

Faculty Information Technology Advisory Committee (FITAC)

FITAC Annual Report February 12, 2012

Anselmo Lastra, Chair (lastra@unc.edu)
Timothy Carey, Laurie Cochenour, Laurie Maffly-Kipp, Carlton Moore,
James Porto, Marc Serre, David Thissen, Barbara Wildemuth
Attending from ITS: Larry Conrad and Ramon Padilla

FITAC was active from about 2000 to 2006, but had been dormant since approximately 2007. In 2011, Larry Conrad had been communicating with Jan Boxill to try to get faculty opinion on information technology matters. Therefore, Jan decided to reconstitute the committee. The charge of the committee (unchanged) is the following.

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.

The new committee has met three times. At the first meeting, we discussed ways in which the faculty could comment on the priority of a variety of projects presented by Larry Conrad. Did the committee actually represent faculty opinion? No one believed this, and we found it difficult to come up with good ways to open communication with the general faculty. We decided to give this problem some thought and come back to it at a later meeting.

Our second meeting was devoted to the issue of grades on unencrypted mobile devices. Many faculty members are confused about the rules, and the FERPA law is very broad. Is it OK to have quiz grades on a laptop? How about final course grades? To address this, we invited Stan Waddell, the university's information security officer, to meet with FITAC.

The issue is not clear and the answer really depends on how much information is on the portable device. After discussion, Stan Waddell volunteered to draft a document to send to the faculty, and FITAC will serve to give him feedback. The consensus was that a single page document would be best. FITAC members have received and commented on one draft.

At our third meeting we returned to the problem of communicating with the faculty and soliciting opinion. We decided to bring the FITAC website up to date, *add a comment form*, and to circulate a small electronic survey to the faculty. The problem with surveys is that we are asked to fill out many, and some are very time consuming. So the committee decided to make it short, approximately three focused questions, and also use the survey as a way to publicize the FITAC and ways to get in touch with us.

We also discussed possible agenda items for future meetings (in addition to any that we might collect from the faculty). Suggested items are the following.

- Re-imagining the CCI (should devices besides laptops be included?),
- What should the university do about cloud computing?
- What should the university do about mobile environments?

The FITAC web page is

<http://faccoun.unc.edu/committees-2/appointed-committees/faculty-information-technology-advisory-committee/>

or the shortcut

<http://go.unc.edu/fitac>

You can also use the following QR code.

