Faculty Information Technology Advisory Committee
FITAC Annual Report
March 17, 2004

James Noblitt (Chair)

During its fifth year as a committee of the Faculty Council, FITAC generally met twice a month during the fall and spring semesters to study the educational uses of Information and Communication Technology (IT) on this campus. (See FITAC Charge and Membership, attached.) As reported last year, FITAC activities continue to be constrained by 1) lack of funding for innovation grants to encourage intelligent educational uses of IT, and 2) the continuing absence of a permanent Vice Chancellor for Information Technology.

I. FITAC Activities: Old Business

1. *FITAC Resolution to the Faculty Council, Spring 2002*

·   a) The 2002 Resolution called upon the Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost to "establish an Information Technology Strategic Planning Council with substantial faculty representation which will, in collaboration with Faculty Council, develop a strategic plan for information and communication technology covering policy, infrastructure, application, adoption, and fund-raising priorities." This initiative was designed to assist in finding funds "to continue the successful faculty summer workshops and grants that promote excellence in teaching and learning through innovative applications of information technology."

    Status: Action on this plan was delayed awaiting the appointment of a new Vice Chancellor for IT. The initiative remains in suspension.

·   b) The Academic Plan adopted July 2003 notes that "[c]ampuses continue to expand high-tech infrastructure to support sophisticated research, manage essential student and faculty support functions, and streamline business operations." The Plan points to the implication that high-quality technological resources are "an important component of Carolina's ability to offer an excellent academic setting and to extend the reach of its resources beyond the physical walls of campus."

    Status: FITAC representatives, reacting to an earlier draft of the Plan, communicated some additional implications:
·   *1) Planning at the cabinet level will be needed to coordinate resource allocation for academic and technological initiatives.*
·   *2) Distributed learning initiatives can be effective for both on- and off-campus learning and can be applied to both professional and general education.*
·   *3) The role of our libraries in the distributed learning environment is critical and deeply affected by the economics of publications in digital form.*

2. **UNC Digital Library Services**
   One result of the UNC/IBM Curricular Innovation Grants in 1999 was a FITAC-funded planning grant for a Digital Library Services project, whereby departmental media databases (images, audio, video, etc.) could be shared across disciplines and institutions. Now called the Electronic Media Cooperative, EMC is a joint project of the College of Arts and Sciences and ITS. The EMC serves as a repository for interdisciplinary digital media collections that would not otherwise be accessible to most UNC faculty, staff and students. It is used for both instructional and research purposes by faculty, staff and students.

   Status: The Electronic Media Cooperative (EMC) will soon be announced as a campus-wide faculty resource. A comprehensive rights management component is in place to encourage fair use of digital resources not in the public domain. The EMC also provides a web-based management system for organizing, cataloging and presenting media files.

3. **TLT Collaborative**
   The University of North Carolina Teaching and Learning with Technology Collaborative (TLTC) provides vision and shared resources in support of TLT programs and initiatives on the sixteen UNC campuses. The TLTC actively explores collaborative opportunities and assists in identifying and implementing best practices, common services and shared resources. (See ATN presentation at http://www.unctlt.org/tlt/news/news.cfm)

   Status: FITAC members continue to participate in TLTC efforts to facilitate professional development. This year staff members from OASIS and CIT attended a workshop at the Office of the President to study the Pew Foundation's approach for using IT in enhancing large enrollment courses.

II. FITAC Activities 2003-2004

The committee focused this year on information exchange concerning the current educational uses of IT at UNC. Each meeting of the committee has featured an informational presentation by faculty or staff. (For a detailed report on these activities, see meeting minutes at www.unc.edu/fitac.) The summary is divided into two parts to emphasize FITAC's interest in integrating academic and IT concerns.

1. **Instructional Use of IT by Departments**

   The following list of activities by various disciplines or programs is intended to be illustrative of individual initiatives for the use of IT for teaching and learning. The list is a sample and is not intended to be exhaustive. (Note that four out of five of these projects received innovation grant funding administered by FITAC.)
   - **Romance Languages** (Jim Noblitt): *First-Year Seminar: The Art & Science of Language.* A forum for submitting papers supported by webliography demonstrates quality of information in online vs. print publications.
   Student impact: Student writing is improved by peer review.

- **Music** (Jocelyn Neal): *History of Country Music Course.*
Integrated learning environment for lecture and papers, shared resources with colleagues.
Student impact: Combination in lecture of sound, image, and text. Students have access to sounds files for better familiarity with music.
- **Math** (Sue Goodman): *Math 10: Algebra*
Online materials demonstrate visual representations resulting from formulas.
Student impact: Learners spend more time on task exploring possibilites of mathematical expression..
· **- African and Afro-American Studies** (Tim McMillan): *Introduction to African-American Studies.* Topics are supported by online lessons, structured so that students can link to document sources such as the *Southern Oral History Project* and participate in online discussions.
Student impact: More students can be introduced to the use of primary document sources.
- Slavic Languages (Laura Janda): *Linguistics, Czech Language Course*
[Scheduled for presentation in April. Dr. Janda will report on her NSF grant based on her work.]
Student impact: Students have access to online samples of authentic samples of speech.

