**Council for Instructional Technology**

September 3rd, 2014

1:00 – 2:00 PM, ST 501

Minutes

Present: Chris Carpenter, Justin Ehrlich, Kimberly Hartweg, Fuyuan Liang, Charles Malone, George Mangalaraj, Bree McEwan, Abha Singh, Anna Valeva.

1:02 Meeting opened by Anna Valeva, chair

Everyone introduced themselves

1:05 Mandeep Singh, Faculty Senate chair, told the committee that the committee’s report was accepted by the Senate and that it is important for this committee to be judicious in our choices because the university is impoverished. Ideally, any changes in technology should come from the faculty in order to teach the students better. He suggested that the earlier we submit requests and ideas to the Senate, the better so as to not take them by surprise.

1:07 Anna announced that the minutes from the last meeting would be emailed out soon for approval.

1:08 Elections were called for UTAG representative. Charles Malone volunteered and was accepted.

1:09 Anna explained last year’s work. First, for online course evaluations, the EIS department’s model looks great. In those courses, a course module for the online evaluation was available. The department secretary received a list of students who had not yet completed it and emailed them reminders. The committee last year proposed that WIU adopt that model for all departments, perhaps with a banner on the homepage of Western Online to remind students to participate in online course evaluations. Anna noted that a similar model was used for faculty surveys so that with a little programming, it could be used for students. Anna asked the committee to email her any additional ideas to bring to the faculty senate. Anna noted that no numbers exist for response rate on existing courses. Numbers may be available soon.

1:11 Anna opened the floor for additional ideas. [crickets]

1:13 Anna moved on to discussion of setting the year’s agenda with an eye towards expanding the purpose of the committee.

1:14 Bruce Walters asked what kind of expansion she had in mind

1:15 Anna suggests that the committee also include scholarly uses of technology in addition to instructional. That may necessitate a name change.

1:16 Bree McEwan noted that if the committee discusses survey software, that has both a pedagogical and a research function so it would make sense for the committee to change their name. She suggested Council on Academic Technology as it would produce the acronym “CAT.”

1:17 Bruce volunteered to make a logo integrating the new committee name.

1:19 Anna said she would send the committee the current “charge” from the faculty senate in order to decide on expanded responsibilities for the committee.

1:20 Bree pointed out that the change in the charge would have to be approved by the faculty senate.

1:21 Anna recalled that the original charge of the committee was to examine the online course database and suggest improvements. She opened the floor to additional suggested changes to that database.

Charles reported that it is hard to find specific kinds of courses, e.g. global issues courses

Anna suggested that the committee members try the database and solicit feedback from colleagues.

Bruce introduced the topic of CITR not adequately promoting the technology they have available for faculty use. He mentioned that Roger Runquist of CITR has a set of Google Glasses. He suggested that the committee be a part of discussions about how to help CITR promote the available technology better.

Charles reported that CITR even has a 3-D printer and many committee members expressed surprise.

Bree explained that the Music department had used it to print mouthpieces for instruments but that most departments did not know it was available.

Justin Ehrlich suggested inviting Roger to a committee meeting to discuss available tech and how to promote it

George Mangalaraj expressed a desire for there to be a central location for all the tech where it could easily be examined by faculty.

Kimberly Hartweg complained that although google offers a lot of interesting technology, they do not support its use unless the students all get google accounts.

Bree stated that another committee was seriously considering switching to all google email accounts for all faculty, staff, and students as the Utech staff would prefer it. She noted that google will not be searching academic accounts to protect privacy.

Anna described difficulties with collaborating in real time on google drive.

Bruce noted that the Quad Cities campus has a lot of new technology as part of the expansion on the riverfront. He suggested that the committee have a QC representative to tell us about what they have.

Anna agreed that it would be ideal and suggested we look for volunteers.

1:26 Anna opened the floor to other suggestions for guests to address the committee.

Bruce suggested that a representative from Utech who is from the QC campus talk to the committee

Bruce suggested that it may be helpful to talk to someone who works at a different university how they have dealt with some of their technology needs.

Bree suggested that the provost office send a representative to tell us what their long-term vision for campus technology is

Justin suggested Kathy

Anna noted the potential need to be flexible in the meeting time to accommodate the schedules of these potential guests. But, the meeting time is fixed in general in order to facilitate faculty choosing which committees to volunteer for.

1:31 Anna opens the floor for additional suggestions. She notes that there used to be a service that would help create classroom materials but that it is gone.

Bruce suggests that it would be nice to collect some data to tell us what the current technology abilities of the students are.

Bree explained that 3 years ago, a survey was conducted that asked faculty to estimate the ability of their students to use technology in ways that were required for their classes. Despite concerns by the committee at the time, the faculty reported in the survey that the students were adequately able to use technology. The result was that the committee did not move forward with plans to propose a technology in the discipline class.

Several committee members discussed the difficulty of getting a good response rate. Proposals for surveying chairs, surveying students directly, or simply going to the chairs meeting were floated.

George asked about the CITR survey.

Bree said the previous survey had been attached to it. She noted that people are less likely to take that survey if they felt they have already taken it at a previous date.

Bree noted that it may simply seem as though the students were inept with technology due to a few salient examples but that the previous survey suggested that for the most part, the students’ tech skills are adequate.

Several committee members offered cases in which students’ technology skills were inadequate.

1:45 Anna asked about alliance reports

Justin reported that marketing was trying to fix searches and add capchas to protect the online directory from phishing schemes. He reported that students will now have to opt-in to be publically listed.

1:48 Bree reported that she is on the ITACK committee (website committee) and asked if there were any issues with the new website.

Several people complained that the new website seemed less functional on traditional computers

Bree explained that the university was trying to target students better as they are much more likely to use it from a mobile device. She also reported that the overall feedback was around 50%, 50% negative, which is better than the expected 20/80 positive/ negative split that is common for new websites.

The color scheme of the website was briefly discussed. The difficulty in sticking with school colors when readability might be more important was also mentioned.

George mentioned that Dan Romano, Director of uTech might be a good person to invite.

Bree suggested to invite Cristopher David, Assistant Director, QC Technology Support Services.

CODEC was briefly discussed as a means of contacting QC people

Anna concluded the meeting with a reminder that the next would be on October 1.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Chris Carpenter.