

**INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE
ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2007-2008**

I. Statement of Committee Functions and Charge

Faculty Policies and Procedures (amended 5 May 2008):

6.42. INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE.

A. MEMBERSHIP. The Information Technology Committee shall consist of the following members:

1. Eight faculty members, two from each faculty division, appointed for terms of four years.
2. Three academic staff members. No member of the Division of Information Technology staff may serve as a voting member of the committee.
3. Three students, at least one of whom shall be an undergraduate student and at least one a graduate student, to serve one-year terms.
4. Chief Information Officer, ex officio nonvoting.
5. One nonvoting member representing the director of the University General Library System, two nonvoting members representing the vice chancellor for administration, and two nonvoting members representing the provost. These members shall be appointed by the provost.

B. FUNCTIONS. The Information Technology Committee is the faculty advisory body for policy and planning for information technology throughout the university. In performing its functions, it shall consult with such groups and individuals as it feels may be able to provide valuable advice. It may request such reports on budgets, personnel policies, and other topics as are necessary for it to make informed judgments and recommendations. It shall establish such subcommittees as are necessary to carry out its functions.

1. Reviews and makes recommendations on strategic planning for the university's information technology resources.
2. Reviews the performance of information technology facilities and services in supporting and assisting scholarly activities.
3. Receives reports from and provides general direction to committees formed to address specific information technology issues.
4. Monitors technical developments.
5. Consults with and advises appropriate administrative officers on budget and resource allocation matters including charges and funding sources for information technology services.
6. Receives recommendations from departments, deans, and the Division of Information Technology regarding the establishment, abolition or merger of information technology services and facilities supported by university funds, and makes recommendations regarding these actions to the appropriate administrative officers.

II. Past Year's Activities

The Information Technology Committee (ITC) held nine monthly meetings between September 2007 and May 2008. Meeting agendas were published online at itc.wisc.edu and distributed to several campus email lists. Meeting minutes were posted in draft form at the same site within a week of each meeting and were finalized at the subsequent meeting. Issues monitored included:

A. Data Security—Computer viruses and spam receded as major issues for computer users due to technological advances in responding to their threat and nuisance. However, the ITC was informed of the need for heightened awareness due to phishing schemes, in which computer users are tempted to surrender personal data that could compromise the email system, and data breaches that release personal information.

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To counter the latter, the CIO invalidated 8,000 UW identification numbers based on social security numbers. This action, authorized by the ITC on 20 April 2007, resulted in 3,000 new identification numbers being authorized; the remaining 5,000 did not request new ID numbers.

B. RIAA and Copyright—The CIO reported to the ITC on a regular basis the activities of the Recording Industry Association of America and their lawsuits against individual UW students living in student housing. Also monitored was proposed language to the Higher Education Act that would have required university networks to have peer-to-peer filters intended to prevent such file sharing; the ITC was informed that the software available was not scalable to a system the size of the UW-Madison network and that the potential adverse consequences for research and education applications presented a very high risk scenario. As an alternative, the UW has engaged in campaigns to educate students about copyrights and copyright infringement.

C. Open Software—The ITC considered the value of open source software and the effect of the license restrictions posed by commercial software vendors to open courseware. After discussion expressing concern that open source software might not be properly represented in purchase processes in which vendors respond to Requests for Purchase, the CIO produced, and the ITC endorsed, a policy whereby ‘for every procurement we undertake, we must ensure that we conduct appropriate due diligence by evaluating the open source options side-by-side with vendor-offered solutions.’

D. IT Service—In two instances of breakdown in service during the 2007-2008 school year—the Learn@UW course management software at the beginning of the 2007 fall semester and the WiscMail system during the spring semester—the ITC requested the presence of the heads of Academic Technology and WiscMail, respectively, to learn of the nature of the failure, lessons learned, and remedial steps to avoid recurrence. The Learn@UW breakdown was application-related to load at start of semester. The WiscMail outage was due to a failed effort to upgrade the system followed by an unexpected difficulty in recovering the previous state. Both heads expressed regrets at disappointing their clients and committed themselves and their units to trying to avoid repeat situations.

E. Mobile Devices—Student ITC representatives enthusiastically described emerging trends in mobile devices, available and widely in use among students. However, DoIT representatives reported that the number of UW-Madison employees with state-owned cell phones, devices, and services dropped from 1,700 to 900, with many handing in the devices to avoid requirements to separate and itemize personal use. Further, a new DOA contract specified a single provider and service which did not meet all stipulated UW needs; the cost of seeking individual contract waivers was estimated at \$30-40,000 annually. The CIO committed to working with the state Department of Administration and UW System Administration to lessen the burden of the waiver process and to ensure that UW-Madison faculty and staff have access to the mobile devices and services they need.

F. Course Management Systems—The ITC was briefed on campus and system usage of Learn@UW, a UW-branded application licensed from Desire2Learn (D2L). A ‘wish list’ of features requested by instructors to be presented to D2L was reviewed by the ITC, and additions to the list were discussed. The open source course management system Moodle was demonstrated to the ITC by members of ComETS, with emphasis on features—particularly related to language and math support, but also bolt-on modules for wikis and blogs—that were found to be compelling by instructors and academic technology units in several UW colleges and schools. Further, Moodle has been an important presence in the Provost’s Technology Enhanced Learning (TEL) internal grant program, appearing in the kernel of several school/college projects.