2. **IT Infrastructure and Administrative Issues**

- **Search for new VC for Computing (CIO).** FITAC members Anderson, Noblitt, and Peterson served on the search committee for a new CIO. As of this writing, we understand that no agreement on hiring has been reached and that the Chancellor will reopen the search.
- **Security policies for IT.** Jeanne Smythe (ITS) presented a draft of the new Information Security Policy and Standards for review and comment.
- **Portal Project.** Lori Casile (ITS) briefed the committee and sought input on features for a UNC Portal for students, faculty, and staff. Members recommended online access to instructional media and online submission of grades.
- **Instructional Support.** Bob Henshaw (CIT) reviewed campus services and sought input for support in the absence of innovation grants and training workshops, recently cancelled. Currently, selected instructional projects are supported as resources permit.
- **IT and New Curriculum**. Judith Wegner (Faculty Chair) visited to discuss issues that FITAC may wish to address, such as online advising and faculty incentives for the uses of IT in support of the new curriculum.
- **Economic Crisis for Library Subscriptions to Journals**. Wallace McLendon (Health Affairs Library) discussed practices in pricing for online journals, indicating problems introduced by commercial publishers (e.g., Elsevier). Diane Strauss (Academic Affairs Library) pointed out the impact of price increases by Elsevier.
- Software Secure. Greg Robinson (OASIS) demonstrated software that allows instructors to administer exams on student laptops by locking down functions such as personal files or outside web sources. This provides a secure environment for test-taking and prevents cheating.
- **Classroom Design.** Scott Adams (Classroom Design Committee) visited to update the committee on plans and procedures for making renovated classrooms capable of support for computer multimedia projection. Coordination across the campus raises communications issues.

- **Spam and Virus Control.** Judd Knott and Chris Colomb outlined measures adopted by ITS to block unwanted information from the Internet. Procedures available to the campus community to control spam and virus problems are online at http://www.unc.edu/atn/fitac/03-03-2004.htm.

III. FITAC Recommendations for Faculty Council

1. **Academic Advisory Committee for Vice Chancellor for IT**
   As reported last year, the committee supports faculty representation for IT resource allocation. We feel that the governance structure relating the Academic Plan to the IT infrastructure is an important priority for review by the (eventual) new CIO. This University has a fine and enviable IT infrastructure; its potential for effective academic use must not be underutilized.

   FITAC recommends that the agenda of the Academic Advisory Committee include 1) seeking funding support for innovation, 2) making recommendations for the integration of IT infrastructure with educational initiatives such as the new curriculum, and 3) academic reward for research and teaching that makes intelligent use of digital resources.

2. **A Public Hearing on Electronic Publishing, Fall 2004**
   Scholars have a vested interest in the creation, storage, and dissemination of knowledge. The role of the digital medium in these areas of scholarship needs to be better understood. Publishing practices have begun to exert economic pressures that threaten the academy's traditional way of doing business. (See Appendix A for an amplified discussion.) FITAC supports the initiatives undertaken on this campus by the Provost and the Library Administrative Board and welcome a public discussion of the issues.

   FITAC recommends Faculty Council sponsor a panel discussion to bring together expertise to consider the academic, legal, economic, and technological implications for scholarship at this university. We assume that the discussion would involve issues as diverse as 1) copyright and fair use law, 2) the creation and use of institutional digital repositories for scholarly research, and 3) the implications of new publishing models for promotion and tenure.

Charge to the Committee:

" 4-26. Faculty Information Technology Advisory Committee. The chair of the faculty appoints the committee. It shall consist of (i) faculty members, who shall constitute a majority of the members; and (ii) one or more students, serving one-year renewable terms. The committee represents to the chancellor and the University community the concerns of faculty and others with regard to information technology. The committee's functions include:

1. considering issues pertaining to the use of information technology in teaching and learning, research, and other professional activities in the University; and
2. advising University officers and offices of administration on faculty needs and interests relating to information technology."

