ESTC Minutes
Engineering Student Technology Committee
February 6, 2024
4-5pm Scott 203

Present:
ATS : Nick Falk, Eric Goldenstern, Prof Steve Miller
CBE : Prof. Chris Snow
CEE : Julie Robinson, Jiate Li, Branch DeMersseman
ECE : Luke Shuttleworth
ME : Miguel Valles Castro (Chair), Brandyn Garcia, Michael Brown
SE : Fletcher Ouren
SBME : Dmitri Svetiov
Ex-Officio : Kelley Branson (ETS), Prof. Becki Atadero (AA)
Guests : Travis Rogers (ETS), Nick Stratton (ETS), Shaila Parashar (ETS)

Absent:
ATS :
CBE : Caroline Loewecke, Ben Sosa
CEE : Prof. Jordan Jarrett
ECE : Aaron Davis, Amin Mahdian, Prof. Mahdi Nikdast
ME : Prof. Kirk McGilvray
SE :
SBME :
Ex-Officio :

Old Business & Welcome

Welcome and Minutes

• Miguel welcomed everyone. Dmitri offered to take notes. Open ESTC positions were announced - if anyone knows of potentially interested candidates, please forward information to Kelley and/or Miguel (CBE grad, SE grad+faculty).

• The minutes from the November 13, 2023 meeting were unanimously approved. These will be posted to the ESTC website by Kelley. These and other ETSC documents are available to ESTC members at the following:
T:\Committees\ESTC
If you are unable to get into this drive space, let Kelley know.

New Business

FY25 Budget Process Overview

- We are starting out in the black (about $4K) for the first time since ~2019.

- Explanation of revenue / how generated:

  - Student CFT: $178.50/semester/student for FY24, increasing 5% to $187.40/semester/student starting Fall 2024

  - Other revenue sources – sale of retired computers (considered "gravy") and print quota purchases (not even a drop in the bucket)

- Explanation of the main budget sheet expenses:

  - Software is a major one, and some of the prices are not yet known.

  - Kelley: "Network equipment replacement" has been clobbered for several years, and we really need to keep it in the 2025 budget.

  - The $19.4 K for Computer Lab Furniture Replacement in FY24 was a substantial reduction from the historical rate; a restoration to $25.6 K is being proposed for FY25.

  - Kelley to Travis: For FY24, have we stayed within budget for these major line items? Travis: off the top of his head, $80K is left to spend, i.e. allocated in the budget but not yet spent.

- Explanation of Strategic Initiatives:

  - These only come into play when we have money left over at the end of the year and must spend it (since revenue cannot be refunded to the students)

  - Calls for proposals will be put out if and when that occurs (approximately March).

- Questions from the committee:

  - Why did the staff wages rise and student wages decrease between FY24 and (projected) FY25? Nick responded that student wages are extrapolated/projected from recent averages (variability in student workers and their hours), whereas staff wages are more precisely known. There were no wage reductions; in fact, there were increases throughout the College on 1/1 to adhere to the State minimum wage increase.

  - Last year, the baseline department allocation was cut and the tier system changed. Is this being kept the same in the proposed FY25 budget? These have decreased over time; in order to balance the FY24 budget, the total allocations to the departments needed to be reduced from $75 K to $50.7 K. The baseline was decreased as well.

  - Miguel: Is the budget "done"? Kelley responded that many of these numbers are reality, because of the four-year cycle to which we adhere for computer

replacement and server maintenance. Many of these are non-negotiable, e.g. there are purchases that have been made and invoices received, such as the 12-computer overhaul the Virtual Classroom is getting and the cost of software licenses.

• History of Department Allocations, I2P Lab and Assistive Technology Fee (non-negotiable). Comments from Nick Stratton on I2P lab:

- Our funding for this has been pretty steady.

