

Faculty Information Technology Advisory Committee
(Appointed Committee)

Charge

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
Angel, Bonnie	School of Nursing	Spring 2003
Assani, Idris	Mathematics	
Lee, James	Student Government	
Metzguer, Karen	School of Medicine	
Neal, Jocelyn	Music	
Anderson, Daniel	English	Spring 2004
Berger, Robert	Medical Informatics	
Bollenbacher, Skip	Biology	
Kowlowitz, Vicki	School of Nursing	
McLendon, Wallace	Health Sciences Library	
Moody, Aaron	Dept of Geography	
Noblitt, Jim (Chair)	Romance Languages	

Redman, Richard	School of Nursing	
Smith, John	Computer Science	
Strauss, Diane	Davis Library	
Janda, Laura	Slavic Languages	
Newby, Greg	SILS	Spring
Stewart, John	Economics	2005
Turner, Craig	Dramatic Art	
Englehardt, Sheila	School of Nursing	Ex Officio
Estroff, Sue	Faculty Council	

Staff Members

Carl, Linda	Office of the Provost	lcarl@email.unc.edu
Casile, Lori	Information Technology Services	lori_casile@unc.edu
Evans, Libby	Admin. Information Service	uevans@email.unc.edu
Henshaw, Bob	Center for Instructional Technology	bhenshaw@unc.edu
Loewenthal, Norm	Continuing Education	norm_loewenthal@unc.edu
Peed-Neal, Iola	Center for Teaching & Learning	iola@email.unc.edu
Peterson, Rick	Office Arts & Sciences Info. Serv.	rick_peterson@unc.edu
Thomas, Kathy	Center for Instructional Technology	kdt@email.unc.edu

FITAC Annual Report

March 28, 2003

James Noblitt (Chair)

During its fourth year as a committee of the Faculty Council, FITAC activities were greatly influenced by 1) University-wide funding cuts and 2) the departure in 2002 of the Vice Chancellor for Information Technology. The Committee generally met twice a month during the fall and spring semesters to address a variety of issues and projects related to the educational uses of Information and Communication Technology (IT) on this campus.

I. Continuing Activities

1. FITAC Resolution to the Faculty Council, Spring 2002

- a. The first part of the Resolution called for the Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost to "revise, or create, University statement(s) regarding teaching such that the University promotes both excellence and innovation in teaching, which may include the use of information and communication technology." A committee was formed, comprised of the Chair of FITAC, Chair of the Faculty Council, and President of the Academy of Distinguished Teaching Scholars, with the charge of submitting a draft statement to the Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost.

Status: The draft statement, guided by recommendations from the ADTS, Center for Teaching and Learning, and Center for Instructional Technology, is attached as Appendix A.

- b. The second part of the Resolution calls 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."

Status: Action on this plan has been delayed awaiting the appointment of a new Vice Chancellor for IT.

- c. The final portion of the Resolution calls upon the Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost, "in consultation with the Information Technology Strategic Planning Council and FITAC, to continue the successful faculty summer workshops and grants that promote excellence in teaching and learning through innovative applications of information technology."

Status: FITAC assumed responsibility for establishing the guidelines, criteria for evaluation, and announcement of proposals to support curricular innovation using new technology. Announcements of winners of the competition were made in late March 2002 under what was to have been the final year of grants under the initial support from IBM. The budget crisis of 2002 required the Provost to rescind these grants. FITAC wrote the Provost (Fall 2002) inquiring whether special funds could be located to continue the program, fearing momentum for the program would be lost, including mechanisms for proposal review and program maintenance. No funds were located, but the issue is mentioned as a concern in the current draft of the Academic Plan.

2. KnowledgeFoundary (formerly KnowledgeWorks)

The publication of "e-books" to develop materials for undergraduate education received unanimous endorsement from FITAC in December of 2000.

Status: Initiative for the project has shifted from FITAC to the Vice Chancellor for IT, and Professor Bollenbacher (Department of Biology) has been appointed as Director.

3. Support for a Laptop Option under The Carolina Computing Initiative (CCI)

FITAC explored the desirability of including the option for faculty of selecting between a desktop and laptop as the replacement cycle for CCI machines proceeds. The option is designed to allow the use of laptops for in-class instruction.

