

Webmasters' Users Group

10-29-08

Present: Michael Van Putten, Margaret von Steinen, Ken Schaefer, Carolyn Fink, Nancy Meister, Deb Withee, Susan Kamman, Thom Myers, Nancy Kroes, Darren Webb, Susan Copeland, Kevin West, Tonya Durlach, Amy Brimmer, Pamela Rups, Cari DeLong, Bradley Horstman, Joe Fee

1. Presentation/discussion lead by Greg Lozeau (OIT) – Gform conversion to PHP

-Greg Lozeau, OIT, reported that Gform, the product in use at WMU for online forms for over a decade was antiquated, hadn't been updated by it's author for years and was breaking many times, and as updates to servers are made, potentially not going to work any more. It is due to be removed, thus necessitating in the migration from it to something else.

-Nancy Kroes reported that there are 71 departments with 504 Gforms currently on the www server, however it is not known if all are active. Nancy asked for volunteers to assist with creation of a realistic php template to be downloadable for folks to utilize in the migration process. Bradley Horstman has converted all of the forms he is responsible for and offered to work with Nancy. It is hoped that there will be something to present in January, with perhaps a training session scheduled in a computer classroom on campus.

-Nancy Kroes noted that PHP forms can become a major security hole if not created correctly.

--Nancy Meister has a list of PHP tutorials and online sample forms on her unit's Web site and reported that there are many available online.

-Greg asked the group for input on setting deadline to convert and the group decided March 1 or April 1 would allow sufficient time to educate staff about making the conversions.

-Greg nominated Nancy Kroes to take charge of the effort. Thom Myers supported and the group agreed.

- -Michael Van Putten suggested using Web governing council to find a solution for the roll out of Gform to PHP form conversion project – Greg confirmed this is way to proceed.

-Resources – need U-wide management of our Web presence, which is a charge for the Web Governing Council that will be announced in November.

-Pam Rups from OIT announced that online training for faculty and staff through Lynda.com will become available Dec. 1. Faculty and staff will request an account and will then have access for three weeks, which can be renewed for another two weeks depending on availability. During that time, users will have access to hundreds of training movies 24/7 from any computer. This training is not for students. More information regarding obtaining accounts, etc., will be made available soon.

2. Michael Van Putten—President's report

-Michael has accepted an MSU position and will be leaving WMU in early November. His new position is Senior Communications Manager for Web and New Media. Michael expressed his gratitude for the collegial support he has received from WUG members for many years and his regret to leave WMU behind, career-wise.

-With Michael leaving the president position of the WUG executive committee, he suggested that the group decide how to proceed, noting that it might be a good time to find out if other WUG members are interested in serving on the WUG executive committee. The group agreed to survey the entire WUG group to learn if there are other members interested in volunteering on the executive committee. Joe Fee indicated interest in volunteering at the meeting.

-Consensus – Nancy Meister will create and tabulate the survey form and Nancy Kroes will send out the notification of the location of the survey. Names will be accepted until 5 p.m. on Friday, Nov. 7. A new survey will be available at some point during the week of Nov. 10 to allow the group to vote for those who volunteered to serve. The new committee will be announced at the Nov. 19 meeting.

3. Thom Myers—structure and purpose of forthcoming Web councils

-Thom explained how the forthcoming U-wide Web councils/groups will aid the University in advancing its Web presence.

WUG—will remain an independent user's support group. It will continue to serve as a sounding board for proposed changes, but will not be a formal part of the Web governance structure.

Web Governance Council—will consist of administrators who will be empowered to form a series of standing and ad hoc working groups, set policy and standards, and make recommendations to the Executive Steering Group with regard to allocation of new and existing resources.

Executive Steering Group—will consist of senior officers, who can approve expenditures for projects and new hires institution-wide to meet Web staffing needs.

Meeting adjourned at 10:30 a.m. Next month's meeting will be held one week early because of the Thanksgiving closure.