

Memorandum

TO: Rick McFerron, Ramesh Soni, co-chairs, ACPAC

CC: Lloyd Onyett, Don Rosenberger

FROM: Steven F. Jackson, convener, student ID action team

DATE: March 12, 2001

SUBJECT: action team recommendations for student IDs

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The student ID action team consisting of Ramesh Soni, Lloyd Onyett, and convener Steve Jackson met on 26 February 2001, with the invited guest Don Rosenberger of Student Technology Services to discuss issues of the student identification system on the university e-mail server. Extensive discussion at this and previous meetings established the following criteria for e-mail identification for students.

1. Logical association with students. Nothing can be more disconcerting for faculty than to receive an e-mail from “zfhg@grove.iup.edu” and have no idea of which student it may be from. Student e-mail IDs must be logically associated with their owners so that faculty, staff, and other students can know who an e-mail is from. Students also wish to have an e-mail address that makes sense and is easily remembered. Capt. Rosenberger pointed out that one of the most frequently-asked questions of Student Technology Services is how to set a student’s four-letter sequence to something meaningful. The lack of a logical e-mail address is also thought to be a deterrent to broader student use of their IUP e-mail accounts.
2. A system which is easily understood and explained by all campus faculty and staff. Telling students to look up their ID may make sense to people familiar with the system, but it acts as a deterrent to student university e-mail use. The system for names ought to be clear and logical so that any student can be told what their e-mail ID is.
3. The system ought to avoid information that is protected by Buckley Amendment provisions. This was the original reason for moving away from the seven-digit social security number-based VMS e-mail IDs and to the four-letter IDs.
4. The system ought to accommodate multiple surnames and given names, across a span of time in excess of ten years. A quick perusal of the IDAP system reveals 129 “Smiths” at IUP currently, including two with initials “AR” and two “Andreas.” Any user ID system must be able to create IDs which are unique to an individual.
5. The initial password ought to be intuitive to the user but not publicly available. That is, the password ought not to be something that a student must go to an office to look up; it should, like the ID itself, be intuitive and easily explained by all faculty and staff.
6. The user ID should be available to the student for a period of time after

graduation. Students who do use their university e-mail often inquire about how long a user ID will be theirs after graduation, and a clear public policy on this matter would help. The team also felt that establishing a system of alumni e-mail addresses (e.g., “sfjackson0612@alumni.iup.edu”) may be a useful way of maintaining alumni connection to the university.

7. In a similar vein, it was thought that giving e-mail addresses to incoming students ought to be accomplished before they actually arrive at IUP, and that upon a university admissions deposit, a letter to the student giving them their ID, password and information on the university Informational Technology services may be a good way to give students a feeling of university commitment to them.

Accordingly, the student ID action team recommends a student ID system that is:

Fmlast0613@iup.edu

Where F=first initial

Where M=middle initial (if any)

Where last=last name

And where the four-digit number is the student’s birthday. This number could be reset by the student upon request to something beginning with “14” since there are no months equivalent to 14. This student ID would last for one year after graduation or separation from the university after which an offer of an alumni account for a very nominal fee would be made.