

**Faculty Information Technology Advisory Committee (FITAC)**  
**(Appointed Committee)**  
**Annual Report**  
**April 28, 2000**

Members: Bill Balthrop, Chair (2002); Terms Ending in 2000: Julie Collins (Kenan Flagler School of Business), Sheila Englehardt (School of Nursing), Steve Leonard (Department of Political Science), Joanne Marshall (School of Information and Library Science), James Noblitt (Department of Romance Languages), Steve Weiss (Department of Computer Science); Terms Ending in 2001: Daniel Anderson (Department of English), Skip Bollenbacher (Department of Biology), Marjorie DeWert (School of Education), Howard Reisner (School of Medicine), Diane Strauss (Davis Library); Terms Ending in 2002: Bob Adler (Kenan Flagler School of Business), Anita Farel (Maternal and Child Health), Ed Neal (Center for Teaching and Learning), Richard Whisnant (Institute of Government).

Report prepared by: Bill Balthrop (Chair)

During its first year as a committee of the Faculty Council, FITAC continued to build on its previous activities and to undertake a major initiative involving broad participation by the University community. The Committee met twice a month during the fall and spring semesters addressing a variety of issues and projects and will continue its work throughout the summer months. A summary of activities follows.

*1. Working Statement on Strategic Vision and Direction for Information Technology at UNC-CH (see Interim Report to the Faculty Council, January 21, 2000)*

Deliberations and work on specific projects during the fall semester led FITAC to become particularly concerned about clear strategic directions for addressing issues of faculty reward, professional development, scholarship, curricular and programmatic matters, and assuring appropriate faculty voice in the development of IT policy. The University has been aggressive in establishing an Information Technology Services (ITS) strategic plan for infrastructure and conceiving the Carolina Computer initiative (CCI). By contrast, the university has not articulated a clear vision and well-conceived institutional strategic plan that will make the appropriate use of our rapidly expanding infrastructure and even help direct future infrastructure design.

The *Interim Report* outlined the main issues and a procedure for creating a working statement of such direction and vision. During the spring semester, FITAC held open meetings with faculty, staff, and students and collaborated with other University committees (particularly the Distance Education Steering Committee and the Copyright Committee) and administrators (particularly the Office of the Provost and the Vice Chancellor for Information Technology Services). As the semester progressed, it became clear that a meaningful working statement could not be developed by the end of this academic year. FITAC will continue working with a wide range of constituencies throughout the summer and will issue a final report to the Faculty Council on this initiative in fall 2000.

## 2. *Continuing Activities*

### A. Assessment Subcommittee:

This subcommittee's primary activity is to assess the impact of new technologies on student learning and on the overall teaching, research, and public service missions of the University. Surveys, developed in collaboration with the Office of Institutional Research, were distributed to incoming first-year students (approximately 3,000 were returned). Additionally, a survey of faculty use of IT is in progress. Assessment will continue over a four-to-five year period to measure changes in student skill level, faculty utilization, and impact on the University's missions. FITAC and the Center for Instructional Technology will also serve as a clearinghouse for distributing research to other institutions and for coordinating varied assessment activities on the UNC-CH campus.

### B. Joint Project between Operations Research and IBM:

Under the contract with IBM for CCI, funds were allocated for research projects addressing new technology. The project established between Operations Research at UNC-CH and IBM involves faculty and graduate students working with IBM to improve their business processes by examining efficiency of process and the quality of product. This is a two-year project and constitutes the first endeavor to see how collaborative projects can function and serve both parties. The second part of this effort involves Operations Research working with ITS on the design of the CCI warranty service unit.

This endeavor is part of a broader exploration of joint research projects between IBM and UNC. *FITAC recognizes the importance of openness in all dealings with IBM and in assuring that opportunities are available to all members of the University community.*

### C. Faculty Sabbatical Program:

Another component of the CCI agreement involved a sabbatical for a UNC faculty member at IBM. This year, that faculty member is from Operations Research and begins the sabbatical period this fall. FITAC will begin work soon to announce, publicize, and select next year's sabbatical recipient.

### D. Student Internship Program:

A student internship program was also part of the IBM relationship. Last summer, IBM had approximately ten student internships from across the University participating. The program was handled through Career Services and will continue for the next three years. Both students and IBM report very satisfactory experiences.

### E. Subcommittee on Professional Development and Tools:

Last year, FITAC coordinated establishment of the "Technology in Context Consortium." This Consortium was created to include as many service organizations and providers for

new technology across campus as possible. This resulted in a website (COMPASS; [www.unc.edu/faculty/tic](http://www.unc.edu/faculty/tic)) that identifies providers, access, and services. This website is continually updated and is designed to provide "one-stop shopping" for the University community. The Consortium has resulted in greater collaboration and less duplication among service providers. FITAC will continue to review this effort and provide feedback and direction for a more comprehensive strategy to facilitate professional development.

#### F. IBM Curricular Innovation Grants:

Support was also provided through the CCI contract of \$250,000 for four years to support curricular innovation using new technology. FITAC assumed responsibility for establishing the guidelines, criteria for evaluation, and announcement of proposals. This year, grants concentrated on integrating IT into courses with substantial numbers of first-year students: 53 faculty instructional development grants were awarded out of 67 applications; 39 graduate student instructional development grants were awarded out of 60 applications; and 28 peer consultant grants were awarded for faculty and graduate students. Of the grants awarded, 34% went to faculty/teaching fellows with little or no previous experience using instructional technology. Approximately 9500 first-year student seats will be included in these courses. All those receiving grants will participate in a comprehensive assessment of IT in the learning and teaching process.

#### G. Tech Expo

FITAC collaborated with various units of ITS (particularly the Center for Instructional Technology) to host the second Tech Expo earlier this spring. Demonstrations of best practices by UNC faculty and graduate students, displays by vendors, and panels on Instructional Technology covered a wide-range of activities. Attendance and response both indicated a very positive response to the Expo. FITAC hosted a lounge to discuss IT issues with faculty and other constituencies.

#### 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."