

Faculty Senate Agenda Item

No. 09-10

SUBJECT: Faculty Senate Resolution on the Washburn Technology Crisis

MOTION: the Faculty Senate calls for the establishment by the President of Washburn University of an investigative panel, including faculty and student participants, commissioned to explore, at minimum, the following issues:

1. What the balance of responsibility for the crisis is between off-campus providers and campus technology administrator;
2. What was known in advance of the upgrade of potential difficulties or system incompatibilities, and why nothing of this knowledge, if it existed, was communicated to the Technology Steering Committee and the Faculty Instructional Technology Committee;
3. What led to the decision to carry out such a fundamental shift in systems one week before the beginning of a semester, and why the Technology Steering Committee and Faculty Instructional Technology Committee were not alerted to the fact that this upgrade could be less than routine;
4. Why no back-up systems were in place, and why there seems to have been no effort to create any sort of fail-safe mechanism, any workable restore point, or even, at the bare minimum, some sort of bounce-back message for email so that colleagues outside of Washburn would know that messages were not being received;
5. Who at Washburn University is taking responsibility for the decisions that led to this crisis, and what consequences that responsibility entails;
6. What the cost of this crisis has been to Washburn University , in terms of lost student enrollment, retreat to paper copies, disruption of faculty and student life, and wasted staff time;
7. What mechanisms are being put in place to ensure that meltdowns of this scale do not take place in the future;
8. Whether, in light of the crisis, it has become critical to engage the services of an outside consultant on technology issues on campus;
9. And what mechanisms will be put into place to ensure that ISS is directly answerable in some real way to academic programs.

The committee shall include representation from each academic unit of the university and each division of the College of Arts and Sciences. No more than one member shall be drawn

from ISS, and that member shall not chair the committee. The commission should deliver at least a preliminary report of its formation to the full faculty of the university by no later than December 16, and a final report no later than Feb. 26, 2010.

Date: September 14, 2009

Originated By: Thomas Prasch
Faculty Senate President

Approved by Faculty Senate: November 20, 2009