Term Members

Name	Department	Term Ending
Anderson, Daniel Berger, Robert Bollenbacher, Skip Kowlowitz, Vicki McLendon, Wallace Moody, Aaron Noblitt, Jim (Chair) Smith, John Strauss, Diane	English Medical Informatics Biology School of Nursing Health Sciences Library Geography Romance Languages Computer Science Academic Affairs Library	Spring 2004
Janda, Laura Stewart, John Turner, Craig	Slavic Languages Economics Dramatic Art	Spring 2005
Karen Blansfield Sue Goodman Tim McMillan Jocelyn Neal Jim Porto	Dramatic Art Mathematics African and Afro-American Studies Music School of Public Health	Spring 2006
Judith Wegener	Faculty Council	Ex Officio

Staff Members

Carl, Linda Casile, Lori Green, Charles Evans, Libby	Office of the Provost Information Technology Services Office Arts & Sciences	lcarl@email.unc.edu lori_casile@unc.edu uevans@email.unc.edu bhenshaw@unc.edu

Henshaw, Bob Loewenthal, Norm Peed-Neal, Iola Peterson, Rick Thomas, Kathy	Info. Serv. Admin. Information Service Center for Instructional Technology Continuing Education Center for Teaching & Learning Office Arts & Sciences Info. Serv. Center for Instructional Technology	norm_loewenthal@unc.edu iola@email.unc.edu rick_peterson@unc.edu kdt@email.unc.edu

Appendix A

27 January 2004

Memorandum

To: Judith Wegner, Faculty Chair

From: James Noblitt, FITAC Chair

Re: Scholarly publishing

1. **Background**
   Thanks for your email of 12 January 2004 with information addressed to the Faculty Council concerning a recent decision by the Triangle Research Libraries Network (TRLN) to discontinue the consortial agreement that provided access to electronic journals by Elsevier Science. Our committee had been briefed earlier by Wallace McLendon on the financial and ethical implications of universities having to "buy back" rights to their published research at prohibitive cost. (See our website at www.unc.edu/fitac for his report as part of the 17 November 2003 FITAC meeting.) Our discussion during the FITAC meeting of January 21 was further informed by a report from Diane Strauss on the most recent developments in cost containment undertaken by our libraries. Over 100 titles have been cancelled. We understand that the Library Administrative Board subscribes to the position taken by the Academic Affairs Library in cost containment.

2. **Issues**
   As you are well aware, the Health Sciences and Academic Affairs libraries must now make individual arrangements with publishers like Reed Elsevier to purchase serials that departments consider essential to research and publication. We understand that UNC spends upwards of $1.5m annually. A single science journal subscription may cost as much as $50k. The broader implications for universities are serious:
   - Libraries are held hostage by decisions made by commercial interests. The practice of "full-line forcing" is exploitive of the academic community and puts into question the good faith of publishers.
   - Faculty are now faced with deciding which journal holdings are "essential" rather than simply "desirable."
   - The impact is not just on sciences and health sciences. Spiraling costs for information services has indirect impact on the humanities because of diminishing resources for books, serials, etc. in traditional format.
   - No alternative model to "boycotting" Reed Elsevier has been proposed for faculty consideration.

3. **Institutional Repositories**
   A dialogue between faculty and administration on two critical issues occasioned by recent developments in scholarly publishing would be welcome.
   - o We need to examine the cost and benefits of *institutional repositories*. Examples include our own *ibiblio* project [http://www.ibiblio.org/], as well as MIT's *DSpace* [http://libraries.mit.edu/dspace-mit/mit/mit-dspace.html] or Cornell's website devoted to "Issues in Scholarly Communication" [http://www.library.cornell.edu/scholarlycomm/]. Local columnist Paul Gilster has highlighted the crisis ["How to get the data out," *Raleigh News and Observer*, 14 January 2004] by pointing to an experiment in open publishing, called the Public Library of Science (PloS) [http://www.publiclibraryofscience.org/] in which authors retain copyright and articles are freely exchanged for public use. As Gilster writes: "And universities don't get charged a second time for work they paid for in the first place, usually with taxpayer support."
   - o We need to examine, collectively, the culture that requires publication in *prestige journals* for academic survival. These journals provide the "value-add" that determines the economics of scholarly publishing. The original motive behind scholarly print culture was obviously quality control through peer review. (See, for example, Adrian Johns, *The Nature of the Book,* U Chicago Press: Chicago, 1998.) The question before us now is whether or not the force of economic events requires changes in the form of the medium. Can scholarship in digital form deliver the quality of peer review as does print? The implications of these issues will have direct impact at the departmental level concerning evaluation for promotion and tenure. Tenure review committees rightfully serve as guardians of the gate for upholding the standards of their discipline. What role will open-access models play in that process?

4. **Action**
   FITAC members wish to follow closely the on-campus debate and contribute as individual background and training may be appropriate. We note with interest an article in the 23 January 2004 *Chronicle of Higher Education* that reports faculty action against Elsevier in the University of California system. The 30 January issue of *CHE* headlines "The Promise and Peril of 'Open Access'," stressing what it terms "The Uncertain Future of the Past."

   We feel that this committee cannot be a prime motor in getting the issue before the Carolina community; the initiative is more properly the prerogative of the Faculty Council. However, we support initiatives already undertaken by the Provost as our chief academic officer, are interested in participating in a forum to air the matter, should such an event be organized. In any case, we plan to offer a white paper on the issues, together with a resource list, as part of this year's final report to the Faculty Council. We invite your comment and advice.