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At the request of the ITC, those college/school academic technology units supporting Moodle were charged with looking into ‘how Moodle fits into the portfolio of opportunities’ at Madison in addition to D2L/Learn@UW. In response, and with some organizational assistance and support from the CIO, the Moodle special interest group formed a federation of distributed IT groups, calling itself the Moodle Council. In March 2007, the largest CMS vendor, Blackboard, won an injunction in a patent infringement suit against its largest commercial rival, D2L, which threatened to force the UW to change CMS vendors. The Moodle Council was presented with a challenge by the ITC and the CIO to devise an emergency contingency plan for deployment of Moodle to cover such a contingency. That work was ongoing over the summer of 2008 and resulted in a campus-wide plan of action if D2L were to suddenly disappear. A revised D2L version designed to work around the patent infringement was installed during the summer of 2008 and legal problems seem to be on hold.

G. Classrooms of the Future—At the request of the ITC, DoIT Academic Technology and Facilities Planning and Management examined IT needs for 21st Century classrooms by presenting leading edge spaces on campus and at other institutions. The most innovative introduction of classroom technology appears when space is being built or renovated and when college or instructional IT staff are pushing the process. Even so, the technology specified at the beginning of a multi-year planning and building project may not be appropriate at the time of delivery. General assignment classrooms seem to be largely brought up to a technology standard that was determined years ago and not subsequently revised upwards; issues of adequate technical support for innovative technologies in such rooms with existing staff numbers were apparent. Difficulties exist in disseminating rather straightforward technologies, such as ‘clickers’ (audience response systems), because of insufficient on-the-ground support by either central or decentralized academic technology staff, presenting instructors with challenges to learn whom to work with to get the teaching space set up and working well, particularly in general assignment classrooms. Even though a single class may not need the same set of resources at different meetings, it is difficult to accommodate shifting needs through the span of a semester.

H. IT Governance—In 2007-2008, the role of the chief information officer changed from that of largely director of DoIT, the central IT service provider, to that of a campus IT officer with responsibilities to the schools and colleges and the distributed IT found therein. MTAG, the Madison Technical Advisory Group, which previously consisted of self-selected advisors to the CIO, will now consist of dean/director-appointed representatives of schools, colleges and major administrative units. The ITC, whose membership comprises faculty, academic staff, students, and non-voting members appointed by the provost, has previously expanded the representation of the distributed IT staff by inviting formal representation of the self-assembled groups: CTIG (Campus Technical Issues Group), ComETS (Community of Educational Technology Support), and new this year, NAG (Network Advisory Group). Members of these groups work closely with individual campus instructors and researchers and bring additional expertise in instruction and research from the decentralized IT groups to the ITC deliberations and have thereby assisted in the governance and advisory functions of the ITC. The student representatives were very engaged in the business of the ITC and made a positive contribution.

III. Current Issues or Concerns

Current issues include:

1. Strategic/Master IT plan centered on IT service for teaching, learning, research and service
2. Continued security and phishing
3. Consequences of budget reductions on teaching and research activities

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IV. Summary/Recommendations

The CIO's office has been conducting periodic policy and procedure listening sessions organized around specific themes. Results of these meetings are collated and posted. Policies that are proposed are vetted by the ITC as part of the formal procedure. Faculty and staff are urged to participate in policy forums that match their interests and to convey any issues to individual ITC members or to the ITC chair.

V. Committee Membership

Voting

Faculty

Phillip Barak (chair), Soil Science
Susan Bernstein, English
Katrina Forest, Bacteriology
Richard Halverson, Educational Leadership and
Policy Analysis
Mathew Jones, Physiology
Martin Nystrand, English
Roberta Riportella, Human Ecology
Chris Rutland, Mechanical Engineering

Academic Staff

Eric Alborn, Business
Sandra Paske, General Library System
Brenda Spychalla, Center for Instructional
Materials and Computing

Students

Dan Cornelius, Law and Land Resources
Steven Eisenhauer, Business
Erik Paulson, Computer Sciences
Stephen Pulec, Computer Sciences

Non-voting

Ex Officio

Ron Kraemer, CIO and Vice Provost for IT

Libraries

Ken Frazier, General Library System

Provost Appointments

Joanne Berg, Enrollment Management/Registrar
Clare Huhn, Office of the Provost
Don Miner, Business Services
Bill Richner, Budget Planning and Analysis

Liaisons

Lisa Jansen, L&S Learning Support Services, ComETS
Rob Kohlhepp, Computer-Aided Engineering, CTIG
Janet Newlands, Bacteriology, NAG
Mike Pitterle, Pharmacy, ComETS

List of abbreviations

CIO	Chief Information Officer
CMS	Course Management System
ComETS	Community of Educational Technology Support
CTIG	Campus Technical Issues Group
D2L	Desire2Learn
DoIT	Division of Information Technology
IT	Information Technology
ITC	Information Technology Committee
NAG	Network Advisory Group
RIAA	Recording Industry Association of America
TEL	Technology Enhanced Learning