CS 419 Project: Simplified Advising Scheduling

Background

Students in the department of EECS sign up for advising via a web form. This form generates an email for each action the student performs. The advisor gets an email when an appointment is created, and another email when the appointment is canceled. The only problem is, these emails are plain text, and require that the advisor manage them all by hand if they want the appointments on a calendar.

Project Description

What this project entails is writing a tool, which can be used as a procmail filter, which does 2 things with these emails:

1. converts them from plain text to a meeting request/cancellation Outlook can read (gmail accepts the same format, so testing should be easy) and
2. adds/removes the appointment from a database which will be used for a CLI client.

Further, you will be creating a curses based CLI client to the database which allows for managing the appointments as well.

In other words, whether I’m on my own laptop with Outlook or on a department Linux machine, I can read and manage my advising appointments.

Database

The database will be a mysql database on the EECS mysql server. You will be sent login information for this database after the start of the term. NB: you will be unable to access this database from an off campus IP address.

User stories

- Kevin, a student, has already scheduled an appointment, and decides to cancel it. This prompts the system to send an email to his advisor. This email contains a meeting cancellation, and so the advisors calendar client removes the appointment from his calendar.

- An advisor prefers to use Linux computers, and is making use of the command line client. He realizes a student who is not his has signed up for an appointment, and cancels this appointment. While this doesn’t remove it from the advising system, it does remove it from the advisors calendar via a meeting cancellation email.

- A student signs up for an appointment, and the email received by the advisor contains a meeting request, which adds the student to the calendar.
Useful information

• procmail is a mail filtering tool. It is quite powerful, and I highly recommend you look into it for details of its operation. A significant part of this project involves writing a filter which can be called from procmail.

• Meeting requests have an attachment with MIMETYPE “text/calendar; method=REQUEST;” (sans quotes). Approximately 30 seconds of searching found detailed instructions for a java tool, which is easily translated to python.

• These tools will be entirely written in python. That means the curses based CLI, the procmail filter, and any testing tools you need to write.

• Speaking of testing tools, it is very easy to send arbitrary emails from python.

• There should only be a single email seen by the advisor in their inbox, so take that into account when writing your procmail filter.

• Both a signup and a cancellation email, as generated by the actual advising signup system, are included at the end of this document. This is the format you will want to use when testing.
Advising Signup with McGrath, D Kevin confirmed
Name: REDACTED
Email: REDACTED@oregonstate.edu
Date: Wednesday, November 21st, 2012
Time: 1:00pm - 1:15pm

Please contact support@engr.oregonstate.edu if you experience problems
D. Kevin McGrath

From: do.not.reply@engr.orst.edu
Sent: Thursday, November 15, 2012 10:11
To: REDACTED@engr.orst.edu; dmcgrath@eecs.oregonstate.edu
Subject: Advising Signup Cancellation

Advising Signup with McGrath, D Kevin CANCELLED
Name: REDACTED
Email: REDACTED@engr.orst.edu
Date: Thursday, November 15th, 2012
Time: 11:00am - 11:15am

Please contact support@engr.oregonstate.edu if you experience problems