**SENATE AGENDA ITEM III.E.1.**

**2 September 2014**

**August 26, 2013**

**TO: FACULTY SENATE**

**FROM: COUNCIL FOR INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNOLOGY**

Submitted by Anna Valeva, Chair

**RE: ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE 2013-2014 ACADEMIC YEAR**

**Membership on the Council** for the past academic year included: Richard Cangro, Jonathan Day, Virginia Diehl, Justin Ehrlich, Kimberly Hartweg, Breanna McEwan, Terry Smith, Sharon Stevens, Cynthia Struthers, John Stierman, Anna Valeva, Bruce Walters, Janet Wigglesworth.

**Meeting Dates:**  Aug. 21, Aug. 28, Sept. 4, Oct. 2, Nov. 6, Mar. 5, Apr. 2, and Apr. 30.

**Guests:**

Steve Rock – Faculty Senate

Roger Runquist – CITR

Mandeep Singh – CBT

Richard Carter – School of Distance Learning, International Studies and Outreach

**COUNCIL ON INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNOLOGY**

**ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE 2013-2014 ACADEMIC YEAR**

**Summary**

During the 2013-2014 academic year, the council focused on two main issues: recommendations for changes to the IT Governance Proposal and IT Strategic Plan, and strategies to improve the response rate in online course evaluations. The council also continued its interaction with campus computing bodies and exploration of using technology to improve the effectiveness of course administration, content delivery, and student engagement. In addition, members of the council became active participants in the newly established IT Governance process, with two members taking leadership positions (Justin Ehrlich – chair of the Marketing/External Alliance and the Executive Committee, Jonathan Day – co-chair of the Instructional/Scholarly Alliance).

**Major activities**

During the 2013-14 academic year, the council pursued the activities discussed in the following paragraphs.

1. Council administration – elections:
   1. Chair: Anna Valeva was elected chair
   2. Vice chair: Sharon Stevens was elected vice chair.
   3. UTAG representative: Breanna McEwan, who is also a UTAG member, volunteered to ensure the communication between CIT and UTAG.
   4. Secretary: The council decided to rotate secretary responsibilities.
2. Recommendations and proposed changes to the IT Governance Proposal and IT Strategic Plan:

The first meeting of the council began with a visit from Dr. Steve Rock, Faculty Senate Chair, who brought to the Council’s attention the IT Governance Proposal and IT Strategic Plan draft. Dr. Rock recommended that CIT members staff the faculty body of the proposed Education Alliance in order to ensure clear communication with the Senate and the faculty as a whole.

In the process of three meetings CIT arrived at a list of recommendations and proposed changes to the IT Governance Proposal and IT Strategic Plan (please see Appendix I), submitted to the CIO, Stephen Frazier, on September 4th 2013 for inclusion consideration in the final drafts to be presented at the Board of Trustees meeting on September 13th. Unfortunately, the CIO, Stephen Frazier, was not able to attend any of the three CIT meetings due to other professional engagements at that time. However, the CIT chair attended two meetings of a subcommittee working on the IT Governance Proposal and implementation plan to ensure proper communication between the council and those immediately charged of establishing the IT Governance structure. The main recommendations were:

1. Strengthen faculty representation at all levels of the IT governance process (for details see Appendix I).

The recommendations of this nature were only partially incorporated in the final draft and subsequently in the newly established IT governance structure. Specifically, it was ensured that a faculty member would be chair of the Instructional/Scholarly alliance and as a result at least one faculty member would serve on the Executive committee. The faculty membership on the Administration and Marketing/External Alliances was increased from zero to one member each (CIT recommended 3 faculty members serve on each of these two alliances). The idea that, when possible, CIT members serve on the alliances was adopted and successfully implemented (6 out of 8 faculty representatives are also CIT members, covering all three alliances and the Executive committee). The recommendation for faculty representation at the level of actual decision makers (IT Governance Council) was not incorporated in the final version of the proposal. Also, there is no actual mechanism in place to ensure that voting members of the alliances have strong interest or knowledge of IT. Currently this is achieved mostly by faculty with such interest/knowledge volunteering to serve on the alliances.

1. Provide an entry point to the IT governance process for proposals that are driven by/would enable research activities, with the most straightforward modification being to incorporate proposals scholarly in nature within the Educational Alliance with appropriate name change of that governance body.