- There have been many questions about the I2P lab in recent years, particularly now that ECE has its own CreatorSpace. Conversations have therefore been started with Brayan Trejo and Steve Johnson about how to broaden the utilization, given that there is the impression that I2P is only for MECH and CreatorSpace is only for ECE.

- One point that has arisen is that even with $30K, there is still a fee for every student who uses this (~$23/year). Therefore, if ESTC funded I2P a little bit more ($34K), every ENGR student could be funded completely (including training).

- This is an assumption based on current and recent historical expenses, but the costs could increase beyond this if enrollment and utilization increase.

- We also discussed potentially expanding the I2P lab, e.g. adding 3D printers to other labs and not only in the main I2P location. This is a longer-term question. Lockheed Martin and/or other groups are potential sources of external funding if there is interest among the College.

- University CFT does provide some cost-sharing for I2P. Nick is unaware of the similarities and differences between I2P and the CSU-wide Nancy Richardson Design Studio.   Kelley noted there is a membership fee for using the space at Richardson.

• The process! Checking the boxes as we work through and approve each line item.

- Each (high-level) line item in the budget must be explicitly approved. Some items are non-negotiable, whereas others can be modified.

- Per line item, we will open the floor for discussions; then Miguel will request a motion to approve the item.

- Kelley would like to move in the direction from more known to more unknown line items, e.g. I2P will be at or near the end.

The Current State of the CFT Account

The actual account is different from the budget. The budget is a guide for how we are to spend the CFT. The account is what actually happens. Travis sends out what is left to be spent to representatives for each department monthly. Please talk to your Lab

Managers to make sure it will be spent or will be saved for something larger in the future. Travis will share the actual account next time.

At the end of March, we must produce a report to the University CFT committee, to be passed along to the Board of Governors, of how money is being spent and justify any carryovers.

In 2021 or 2022, we could see that we would not be able to balance the budget, due to reduced revenue from lower student enrollment during the pandemic. The College gave us a gift of $75K, kept in a separate account, which can only be touched after the current account is spent down. We haven't had to touch it in 2 years.

Budget Work

• Business Expenses

Moved and seconded to approve the Business Expenses line item of $2820 for FY25 – approved unanimously

• Computer Lab Equipment

- Nick will be spending a little more than budgeted this year (about $150K versus $137.9K). Question: Because of the four-year cycle, are these expenses amortized or batched? Answer: These are staggered. We replace half of our Server equipment every two years (think VCL and Windows Compute Servers). Nick has his own replacement plan for the Labs computers so that he replaces some every year but there are larger years and smallers years. We use carry-over in the Labs and Systems line items to prepare for the following year after a "smaller" year.

- Kelley: When in a budget deficit, we have sometimes pushed off major expenses like replacing the old 60" plotter in Magellan. (as it turns out, this plotter broke after the budget was approved last year and we ended up replacing it with a new 65" plotter). We had the money in the account to do so. The acount is always in an eb and flow.

- Nick: We had to bring the Anderson lab back (i.e. continue its existence and therefore maintenance) because the Glover building did not get scheduled for demolition as expected. We decided to bring back only the workstations, not the thin clients, because of the low traffic. There was also a specific request for the student-org lab in Scott, sandwiched between WMEP and Student Success Center. It had only a few thin clients and was hardly ever used. So it is being revamped to only have one computer rather than five.

- The above Anderson and Student-Org Lab modifications were moved and seconded – carried unanimously

- The full Computer Lab Equipment line item was not approved since we ran out of time in the meeting.

• Furniture Discussion

Travis noted this is not a major issue. The current $19.4K in the budget is just to have money available in case something breaks and also to save up for when we do a full replacement in a lab.

Next Meeting
Thank you to all who attended. Scheduling for further meetings expected to occur during Winter Break.

Meeting was adjourned at 4:59pm.
Upcoming meetings at 4pm in Scott 203
- February 27
- April 2
- April 16 (if needed)
- March 26
- April 9 (if needed)

Respectfully submitted by Dmitri Svetlov with modifications and additions from Kelley