

MINUTES OF THE K-STATE LASER PROJECT STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING

10:00 a.m. to 11:25 a.m., 30 August 2002, Anderson 201

As Approved: 20 September 2002

Attending:

Tom Rawson, Beth Unger, Larry Moeder, Wayne Usry, Dale Schultz, Diana Blake, Ruth Dyer, Don Foster, Jim Guikema, Rebecca Gould, Keith Ratzloff, Betty Stevens, John Streeter, and Lloyd Walker.

Absent:

David Hillier

1. Introductions – Larry Moeder
2. Role of the committee – Tom Rawson

Tom Rawson described the LASER Project as K-State's largest IT project, which will require considerable oversight and attention. The project accurately reflects the needs and priorities of the University. The project will bring people together that are not now working together.

Tom expressed his appreciation for the attendance of Wayne Usry, Oracle Consulting Vice President for Higher Education and Health Care. Wayne recently joined Oracle and is replacing Bob Boll on the Steering Committee.

Tom also expressed his pleasure that Dale Schultz, Oracle Consulting, Program Director, had been selected to serve as the K-State LASER Project Director, sighting Dale's personal style, way of communicating, and knowledge of Oracle products and projects as real assets being brought to the project team.

Tom outlined the role of the committee as follows:

- a. Communications
 - i. There will be a large number of people using the products of the project.
 - ii. Members are expected to communicate with their respective staffs and the campus community.
- b. Making policy and procedure decisions that cannot be made at a lower level
 - i. Nearly all decisions will be made at a lower level.
 - ii. Some decisions may require the President to make the decision.
 - iii. Members are to take a University perspective; they are not here to protect their respective domains.

3. Funding and positions – Tom Rawson
 - a. Funding for the LASER Project will be budgeted as an allocation of new Tuition-Technology Fee Revenues, which began Fall 2002.
 - b. Beth Unger and John Streeter have revised the Infrastructure/III/LASER Project Spreadsheets to balance budgets following a mandated \$1 Million reduction to \$2,500,000 in budgeted spending for FY 2003 and a \$500,000 reduction to \$3,500,000 in projected spending for FY 2004.
 - c. Positions that remain funded in the revised spreadsheets may be hired for appointment as scheduled.
 - d. Most positions are budgeted to be filled mid-year and cannot be appointed until at least 9 December 2002, which marks the beginning of the second half of FY 2003.
 - e. The iTAC Communications Specialist, in particular, is authorized for appointment as soon as a proper search can be conducted.
 - f. The LASER Project Site will be established on the 4th Floor of the KSU Foundation Center. It will occupy space recently vacated by the KSU Alumni Association. Architectural planning for the renovations is in process. ISO will purchase the movable partitions and some furnishing for reuse. Some new furnishings and equipment will need to be acquired with project OOE funds. It was suggested that renovation of the space may be completed in approximately 6 weeks; however, it will probably take considerably longer. About 1/4th to 1/3rd of the 4th floor will be separated from the Project Site and undergo renovation for use by Mercy Health Center Staff.
4. Events to happen between now and the hiring of staff – Dale Schultz
 - a. As LASER Project Director, Dale Schultz will work to provide direction to diverse perspectives, goals and objectives for the project; he expects the Steering Committee to be of considerable assistance in that effort.
 - b. The draft Scope, Objectives and Approach document was distributed for review by the members. The document provides a good overall description of the project.
 - i. Dale discussed the overall approach to be taken in the project to be that of using the Oracle Products as intended. This will be accomplished by reviewing the Oracle business processes and dealing with K-State requirements to keep the system customization free. He contrasted this approach with the traditional approach of defining requirements based upon existing systems and procedures, which tends to end with a new version of the old systems and procedures.
 - ii. The Oracle Financials System is a full accrual accounting system. It has the ability to support activity based accounting, which could potentially empower the colleges and departments to use the central accounting

system more effectively and reduce or eliminate the need for shadow systems. Consideration is being given as to which capabilities and features of the system K-State will implement.