This recommendation was adopted with the proposed Educational Alliance modified to function as Instructional/Scholarly Alliance.

1. Provide a transparent mechanism for communicating to all stakeholders the proposal flow within the IT Governance process.

The spirit of the IT Governance proposal was strengthened in this respect and in the current implementation reasonable degree of transparency exists at the first two levels (alliances and Executive committee), however transparency at the level of decision making (IT Governance Council) is lacking. Further significant efforts are needed for making all faculty members aware of the IT Governance process in principle and specific proposal flow in particular.

1. Per CIT recommendation, the IT Strategic plan was strengthened to include scholarly technology needs, in general. The CIO, Stephen Frazier, pointed out that any specific suggestions with either scholarly or instructional focus (e.g. replacement of existing IT, new IT acquisitions and training, IT professional development, etc.) have to be submitted to the IT Governance process.
2. Update on the instructional and research technology resources available through CITR:

On Oct. 2nd, 2013, CIT met with Dr. Roger Runquist, CITR director. Concern was raised that more faculty training beyond the very basic level for platforms such as D2L, as well as specific software packages, digital instructional materials, etc., is needed. Dr. Runguist pointed out that CITR has only a staff of 4 and needs more staff to go beyond dealing with the immediate basic training needs. For more complex tasks it is best to ask for one-on-one training to make sure faculty needs are met. Workshops could be developed if CITR has more resources. With elimination of services previously provided by CAIT, there is no entity on campus that would convert specific instructional material/idea into digital media form for either online or face-to-face delivery.

CITR has developed MASS (Media Application Storage System) - an easier process for uploading media files to share with students from the streaming server. This is currently available on the CITR website. Also, CITR has some materials that can be borrowed (e.g. Camtasia software, laptops, video cameras, microphones). One-on-one training is available upon request.

1. Update and exchange of ideas on the implementation of the “flipped” classroom teaching model using iPads:

On Nov. 4th, 2013, Dr. Mandeep Singh shared his invaluable experience in implementing the flipped classroom teaching model. He has achieved his goal of freeing up class time with less lecturing (%40 lecture, 60% discussion, exercises, quizzes, etc.) and delivering the content with no space for the students to hide. There is much more hands on. The professor is a facilitator - lets students resolve discussions. There is no need to go online during class (thus making this model implementable, given the limited bandwidth currently available in Stipes Hall). There is a system for renting the devices (purchased through a grant) managed by the library. Dr. Singh also shared his experience in creating instructional materials.

1. Recommendations to improve the response rate in online course evaluations:

In Spring 2014, CIT dedicated three meetings to a charge from the Faculty Senate Executive Committee to explore the issue of online evaluations with the goal of significantly improving the response rate. Dr. Richard Carter – Director of the School of Distance Learning, International Studies and Outreach, was a guest at the meeting. According to his report, the current system is voluntary without any plans to enforce response (e.g. put a block on the final material), anonymous (however, the students are not told that the responses are anonymous – this can be easily changed), and results go electronically directly to the chairs with the format being inefficient for immediate analysis. The council discussed the student evaluations model already in place at the Department of Educational and Interdisciplinary Studies, WIU. Members also had the opportunity to test the system in a mock course. The experience was very positive. To improve the response rate, the department’s secretary sends e-mail reminders to the students. There is no evidence of negative backlash and the response rates are comparable to evaluations conducted in face-to-face classes. CIT will approve its final recommendations at the forthcoming meeting on Sept. 3rd, 2014.

1. Communication with campus computing bodies:

The council receives regular briefings about UTAG meetings (Breanna McEwan), Instructional/Scholarly Alliance meetings (Jonathan Day, Breanna McEwan, Terry Smith), Marketing/External Alliance and Executive Committee meetings (Justin Ehrlich). Overall the IT Governance structure has been successfully launched, with mostly already existing proposals streamlined through the process for testing the structure. Some new proposals of a bigger scale have entered the process (e.g. replacing Zimbra (email, address book, calendar and briefcase), IronPort, Sympa, and personal network storage space (P: drive) with Google Apps for Education), but have not yet completed the feedback/editorial stage before final proposal package submission to the IT Governance Council.

