Members in attendance: Giulia Brofferio, Leslie Edgerton, Maureen Evans, Nancy Fraser, Robin Jenneve, Allen Matlick and Tim Schmidt.

Members absent: Juli Pippin, Kathy Scheidemen.

The meeting began at 9:00 am.

Prior to the meeting (May 15) Nancy distributed the following agenda to committee members –

1. Introduce new committee member Robin Jenneve
2. Allen presents monthly progress report
3. Budget Projections
4. Budget Priorities
5. Third CNT vision/strategy
6. Personnel Task Force Report
7. Effort involved and Status of new GUS users
8. Fund Accounting Training

Meeting began with Leslie introducing Robin to the rest of the committee.

Agenda item #2: Prior to the meeting Allen sent committee members electronically a monthly update of GUS Development activity as well a comparison of feature changes/enhancements between GUS version 4.3a and 4.4.

Allen explained that he had devoted a significant amount of time (three weeks) modifying GUS to accommodate changes in condition codes implemented suddenly by the Office of Research. The committee expressed hope that the GEC could find a way to better manage such changes in the future and Tim volunteered to discuss the situation with the Office of Research.

Prior to the meeting Tim raised some questions about the status of documentation available to support the latest version of GUS so Allen also addressed that topic. Allen explained that if he determined that existing documentation was reasonably accurate (80% or more up-to-date?) that would likely be sufficient for users. Allen reiterated the amount of labor required to continually revise documentation and that it is not feasible for him and Mark to do so in light of their other priorities. Further, Allen observed that it has been his experience that many users do not bother with reading the documentation which is a further reason to not devote an inordinate amount of time to it.

Agenda Item #7: Leslie explained to the committee that she had spoken with the Sociology Department to get some feedback regarding their conversion to GUS.
(Sociology and ISBER being the two test departments currently converting to GUS). She indicated that the department was “frustrated” at the lack of documentation. Some of this was likely the department’s fault since they seemed unaware that there was a GUS website that had user materials available. It was discussed that the GEC needed to think of better ways of disseminating information about GUS and strengthening our mentor activities. Tim explained that he had spoken with ISBER to get some feedback on their GUS conversion. Like Sociology, the process was described as being “frustrating” and that was the case even when using several mentors and referring to the GUS website for instructions and training videos. Giulia, as the primary mentor at the committee meeting, indicated that ISBER had not expressed any frustrations to her about the conversion and that it might be necessary for GUS mentors to take a more proactive role to make sure that departments don’t experience unnecessary difficulties.

Robin observed that when her department transitioned to GUS they relied heavily on notes for using GUS prepared by a staff member in the Physics Department. Several members of the committee expressed dissatisfaction that employees in some department’s have expressed a greater familiarity with GUS than they actually possess and that, in conjunction with varying business practices, inadequate staffing levels, an evolving mentor program and incomplete documentation materials, makes it unwise to continue to roll out GUS until some of these obstacles are resolved or can be better assessed and managed.

At this point the committee agreed that documentation continues to be a high priority and that we should explore ways to address this need. As preface to this discussion Tim was asked to briefly discuss the budget projections for GUS (Agenda Item #3). Based on current commitments and the likelihood of increasing costs (staff salaries, etc) the GUS budget will end the current fiscal year with a slight credit balance and then trend significantly into overdraft next year and the following year.

Following this update the committee discussed Agenda Items #4 & #5. Based on the current budget projections it will not be possible to hire the third person at 100%, at least with the originally proposed start date of July 1, 2006. The committee had a wide-ranging discussion about what was felt would best benefit GUS and there was at least some general consensus that a part-time career position perhaps in the Analyst series might be a viable way to proceed. Committee members were asked to think about creating a job description that would enable documentation efforts to proceed while impacting Allen and Mark as little as possible. Maureen suggested that the new person could document the various GUS modules by working with small teams of existing users. When documentation efforts were up-to-speed this same person might be able to provide training.

Agenda Item #6: Giulia gave a brief update on the status of the personnel task force’s efforts working on the personnel module. The consensus of the task force is that the current module should be continued to be debugged and improved in order that the departments using the module will have as dependable a system as possible.
Agenda Item #8: Following up on an issue originally raised by Allen at previous meetings, Nancy spoke with Jim Corkill in Accounting to discuss the possibility of providing input into the current Fund Accounting classes as a way to foster a collaborative effort with Accounting as well as to provide a mechanism for department staff to obtain the necessary training to facilitate an easier transition to GUS. Jim was receptive to this idea and Nancy asked that the committee review the on-line materials for this class to see if they have any suggestions as to whether this will help promote GUS efforts.

Agenda Item #9: Prior to the meeting Nancy had also asked Allen to provide an overview of disaster recovery procedures with respect to department data GUS servers host. The committee agreed that the process could be strengthened and Allen was asked to provide a proposal detailing potential solutions and costs for the committee to review.

Meeting ended at 10:10.

Action Items:

Tim to discuss with OR improving coordination with GUS when changes are made to ORbit.

Leslie to draft language advising units that request GUS that it is not being rolled out at the current time.

Committee to think about ways to link GUS training with training classes offered by Accounting.

Committee to offer input on job description for additional GUS staff member.

Allen to provide proposal to augment data back-ups.