

UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE ON ACADEMIC COMPUTING AND COMMUNICATIONS

<http://senate.universityofcalifornia.edu/committees/ucacc/>

Thursday, December 16, 2021

Meeting Minutes**I. Chair's Announcements, agenda review, approval of minutes**

Action taken: Meeting minutes from October 14, 2021, were approved.

II. Consultation with UCOP's Information Technology Services and UC IT Strategic Sourcing**1. Cybersecurity updates**

Monte Ratzlaff, Cyber-Risk Program Manager

Log4j vulnerability – Log4j is widely used open source software found in multiple applications and systems. It turns out that it is very easy to exploit and hackers are taking advantage. Log4j users, including UC, are now waiting for manufacturers to produce a patch and for vendors to provide more tools to address the vulnerability. UC's locations are prioritizing their patching processes and sharing knowledge systemwide.

Kronos issue – Kronos, a company that creates workforce management software used worldwide, was the victim of a ransomware attack that resulted in its applications going offline and customers unable to access their data. The Kronos timekeeping apps are used at several UC locations and there may be a week's delay for some paycheck distributions. Some UC locations have a locally-installed version of the software, which was not impacted. UCSB is seeing the biggest impact.

Best practices for mass emails – UCOP is working on creating guidelines for best practices when sending mass email messages. CISOs have gotten feedback that these sometimes look like phishing. (<https://security.ucop.edu/resources/create-less-phishy-emails.html>)

Incident Response Coordination – UC has dealt with a number of cybersecurity incidents in the past six months, The Accellion breach in particular was an eye-opener to what needs improvement. CIO Van Williams is leading an effort to further develop coordination between UC locations when incidents occur.

Information Security Program Review – UC has hired the consultant firm Baker Tilly to conduct a review of information security at UCOP. Faculty are among those providing input.

UCACC members asked about an Accellion response report that was being prepared for the Regents (mentioned at the previous UCACC meeting) and whether it could be shared. There was also a question about sharing the results of Vendor Risk Assessment outcomes to help streamline what is often a lengthy process. Although uses for software can vary, sharing information from

risk assessments may be a way to make the process more efficient. The main challenge will be figuring out the communication mechanism. A workgroup at UC Davis may be working on this.

2. *Systemwide IT procurement*

Thomas Trappier, Associate Director, IT Strategic Sourcing

The UC-wide IT Strategic Sourcing team is part of the larger Procurement Services unit at UCOP. By negotiating systemwide licenses for all types of technology, UC saves money and time that each location would otherwise put toward its own negotiations. Recent new agreements include Amazon Web Services, Charmtech Labs, Google Cloud Platform (discount) and Google Workspace, Kurzweil, Verizon Wireless, and Zoom. There are currently 72 systemwide managed agreements. There is no policy or mandatory use requirement for the negotiated technologies, and anyone in the UC community can take advantage of the negotiated terms, although some contracts require affiliation with a central account. Researchers and PIs are encouraged to contact their local IT office to find out what technologies are available.

The process for systemwide agreements includes a systemwide IT Sourcing Committee that identifies individual UC location needs to determine UC-wide demand. Faculty can propose new technology for a systemwide agreement by contacting their local representative on the committee.

UCACC members asked whether faculty could be alerted when new contracts are signed, and whether there could be more faculty input into the choices for systemwide agreements. The list of local IT Strategic Sourcing Contacts was shared with the committee.

The Oracle financial software causing so many problems was not obtained via systemwide procurement. UCLA spearheaded the effort with an RFP, which was then followed by UCSD.

On another topic, UCACC members expressed strong interest in seeing the Research Data Backup project move forward.

III. UCACC Topics & Potential Actions

1. *Accellion response and drafting a letter from UCACC, based on UCSD letter*

Chair Matt Bishop will circulate a draft Accellion response letter for committee review. The letter requests that UC provide information on what data is stored, for how long, and with what protections. It requests that there be a standing committee within the systemwide Academic Senate to monitor UCOP cyber-security.

2. *Financial accounting system issues*

UCACC members were asked to find information on their campus regarding the new financial accounting system that is causing problems at UC Merced and UC San Diego.

UC Merced: The accounting system continues to be a problem, but the administration is aware and taking steps to resolve, including adding staff to help. It is still difficult to get grant balances.

UC Santa Cruz: There are only rumors.

UC San Diego: The system is still a big problem.

UCLA: Consultants are working on developing a phased implementation approach.