**Recommendations**

The council recommends:

1. Continue the efforts for strong faculty involvement in the IT Governance process.
2. Provide a mechanism for assisting faculty in creating digital instructional materials which utilize best practices achieved with latest technology capabilities.
3. Implement the model for online course evaluations already developed and currently in use by the Department of Educational and Interdisciplinary Studies, WIU (after final approval by CIT, detailed recommendation report will be submitted to the Faculty Senate by the end of the first week in October, 2014).

**Agenda for the next academic year**

The council is organized and poised to meet the challenges of the 2014-15 year. For this period, the council will continue its efforts in: a) actively participating in the IT Governance process, b) communicating to the campus community information about all existing IT resources and gathering/encouraging new IT related ideas, c) reviewing technology policies affecting faculty, d) reviewing the course search database periodically, e) ensuring adequate technology support on campus, and f) continuing its liaison efforts with campus computing bodies.

**APPENDIX I**

**Council for Instructional Technology**

**Recommendations and Proposed Changes to the IT Governance Proposal and IT Strategic Plan Draft**

**September 4th, 2013**

1. **Recommendations and Proposed Changes to the Information Technology Governance Proposal :**
2. There is no entry point in the proposed governance structure for IT proposals that are driven by/would enable research activities. CIT recommends that research along with education be the responsibility of the Education Alliance. To better reflect its responsibilities, CIT recommends that this alliance be called Scholarly Alliance.
3. CIT fully supports the Faculty Senate Chair recommendation: “Assure that the faculty members in the Education” (Scholarly ) “Alliance are the majority of voting members. With that in mind, make the Registrar an ex-officio (non-voting).” Without this, it may be the case that there is no faculty representative on the Executive committee which CIT finds counterproductive to the governance process. The idea is the chair of the Education (Scholarly) Alliance to be a faculty member, who will then carry on as a member of the Executive Committee.
4. Add three faculty members to each of the Administration and Marketing/External Alliances. Thus, there will be an equal number of faculty and student representation on these alliances. This is needed because the Faculty, as well as students, are stakeholders in the processes which will be overseen by these alliances.
5. The faculty members in each alliance should come from the CIT, thus ensuring smooth communication with the Faculty Senate and the faculty body as a whole. CIT has 12 members, of which 5 can serve on the Education (Scholarly) Alliance, 3 on the Administration, and 3 on the Marketing/External Alliance.
6. CIT would like to see a mechanism in place which will ensure that the members of the alliances will have strong interest or knowledge of IT. In view of **item** **4** above, we need to work closely with the Faculty Senate to ensure that the members of the CIT have such interest/knowledge. However, for the rest of the Alliances members, a mechanism has to be established by another governing body. CIT would like to see that addressed in the revised governance proposal.
7. In the current governance proposal there is an imbalance between the faculty/administration representation, with practically no faculty representation at the level of decision makers. To partially remediate that and ensure proper communication in the decision making process CIT recommends a Faculty Senate designee serve on all three bodies: CIT, IT Executive Committee, and IT Governance Council.
8. In terms of proposal flow through the IT governance structure, CIT recommends to make the status of proposals and accompanying comments known to the campus community at each stage of discussion/approval, i.e. ensure a transparent process while proposals are in the pipeline.
9. “Tech Reps” are currently listed as Advisory members of the Education (Scholarly) Alliance. CIT notes that according to the current practice it is not clear in all cases who carries out the role of “Tech Reps” within the various colleges.
10. Overall, more clarification is needed as to the mechanism according to which members at all levels of the governance structure will be chosen.
11. While the current proposal allows for a student ex officio member of the IT Governance Council when discussions affect the student body, any such provision is lacking when discussions affect faculty (which practically would always be the case). Therefore, CIT recommends **item 6** above, or the inclusion of a similar mechanism for faculty representation at all levels of the decision making process.
12. **Recommendations and Proposed Changes to the Information Technology Strategic Plan 2013-2018 Draft:**
13. Action Item 2.1: ESS concerns need to be addressed as they are rolled into Utech. Similarly, University Libraries rely heavily on their support staff who reside in the Digital Commons. The University Libraries does not want to see this go away, unless the tech structure adds more support there.
14. Action Item 2.2 is too vague: the CIO should or should not report the President? Which one is actually proposed?
15. Action Item 2.3: CIT feels that paragraph two provides the context needed for paragraph one to make sense. Therefore, we recommend swapping the two paragraphs.
16. Action Item 2.4: CIT recognizes the importance of continued training but how is this going to be funded, when faculty just had all their professional development/travel funding swept. Both IT staff and faculty continued professional development and training are important. IT staff can be very well trained but if the front line users (faculty) aren't provided with training and innovation opportunities then only a few people will use any given technology (or will use that tech well).
17. Action Item 2.6: The University has been looking into this since 1994. What is in place now at the University Libraries is a vast improvement from the previous practices, as students have to release their print job, which cuts down on duplicate and accidental printing. It is worth implementing this across the whole university. Still, even at University Libraries, there is a lot of unnecessary printing, some of which can be left in .pdf format for on-screen reading. The option of limiting the amount of printed materials students can utilize should be considered, as well as increasing the technology student fee in order to cover the actual cost of printing.
18. Recommendation 4: Scholarly Enablement. “Scholarly” includes not only teaching/instruction, but also research activities which are a major faculty responsibility. Therefore, the wording should be changed from: “Western Illinois University should continue to develop and improve its technological resources that, when used by faculty in effective and innovative ways, have a direct impact on student scholarly achievement.” to

