunded: driven by mission that they are a state institution.

David Fenske: minor in informatics—influencing a whole lot of majors

Makes money from master's, not undergrad

Division in technically inclined and those who are not

PhD—mostly flat enrollment

75 PhD students—full-time, fully supported

Part-time students unfunded

10 new PhDs fully funded by DF

Faculty have to choose among PhD students already admitted

Martha Pollack: Master's applications – flat (2%), MSI (no theses, professional degree)

PhD applications, up by 20%

Make money on master's, lose on PhD

50 students

Master's applications for financial aid already closed.

Will fund up to five years

Summer support guaranteed for 2 years

Ron Larsen: master's up 15%--out of state gone up

Students are flooding market looking for financial aid

Seamus Ross: don't close application until April 1

No figures from last year

6.6 years to completion

Funding councils in UK cut off after 4 years

Students getting grants on their own after more time, more employable

John Unsworth: 4 years of funding guaranteed for Ph.D. students