

Date: April 21, 2009

To: Senate Council

From: IT/Education Work Group (Mary Deletter, Davy Jones, Tom Kelly, Joe Miller, Kim Woodrum)

Re: Recommendations for Faculty Participation in IT

In response to an inquiry from the faculty senate, David Randall, chair of the Faculty Senate, formed a work group to evaluate the process by which faculty contribute to the management of IT resources for education at the University. Among the concerns that have been expressed by faculty include a perception that IT decisions that directly affect faculty and teaching are made at the administrative level without any apparent input from faculty, and that the management of the IT resources do not appear to be responsive to faculty concerns.

The work group has completed a preliminary review of existing mechanisms for faculty input into IT as it pertains to education and has met with the new Vice President for Information Technology and Chief Information Officer, Vince Kellen.

Faculty participation in IT and education is quite broad across the campus. Faculty members are the predominant users of institutionally supported IT resources for delivery of education on campus and through distance learning (e.g., Blackboard, Sharepoint). For a variety of reasons, faculty members are also engaged in educational IT development with focused objectives within departments and colleges that require specialized resource development. Examples include distance-learning technologies being developed in the Departments of Mathematics in Arts & Sciences, and Anesthesia in the College of Medicine, and Continuing Education in the Colleges of Pharmacy and Medicine.

Formal mechanisms for faculty input into IT resource management at UK exist through 1) committee and workgroup structures supported by service organizations, 2) senate committees, and 3) administrative committees.

Service Organizations

One example of a service organization that support committees and work groups soliciting faculty input on IT is TASC. TASC manages an E-Courses Work Group. Participants are mostly technical support people from the helpdesk, colleges around campus, and TASC. Two or three faculty participate on a regular basis, and the work group would welcome additional faculty participation. The group addresses user support issues in relation to Blackboard. They have no formal charge, nor does this group report to anyone in particular – the group's function is mainly for information-sharing, troubleshooting, and upgrade planning.

Similarly, the WEB Advisory Committee is a University-level committee that works with UK PR and the folks at site lab on web-related issues. This committee also solicits faculty input (e.g., faculty from the Library).

Faculty participation on service organization work groups and committees will help to assure that the management of IT resources is responsive to the needs of faculty educators. However, exclusive participation in service organization work groups and committees will not assure that IT decisions made at the administrative level will include appropriate input from faculty.

Senate Committees

None of the standing Senate committees is formally charged with oversight of IT, although the charge to the Academic Facilities Committee comes close. Senate Rule 1.4.2.3 established an Academic Facilities Committee (SAFC) and charged it with the responsibility of providing information and recommendations to the Senate about the alteration, construction, and allocation of all property and physical facilities that may affect the educational objectives of the University, such as classrooms, buildings and grounds, shops and other such real property, audio-visual and television equipment, computers, duplication and printing facilities, vehicle pools, and scientific and musical instruments. The committee does not meet on a regular basis, and committee members express reservations about the committee's ability to influence administrative decisions related to its assigned responsibilities. IT oversight could easily be added to the committee's charge, but there appears to be a broader issue related to the utility and/or efficacy of the committee that should be addressed before expanding the committee's charge to include IT will be effective. Similarly, the long-term utility of establishing a new standing faculty committee charged specifically with providing information and recommendations to the Senate about IT resources and management that may affect the educational objectives of the University will need to assure that systems are in place to sustain the utility and/or efficacy of the committee.

Administrative Committees

AR III-2.0-1 established three standing committees in the areas of research, instruction, and administration to facilitate the exchange of information regarding University-wide computing and data communication needs and interests - the Research Computing Committee, the Institutional Computing Committee and the Integrated Resources Information Systems Administrative Computing Systems Coordinating Committee. These committees provide advice and recommendations to the Provost, appropriate executive vice president, and University Chief Information Officer (CIO) relative to broad, University-wide computing policies, procedures, and directions.

The Institutional Computing Committee provides advice regarding general purpose instructional computing services, with the aim of ensuring that students have access to a wide variety of computer languages, applications, and services in an easy-to-use environment. This Committee is comprised of seven faculty members appointed by the president; one undergraduate student (nominated by the Student Government Association); two senior academic administrators in the Provost areas, e.g. enrollment management, undergraduate education, academic support; and two representatives of Information Technology (advisory, non-voting). At the present time, the Faculty Senate does not have any involvement with the committee, although the chair of the committee appears to be supportive of greater collaboration.

Active faculty participation on the Institutional Computing Committee will improve that likelihood that IT decisions made at the administrative level will include appropriate input from faculty. However, it is not clear at this time how active this committee will be with regard to oversight of the management of IT resources, and as such, may not be sufficient to assure that the management of IT resources will be responsive to the needs of faculty educators.

New Leadership

The University has recently hired a new Vice President for Information Technology and Chief Information Officer, Vince Kellen. Mr. Kellen reported that active faculty engagement in IT for education was essential for establishing functional resources and in lobbying administration for IT resources. In his previous position, faculty played an active role in IT management through an administrative committee structure which included an oversight committee, and several functional subcommittees established to address key elements of IT in a more specific manner. He also suggested the merging of the research and education committees. He expressed a willingness to discuss IT committee structure with the Provost and encouraged the Faculty Senate to do so in parallel, perhaps through the chair of the Senate Council.

