

Request for ACPAC consideration.txt

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To: "Rick McFerron" <jrmcferr@iup.edu>; "J. B. Smith" <jbsmith@iup.edu>  
Cc: <Mark.Staszki ewicz@iup.edu>  
Subject: Request for ACPAC consideration  
Date: Wednesday, February 11, 2009 3:49 PM

Dear Rick and JB,

I am writing to you in your capacity as co-chairs of ACPAC in the hope that you will be able to take the following issue up with that body. My hope is that once you and ACPAC see what I am asking that you (i.e., ACPAC) would develop and support a proposal.

The issue is the following. Each semester I try to learn the names of my students in order to create a more conducive learning environment. To do that, I have them select a seat and I create a seating chart that I use during the course of the semester. A few years ago I decided to ask the students if I could take their picture and place that picture on my seating chart. By doing so, I was more likely to get to know the students better. I've been doing this now for several semesters and no student has ever asked not to be included and on many occasions I've had students tell me how impressed they were that I'd take this extra step. I have mentioned to some of my colleagues that I do this and they have, in turn, asked me to share with them the mechanics of how this is done.

Essentially, it is a very time-consuming process of taking pictures, being able to identify each person in the picture, developing a seating chart, pasting the pictures into the appropriate box on the seating chart and so on. When I began doing this I did a quick search on the internet and found the following site (<http://www.d.umn.edu/~hrallis/guides/SeatChart.html>) - and that site at least provided me with a way of doing this manually.

I have recently been looking to see if there are other tools on the internet that would make this easier for me as a faculty member. I was not unprepared to pay a few dollars out of my own pocket if I could find such a tool. I did find some institution-wide solutions but nothing for the individual. That is why I am writing to you today. I would like IUP to consider developing or securing a package that would allow faculty to create picture seating charts.

Imagine, if you will, the following situation. Universities routinely take pictures of their students for ID purposes. These universities also generate class lists for faculty members for all the students enrolled in their classes. Software can be purchased (or developed locally - and may already be possible within Banner) that would move pictures of students into folders for faculty when class lists are generated. Other software exists that could then take the pictures and the class lists to develop seating charts with pictures. See, for example, what Seton Hall Law School does ([http://law.shu.edu/faculty/seating\\_charts/classroom\\_seating\\_charts.htm](http://law.shu.edu/faculty/seating_charts/classroom_seating_charts.htm))

There are a number of issues that might need to be dealt with regarding this proposal. Here are some that might be important:

1. Is it possible to use student pictures for this purpose under FERPA?

I did go to [www.Ed.Gov](http://www.ed.gov) and looked up FERPA (<http://www.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/index.html>) and there is a document on their front page which included a section by section analysis of FERPA. That link takes you to a PDF file, which I have also attached for you. In the section on "DIRECTORY" information, photograph is listed. So, it would appear that we can use the student pictures just as legally as we do when we print their name in our phone book.

If you look at the two attachments you will find some information on the FERPA issue and what other universities call "DIRECTORY" information.

2. What if IUP chose NOT to declare the pictures as "Directory Information"?

I believe some institutions do not list it as directory but still make pictures available to faculty for instructional purposes such as seating charts. We already share non directory information with faculty (e.g., student banner ID) and we have policies and procedures in place that are intended to protect this information from being inappropriately used. Why could photographs of students not fall into this same classification as long as the pictures are used solely by the faculty member and not distributed to others?

3. Who owns the pictures?

Does the student himself/herself own the picture? Does the COOP own the picture? Does IUP own the picture? I do understand that the Student COOP takes the pictures and generates the ID cards. As I recall, however, this was a function that used to be performed by IUP and the office was housed within the Finance Division. If the university wanted to move in this direction, it would seem to me that this issue could be resolved satisfactorily.

4. What is the cost? Is this too expensive given the current budget situation?

This may be a very real issue and I do not know how to answer it. I would think that the technology already exists on campus to be able to associate student photographs with class lists. I do not know whether seating chart software is expensive. On the other hand, most of us would NOT need seating chart software. It would be easy to create a Word document, inset a table and generate a seating chart IF we had access to the pictures. It is

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taking the pictures, organizing them, manipulating them, etc. that creates  
the work.

I would, of course, be more than willing to meet with the two of you or with  
ACPAC to discuss this further.

Please let me know if this is something ACPAC will consider.

Thanks,

Mark