- iii. Over 4000 pages of documentation have been distributed on CD for the new Student System, which was released 31 July 2002.
 - 1. An important issue facing the university was identified as deciding between course-based vs. term-based fees.
- iv. The Oracle application systems are designed to be configurable rather than customizable. Customization work generally must be repeated with each new release of the software.
- c. The Quality Management and Organization Plan describes the organization of the project team and the processes that will be followed to ensure that high quality products are produced by the project. The document is expected to be available for review the week of September 3rd-6th.
- d. A Control Reporting and Procedures document describing the issue and change management procedures is being prepared by the project team.
- e. A LASER Project Team Training Plan will be developed. A skills inventory will be requested of all Project Team Members to assist this effort; a web-form using the iTAC survey system will be developed to capture the skills information.
- f. The working draft of the LASER Project Plan (Work Breakdown Structure) was distributed as information to the members. The document will continue to undergo refinement as development of the plan progresses.
- g. A LASER Chart of Accounts Conceptual Design document is being developed. The Chart of Accounts is a very important data structure that serves as a foundation for both the financial and student applications.
- h. A Hardware Architecture and Configurations document is being developed to describe the existing environment, the planned server configurations and the network.
- i. Reviewing the Business Flows embodied in the Oracle applications software will provide focus to the application component implementation.
- j. System Interfaces will be identified and described for both the existing applications and the proposed applications. Dale discussed progress being made to identify all of the existing system interfaces.
- k. Shadow Systems will be identified and described. All of the colleges and many departments use decentralized *Shadow Systems* for financial and student information. Dale discussed the potential for the new system to eliminate the need for some of the shadow systems. A web-form will be developed using the iTAC survey system to gather information regarding key reports and shadow systems used by each of the colleges and departments.

- l. A Data Conversion Plan has yet to be developed. The existence of 20-22 years of student history may present considerable challenge for data conversion.
 - m. A Kickoff Meeting will be scheduled involving the entire Project Team.
5. Future Releases – Dale Schultz
- a. It is anticipated that future releases of the Oracle Student System will be issued approximately every six months. The first release was issued 31 July 2002. The second release is expected to be available in late December or January 2003.
6. List serves and web site – John Streeter
- a. A LASER Project Web Site will be established for the posting of project announcements, documentation, project status reports, steering committee minutes, etc.
 - b. The LASER Project Web Site will be established by the iTAC in the context of other IT Projects.
 - c. The following LASER List Serves are being established:
 - i. LASER Project Steering Committee (lasersc-l@k-state.edu) assigned only
 - ii. LASER Project Team (laserpt-l@k-state.edu) assigned only
 - iii. LASER Project Financial Systems (laserfs-l@k-state.edu) assigned and subscriber
 - iv. LASER Project Student Systems (laserss-l@k-state.edu) assigned and subscriber
 - v. LASER Project Public Announcements (laserpa-l@k-state.edu) subscriber
7. Other topics discussed at the meeting:
- a. LASER Communications Specialist to be hired by iTAC – Rebecca Gould
 - i. Position description was distributed for later review and suggestions.
 - ii. There was considerable discussion of the need for and the nature of project communications. Ideas discussed included: (1) identifying tools and techniques to be used with each of the various audiences, which need to be identified, (2) use of the project web site to develop and maintain a set of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) to facilitate the dissemination of consistent answers, (3) use of the iTAC electronic publication Infotech Tuesday and special project press releases to communicate with broader audiences.
 - iii. A draft Communications Strategy will be created by Rebecca Gould for review by the Steering Committee prior to finalizing the communications specialist position description.

- b. Reasons projects fail – Wayne Usry
 - i. Lack of management buy-in
 - ii. Lack of user buy-in
 - iii. Culture of the organization
 - iv. Scheduling and logistics
 - v. Data conversion and interfaces

- 8. Future meetings
 - a. Steering Committee meetings will be scheduled monthly by John Streeter, as secretary.
 - b. Netscape Calendar (to become Oracle Calendar) will be used for scheduling meetings with members on that system. Other members will be notified by e-mail and/or telephone, as necessary.
 - c. The September meeting will be held at 10:00 a.m. Friday, 20 September, in Anderson 201.
 - d. The following topics were suggested for the September meeting agenda:
 - i. Further discussion of the project communications strategy.
 - ii. State IT Oversight requirements and the relationship of the State IT Project Management Methodology (IT:PMM) to the Oracle Applications Implementation Methodology (AIM) being used for the LASER Project.
 - iii. The relationship of the Information Integration Initiative (III) and the LASER Project.