2006 Annual Report

Employee Name: Matthew J. Ross

Current UCPEA Position: Computer Technical Support Consultant II
Current Functional Title: Assistant Director of Technology

Reports to: Director of Technology
Number of Employees under Direct Supervision:

- 3 Fulltime staff
- 4 Graduate Assistants
- 25 Works Study/ Student Labor personnel

Committee Memberships:
- NSOE Technology Oversight Committee (TOC)
- UCONN Information Technology Implementers Working Group (formerly ITLWG)
- UCONN Software License Group (SLG)
  - UCONN SLG Ad-hoc Apple Support Committee
  - UCONN SLG Ad-hoc SPSS committee
  - UCONN SLG Ad-hoc Macromedia committee
  - UCONN SLG Ad-hoc Bibliographic Applications, Chair
- Search Committee Member
  - NSOE Desktop Support Technician
  - NSOE Desktop Support Technician
- CDWG Higher Education Advisory Board

Activities:

As the Assistant Director of Technology, my responsibilities for the 2005/6 academic year covered a wide range of technology operations at the Neag School of Education. Many more changes occurred in the Neag School of Education over the last year. Existing staff was lost, additional staff was hired, and the launch of the new NSOE website was completed. In addition, there were several hardware acquisitions to assist in the phenomenal growth of the school.

NSOE Website

I assumed responsibilities for the NSOE website in September 2005. At the time the site was 60% near completion. I was given a deadline of October 1 to have the site ready and functional with as much information as possible. I accomplished this task by September 28, having all departmental, programmatic, and historical information live on the internet.
I facilitated the migration of the old NSOE web presence to the new NSOE webpage. Responsibilities for the updating and maintenance of the web were also assigned to me, with the exception of all promotional, news, and event items. This information is fed to me by the Director of Communications.

In December 2005, I began a project to make the NSOE (and all child websites) ADA compliant. Per Federal law, all institutions receiving federal funds are required to provide information in an accessible format on the web. Working with the new departmental administrative assistant, a vendor was located that provided a low-cost, efficient solution. By January 15, 2006, the NSOE website was the first school to have a completely ADA compliant website at the University of Connecticut.

I have since been focused on improving the NSOE web-based communication process to students and faculty. A new “Current Students” section is still under construction, but 60% completed. Expected completion is May 2006. I also assisted many faculty and students with web-based surveys.

**Collaborative Technology Center**
The Collaborative Technology Center (CTC) was completed in September 2004. The CTC consists of 6 fixed laboratories and 5 mobile laboratories. The management of the Collaborative Technology Center falls directly under my responsibilities. This included direct supervision of 4 Graduate Assistants (GA) and 25 student lab monitors.

A new approach was tested out in 2005, by shifting most of the day-to-day responsibilities to the Grad Assistants. This approach was evaluated and deemed insufficient for the needs of the faculty. We were forced with firing our first Grad Assistant (in my history with the Technology group), and also lost a fulltime staff member. Because of these losses, the Director and I petitioned to replaced our fulltime staff member with two lower level, fulltime positions. To achieve these two new positions, the department has given back all but three halftime Graduate Assistants.

The two new staff members are responsible for the day-to-day operations of the CTC, and also handle faculty/staff desktop support. Because university classes run from 8AM-9PM, we chose to structure their hours to cover the spectrum. This has resulted in a fulltime technology staff member on duty during all class periods. At the time of this report, we are in our second week of operation under this procedure.

Other responsibilities directly related to the CTC included:
- Coordinated scheduling of all GA and students to cover lab operation hours (Mon-Th 8:30am-9:30pm and Fri 8:30am-4pm)
- Assigned roles to GA according to our projected organizational chart
- Managed the scheduling of labs for Faculty, Staff, and Students
- Managed the scheduling or coordination of A/V equipment for Faculty, Staff, and students.
In addition to personnel management within the CTC, my responsibilities included the supervision and coordination of the technology equipment within the lab.

**NSOE Technology Hardware**
Outside of CTC, my responsibilities included management and maintenance of all workstations, peripherals, server hardware, and coordination of network activity. For Fall 2005, two Graduate Assistants were re-hired to handle day-to-day repair and troubleshooting of faculty and staff desktop support. The tech staff handled over 400 tickets in the course of the last year (May 2005-6).

I also participated in the coordination and planning for an upgrade of existing server infrastructure to a new Storage Area Network. This technology allows the NSOE to grow its server hardware at a faster rate and lower cost. Initial investment is expensive, but outweighed by benefits to operations of NSOE activity.

Our faculty/staff workstation inventory replacement was completed over Summer 2005. Most faculty are on laptop/docking stations (Windows and Mac users). All staff were upgraded to small form factor desktop units. I co-coordinated the upgrade of the entire NSOE Faculty/Staff workstation inventory to Windows XP, or Mac OS X 10.3 (approximately 200 machines). We are now on target (in year 2) for a 3 year replacement cycle.