UC Riverside: The local committee learned that the transition to new systems on the campuses is due to new requirements for financial systems from UCOP. Campuses were able to choose, but it

seems that every campus has decided to go with Oracle. Riverside may be targeting summer 2022 for a rollout. The campus is aware of issues at San Diego and Merced and is interested in a smoother transition.

UC Davis: The campus Controller came to a committee meeting to talk about progress. Davis has a July 2023 rollout target date. Merced and San Diego are sharing lessons learned, and UC Davis has recruited Deloitte to help manage the process in close collaboration with the in-house team. The local committee will provide input and will receive in updates.

UC Irvine: No information on a new financial system.

3. UCOP data management and protection – where, how, and for how long is it stored

For discussion with CIO at the next meeting.

4. Vendor risk assessment & sharing results

Covered in discussion with consultants.

5. New DoD requirements for computers

For discussion with CIO at the next meeting.

6. Software procurement

This topic will remain on the UCACC recurring items list, and IT Strategic Sourcing Associate Director Tom Trappier will be a regular guest to UCACC meetings. UCACC will discuss ideas for improving the current process and communication to faculty. Because software purchases are campus-based, any requests will need to include the local contact person. UCACC is still interested in finding out which technologies campuses are ordering in volume.

7. New: Does UCACC want to get involved with issues around IT staff working remotely?

Some IT staff who have been working remote during the pandemic would like to stay remote. Some are leaving UC for other jobs. UCACC would like to support maximum flexibility for IT staff when applicable.

Action: UCACC members are asked to find out their campus policies for remote work for IT staff.

IV. Member/campus issues – Round Robin

UC Davis: The campus is working on a transition to a new financial system that will incorporate other systems. The local committee is discussing software licensing and a recent denial of service attack where the IT staff couldn't access systems to send email messages. The event raised issues around communication processes, which in general work well at UC Davis.

UC Irvine: The local committee had a presentation from the UCI Research Cyberinfrastructure Center on back-up solutions. UCI is taking research data backup very seriously and looking at various solutions.

UCLA: The campus is updating its LMS to Canvas and asking faculty to login to start getting ready for winter quarter. There is a relatively new CIO who is still developing her communication and consulting needs.

UC Merced: The faculty are still focused on the Oracle financial system problems and issues around official reporting of student academic activity for purposes of financial aid. The local committee is discussing developing practices for shared software solutions.

UC Riverside: The campus move to the new LMS seems to be going smoothly, with all classes now on the new system. The Google workspace issue continues, with Google changing its model to charge for storage. With funding restored, UCR is trying to rehire IT staff back to previous levels.

UC San Diego: The latest meeting of the local committee was cancelled.

UC Santa Cruz: The big issue for the local committee will be the search for a new VC-IT to replace Van Williams. Some faculty, including the UCSC rep to UCACC, work in areas where there are specialized hardware needs and this can be challenging. There has been an aggressive move to using off-campus data centers, and some members of the local committee are interested in creating a new faculty IT survey like the one conducted a few years ago to find out faculty opinions on local versus remote storage among other issues.

UCOLASC: The Committee on Library and Scholarly Communication has also been discussing the research data back-up issue, which the libraries are involved in as well. Some publishers have new requirements for data publication, storage, and access. The big issue for UCOLASC continues to be the rollout of transformative agreements for open access publishing as these contracts come up for renewal. Nature/Springer will be coming up next, then Wiley. Right now, UC has open access agreements with approximately one-third of publishers. UCOLASC also wants more UC authors to be aware of availability of their OA options when it comes to making publication decisions. Funding is often available to cover charges.

V. Under Review Items

UCACC will not comment on the systemwide items under review.

VI. New Business, next steps

Meeting minutes drafted by: Joanne Miller
Attest: Matt Bishop, UCACC Chair

Meeting Participants:

Members: Matt Bishop (Chair, UCD), Avidah Zakhori (Berkeley), Petr Janata (Davis), Nader Bagherzadeh (Irvine), Alex Bui (UCLA), Emily Jane McTavish (Merced), Manu Sridharan (Riverside), Avi Yagil (UCSD), Peter Alvaro (UCSC), Erith Jaffe-Berg (CCGA representative), John Hildebrand (UCOLASC representative)

Consultants, Guests, Staff: Monte Ratzlaff (Cyber-Risk Program Manager), Thomas Trappier, Associate Director, IT Strategic Sourcing, Joanne Miller (Committee Analyst)