

Core Services and Shared Infrastructure

Meeting Minutes, 02/13/2014

It was agreed that there should be a change in the way meeting minutes are approved. The minutes draft should now be sent to the group as a whole for approval instead of just the chairs.

DEATH BY 1000 WEBSITES

Ken Petren, from the department of biology, made a presentation to the blue ribbon task force a few years ago detailing the large number of different University web resources he accesses and the frequency with which he does to highlight the complexity and lack of unification. It is likely that this has only increased in complexity into today. The goal of the Core Services and Shared Infrastructure Committee is to ease this pain.

ARCHITECTURE PRINCIPLES

Gary Grafe is chair of the Enterprise Architecture (EA) committee. Although it was formed prior to this Core Services and Shared Infrastructure Committee, it is agreed that EA is a logical subset of Core Services. Gary has been drafting *Architecture Principles* which are “general rules and guidelines that inform and support the way in which the University of Cincinnati sets about fulfilling its mission.” When we're talking about systems and business processes, it's a good idea to have guiding principles, and we can point to this document to help resolve differences and diffuse conflicts.

In general, this committee's initial review of the principles did not reveal many concerns besides wording preferences and foreseeable challenges in convincing the academic perspective. Gary emphasized the collaborative approach to developing these principles to gather input from all perspectives. A summary of the discussion of these principles follows:

Principle 2: Maximize Benefit to the University – Anton Harfmann disagreed with using Return on Investment as the only way to evaluate benefit, arguing that it would not include “soft” returns that can't be calculated. He gave DAAP's rapid prototyping initiative as an example due to it currently being at a financial loss but is nevertheless a significant education to our students. Diana Noelcke clarified that the message behind this principle is not in how benefit is evaluated, but that it should be evaluated for the University as a whole to create unity. Anton suggested rewording. Everyone also responded favorably to the clause which reassures that “this principle would not preclude any smaller group from getting its job done.” Prioritization would occur as initiatives are presented to the IT Council and then distributed down to subcommittees.

There was some question of how this would be enforced and what the processes would look like, but Gary re-emphasized that the purposes of these principles are not to define policy, but to serve as a guiding philosophy. Purchasing department(s) may come to serve as enforcers if necessary.

Principle 4: Business Continuity – The need to include the right people in these discussions was stressed. Some ongoing discussions on the business continuity location solution need to consider technical aspects.

Principle 5: Common Use Applications - We need to be developing inventories of business processes and IT together so functions and needs are identified and serviced across the university. There was disagreement about the use of the word “Capability”, and the risk that this principle would limit the ability to serve specialized needs. The argument was that it is not the role of these committees to determine a school’s needs; that responsibility rests on the Deans and the Provost.

Principle 7: IT@UC Responsibility – “IT@UC” is not an actual entity, but a philosophy, some proposed it should be changed to “IT departments at the University of Cincinnati”

Principle 9: Data is an Asset – There was discussion on the new concept of data stewards, as opposed to data trustees. Stewards are responsible for ensuring accuracy and play a more active role to determine how data is used and stored. We don't have any formal stewards identified yet.

Gary requested that all members review the document further and provide feedback by the end of February. He will then compile these comments to be reviewed at the next meeting. Next meeting’s goal will be to approve any changes to the *Architecture Principles* document to be sent to the IT Council.

ACTION ITEMS

All Members – Provide feedback to Gary on *Architecture Principles* by Feb 28th

- Gary – Compile feedback for next meeting
- PMO – Resend previous meeting minutes to all group members to approve