**NSOE Building Services**
Following the completion of the addition to the C.B. Gentry building, where I coordinated the moves of computers and telephones for 25+ faculty and staff before and after the construction, I was placed in charge of telecommunications. Currently, I am developing a web-based management system to get a better handle on the service installed in the Gentry building. The management system will allow quick querying of services based on various criteria.

In conjunction with the telecom management system, I also deployed an online form to aid in the addition of new faculty and staff. The process of ordering equipment, activating email and file services, and ordering telecommunications services now runs through my desk. I felt it was a necessity to streamline this process, as there were many problems occurring. My next challenge is getting NSOE staff and faculty to use this form. In all honesty, it seems as if I have now taken on the roll of Building Services (utilities) Manager, which I gladly welcome.

**NSOE Student Information System**
One of the areas this committee deemed a priority for the NSOE was the creation of a more comprehensive information system for students within the NSOE. The new Student Information System links directly into the University’s Peoplesoft Information System, allowing minimal re-keying of data and increasing our data reliability. I have continued to assist and supervise the development of this system. This year was the first deployment of the online admissions system for IB/M applicants. In addition, I
facilitated the migration of the system onto the new Storage Area Network for better reliability and security.

**University and NSOE Committees**
I also serve on two University committees; the Information Technology Implementers Working Group (formerly ITLWG), and the Software License Group (SLG). As a member of the Implementers Group, I participate in regular meetings discussing and identifying technology needs of the campus users. In addition, I served on two search committees for fulltime positions to aid in technical areas. The two, fulltime NSOE staff were additions to our staff under my supervision. I reviewed over 20 resumes and participated in interviews for 7 candidates.

**Professional Development**
Due to other projects, there were very few organized Professional Development offered for Faculty and Staff. Staff were asked to participate in an instructional session on the Graduate Database, as the administration of graduate admissions was decentralized to the departments. Since I was the author of the interface, I facilitated the sessions. Each department was represented by at least one administrative staff member (EDLR sent all three).

While not a traditional professional development session, I facilitated an information session on NVIVO 7.0. NVIVO (a QSR International product) is a qualitative statistical analysis program that is widely used throughout the world (industry standard). I worked closely with the Account Executive and the CEO of QSR to bring Kristi Jackson (QuERI) to the NSOE in March 2006. The topic was centered around changes from the current version to the newest version of NVIVO software. This informational session was open to all University Faculty, Staff, and students. Informal responses were collected at the end of the session and the overall feeling was that the session was helpful. I am now trying to organize similar session for other widely used software in the NSOE.

**Security**
The NSOE suffered an attempted theft in November 2004. Approximately $75,000.00 in equipment was near stolen. Installation of a $100,000 security system was completed in November 2005. Under my direction, the new addition to the building was secured with Proximity card readers (at the suite door entrances), contacts were installed on all multimedia equipment, and cameras were installed at all exterior entrances. The CTC was also retro-fitted with Proximity card readers, motion sensors, and cameras.

The installation forced the release of new UConn ID cards to all NSOE Faculty and Staff as well as select students. I worked closely with the UCONN OneCard office to facilitate this distribution in the most efficient way possible. By accessing the NSOE directory, 75% of the new ID cards were pre-printed to be distributed at the September 2005 faculty meeting.
I worked with the Director and the Dean’s Office to draft a policy and procedures statement for access to the C.B. Gentry Building. That policy now governs access and also describes the process for an individual to attain access to the building.

In addition to management of the project, I have become the primary contact for all security related building issues. Since the completion of the new system, I have been called to the building three times for security related problems. I have made my home phone number available to the UConn Police department in the event of an emergency and have worked through troubleshooting the system and any problems on numerous occasions.

**Personal Professional Development and Continuing Education**

In addition to these job-related activities, I continued my personal education in the Masters program in Educational Technology at the Neag School of Education. Besides taking classes, I also taught three sections of EPSY 240, Introduction to Educational Technology as a Teaching Assistant in the Fall 2005. I expect to graduate next May (2007). Professional development includes a one-day, Photoshop seminar in January 2006.

**Additional Highlights**

- Continued support of Academic Technology Program (laptop, Taskstream, wireless)
- Support to UITS for campus-wide wireless deployment, new VPN access, Anti-virus deployment, etc.
- Teachers for a New Era support. Increased technical support TNE project and database collaboration.
- Support of Confratute with equipment and personnel.
- Increased faculty support with hiring of new faculty and staff.
- Organized and facilitated Professional Development workshops for Torrington School District on “Using MS Outlook”. Approximate attendance was 25 teachers, administrators, and staff.

**Goals for 2005-2006**

- Re-evaluate and improve CTC management of equipment.
- Increase Faculty professional development participation.
- Increase integration of new technology through NSOE.
- Continue to improve desktop support for NSOE faculty and staff.
- Continued implementation of SAN
- Increase web presence of NSOE; Virtual tour, Spanish version.