IT/Education Work Group Recommendations

1. Establish a working subgroup to collaborate with the Vice President for Information Technology to determine the optimal administrative committee structure for sustaining faculty guidance regarding IT resources and management.
2. Establish formal affiliations with service organizations to assure adequate faculty participation and to sustain communication with the Faculty Senate regarding the management of IT resources.
3. Address issues pertaining to the utility and efficacy of the Senate Academic and Facilities Committee.

Brothers, Sheila C

From: Kelly, Thomas
Sent: Tuesday, April 21, 2009 3:16 PM
To: Randall, David C
Cc: Brothers, Sheila C
Subject: FW: Instructional Computing Committee

David:

I apologize – just now recognized that I had received this e-mail today – perhaps it would be helpful to print Ruth's most recent exchange as an addendum to the report?

Tom K.

----- Forwarded Message

From: "Beattie, Ruth E" <rebeat1@email.uky.edu>
Date: Tue, 21 Apr 2009 07:21:26 -0400
To: "Thomas H. Kelly" <thkelly@uky.edu>
Subject: RE: Instructional Computing Committee

Committee charge:

The University is committed to providing students with access to appropriate computing facilities, including state-of-the-art hardware, software, and courseware. The Instructional Computing Committee provides advice regarding general purpose instructional computing services, with the aim of ensuring that students have access to a wide variety of computer languages, applications, and services in an easy-to-use environment.

In the past the committee reported to the Chair of the University Computing Committee - in more recent years I have reported directly to the Provost with copies of reports to the Senate Chair. There is no formal link between the Provost and Senate Council as regards this committee. I have just made sure that both parties are informed of our work.

Current committee roster:

Ruth Beattie, Chair
Sandy Challman
Doug Smith
Janice Kuperstein
G.T. Lineberry
Deborah Moore - left Uk, her position is currently vacant
Czarena Crofchek.

There are also 7 University administrators who serve in an ex-officio / advisory role.

Currently the committee is conducting a pilot of the anti-plagiarism software. the pilot will conclude in May and the committee will make a recommendation (to the Provost and Senate Council) on whether UK should purchase an annual license for Turnitin.

In the past two years, the committee has made recommendations to the Provost regarding (1) reviewing student computer lab usage (in light of so many students now having their own computers) with a view of identifying underutilized labs that could be repurposed;
(2) Repurposing some current computer labs to expand the current range of online testing options.

The Senate Council has a copy of my August 2007 report (the most recent report with recommendations) to the Provost.

REB
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From: Kelly, Thomas
Sent: Saturday, April 18, 2009 12:23 PM
To: Beattie, Ruth E
Subject: Instructional Computing Committee

Ruth:

Do you have a copy of the current roster for the committee (it is listed as TBA on the web)? Also, is there a record of the committee's activities anywhere that I might use to give the Senate Council a sense of the types of projects the committee has worked on in years past?

BTW – I spoke to Sheila Brothers, and it does not appear that the Senate Council has provided guidance to the Provost on committee membership, at least in the recent past, and there does not seem to be a clear understanding of how the Senate (or Senate Council) should interface with the Committee. Perhaps we can try to get this sorted out. Do you have a copy of the Committee charter or any specific guidelines that specify the role of the Senate Council with regard to the committee?

Thanks,

Tom K.

From: "Beattie, Ruth E" <rebeat1@email.uky.edu <UrlBlockedError.aspx> >
Date: Tue, 7 Apr 2009 12:13:16 -0400
To: "Thomas H. Kelly" <thkelly@uky.edu <UrlBlockedError.aspx> >
Subject: RE: Academic Planning and Priorities Committee

Yes, membership is determined by the Provost and Senate Council Chair

Itinerary in recent years has been guided by what the Provost and Senate Council would like us to focus on.

REB

Ruth E. Beattie

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From: Kelly, Thomas
Sent: Tuesday, April 07, 2009 11:21 AM
To: Beattie, Ruth E
Subject: Re: Academic Planning and Priorities Committee

Thanks, Ruth – it looks like there are a significant number of faculty on the committee (n = 7) – and I assume membership on the committee is determined by the Provost (with consultation from the Senate Council). How is the itinerary

of the committee determined?

Thanks,

Tom K.

From: "Beattie, Ruth E" <rebeat1@email.uky.edu <UrlBlockedError.aspx>
<UrlBlockedError.aspx> >
Date: Tue, 7 Apr 2009 08:21:38 -0400
To: "Thomas H. Kelly" <thkelly@uky.edu <UrlBlockedError.aspx>
<UrlBlockedError.aspx> >
Subject: RE: Academic Planning and Priorities Committee

Tom,

The committee that addresses the link between IT and education is the Instructional Computing Committee of which I am Chair.

This year our focus has been on conducting/ evaluating a pilot of Turnitin.

REB

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From: Kelly, Thomas
Sent: Monday, April 06, 2009 2:28 PM
To: Beattie, Ruth E
Subject: Academic Planning and Priorities Committee

Ruth:

The Faculty Senate Council is considering how faculty might better support the University's use of IT as it relates to education. I am trying to track down information on the various committee activities on campus that are related to IT. Does the Academic Planning and Priorities Committee deal with issues related

to IT? If so, how often are such topics addressed by the committee?

Are you aware of any other faculty committees that are engaged in support of IT, particularly as it informs education?

Thanks in advance,

Tom K.

----- End of Forwarded Message