“Western Illinois University should continue to develop and improve its technological resources that, when used by faculty in effective and innovative ways, have a direct impact on **FACULTY AND** student scholarly achievement.”

1. Action Item 4.2: Significant percentage of faculty feels that D2L does not work as well as Blackboard. More than a steering committee is needed in order to address the state of and future initiatives for Western Online.
2. Action Items 4.3 & 4.4: Faculty also need dedicated computer classrooms with instructor stations. Currently many faculty do not have access to a classroom with computers in it that they can use all semester long, regardless of the fact that using specific software packages is part of the coursework. Faculty can use the library twice (instructor stations no whiteboard) or Morgan 102 (blackboard no instructor station) or Stipes 331 (no instruction station, tiny whiteboard) for limited times. This also forces the students to move around campus during their semester. In addition, faculty should have some input when the hardware is changed in these rooms. Morgan 102 was switched over to tiny netbooks and while they may be cheaper it just makes it that more difficult for students to view and interpret for example their SPSS (SAS, MINITAB, etc.) outputs.
3. Action Item 4.5: Add “**and research**” at the end of the first italicized paragraph in bold, so that the end of the sentence reads: “…***emerging*** ***technologies*** ***that have potential application in instruction and research.”***
4. Under Action Item 4.5: Instead of “sandbox”, provide more support for a technology research/resource center either university wide or for each college – model it off the current technology center in the College of Education and Human Services.
5. Under recommendation 4: CIT recommends adding a new **Action Item 4.8: Faculty Support for Development of Online Course Materials**. CAIT used to provide resources to set up new online courses, these are no longer available. The University needs to create replacement for this service. In addition, for already existing online courses, there should be support for the creation of original instructional content that goes beyond the basics. Without such support services, WIU would hardly be able to compete in the Online Education market.
6. Under Recommendation 4: CIT recommends adding a new **Action** **Item 4.9:** **Faculty Research**, in order to explicitly address faculty research IT needs, including hardware, software, and training needs.
7. Under Recommendation 5: CIT recommends adding a new **Action Item 5.6: Surplus IT Infrastructure Dedicated to Innovation in Teaching and Research**. For instance, provide the capabilities for online-only degrees including being able to complete the registration process without being physically present on campus. Another example would be the capability to create research/teaching virtual labs for disciplines like behavioral economics, computer science, psychology, etc.
8. There is a typo on page 16 in Action Item 5.1 "modern than the on in Horrabin". Should be "modern than the one in Horrabin".
9. Action Item 6.4. While CIT fundamentally agrees with the sentiment here (and this was a topic of debate in CIT two years ago), this seems more like a curriculum issue than an IT/administration issue and thus is under the purview of the faculty senate. CIT did collect data two years ago on faculty's perception on their students technical skills. Overall, students need grounding in basic information technology skills.
10. Action Item 7.2: At the end of the third paragraph (counting the italicized text in bold as paragraph 1) explicitly add “… **and research**” so that the last sentence reads

“Faculty members are beginning to request help in the development of mobile apps that they can use for instructional purposes **and research**.”

1. There is a typo in Action Item 7.3 on p. 21, line 2: “… currently on ongoing effort …”. Should be “currently an ongoing effort”.