Status: Provost Shelton responded supportively, but indicated that any decision on the issue would have to be addressed within the constraints of the University's overall fiscal situation.

4. UNC Digital Library Services

During the first year of the UNC/IBM Curricular Innovation Grants in 1999, FITAC funded a planning grant for a digital library project. This decision was based on the belief the University needed to begin shifting departmental media (images, audio, video, etc.) databases toward a common infrastructure that would facilitate resource sharing across disciplines and institutions. More than twenty courses in six departments are piloting first-generation digital library, and at least fifteen departmental collections will be placed in the new digital library system by the end of this summer.

Status: FITAC will continue to play an advisory role for this project until an alternative governance structure is created. Additional information on the project is available online at: <http://www.unc.edu/projects/diglib/>

5. Technology in Context Consortium:

FITAC continued to coordinate 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) that identifies providers, access, and services. This website is continually updated and is designed to provide "one-stop shopping" for the University community. 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. The TLTC recently completed a Strategic Plan and an Operating Plan for 2002-2005. (See

<http://www.unctl.org/tlt/news/news.cfm>)

Status: FITAC will continue to review this effort and provide feedback and direction for a more comprehensive strategy to facilitate professional development.

II. New Initiatives

The committee has focused this year on a better understanding of the current educational uses of IT at UNC. Each meeting of the committee has featured an informational presentation by faculty or staff. These demonstrations led to a discussion of what innovations were needed to optimize the educational uses of IT on and off campus.

1. *Sampler of IT use by Departments*

The following list of activities by various disciplines or programs and 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.

a. **Music** (Jocelyn Neal): *History of Country Music Course*

An online course site integrates music files, lyrics, images with homework assignments. Long-term future of collection is with Digital Library Services, which will facilitate sharing across departments.

Student impact: This approach breaks down physical barriers to media. Student writing assignments improved when shared with classmates.

b. **Romance Languages** (Jim Noblitt): *Foreign Language Resource Center Music & Oral Texts Database*

An online database integrates music, lyrics, translations and images in an easy-to-use interface for classroom or individual use.

Student impact: Language students have access to primary sources illustrating international cultural themes.

c. **English** (Daniel Anderson): *Business Writing*

Print literacy is repurposed for use in other media by giving students access to digital media production tools for online and face-to-face learning.

Student impact: Emphasis on the use of both text and video content in projects allows students to explore possibilities of the digital communication media.

d. **Academic Affairs Library** (Diane Strauss): *Library Resource Tutorials*

Tutorials were demonstrated on library resources for understanding plagiarism, copyright, information evaluation, library research, and citing information. *Student impact:* The lessons can be used across different courses and curricula.

e. **Computer Science** (John Smith): *Introduction to Web Programming*

Topics are supported by online lessons, structured so that students can link to documentation and software relevant to the course.

Student impact: Students can run code snippets from within site and work at their own pace.

f. **Health Sciences Library** (Wallace McLendon): *Institutional Digital Repositories*

Current journal system is not sustainable, and is no longer an issue that just impacts libraries. Math, Physics, and Molecular Biology have been early adopters because research in science tends to be more sensitive to timely data. Alternative non-profit models for online publication are emerging, but tenure and promotion systems continue to reward publications in print.

Student impact: Primary journals are often an arm of the discipline's professional organization, which shapes faculty development and teaching strategies.

g. **Economics** (John Stewart): *Introductory Economics*

IT allows the use of computer-based graphics programs to present graphs, numbers, etc.

Web pages are used primarily to make course materials and practice exams available to students outside of class.

Student impact: Class experience puts content in context as instructor clarifies key points and reviews practice exams.

h. **Biology** (Skip Bollenbacher): *Partnership for Minority Advancement in the Biomolecular Sciences (PMABS)*

IT is used to facilitate course management tasks like document dissemination and linking to current research articles, which are used as the basis for discussion of key concepts.

The website also assists by managing writing assignments, special vocabulary lists, sample exams, and a topical link library.

Student impact: The technology links students and instructors among UNC-Chapel Hill and seven of the NC's historically minority universities, enabling them to share curricula across institutions and thus better prepare students to compete in advanced courses.

2) *Information Literacy*

FITAC was especially interested in gaining student input for the issue of information literacy and consequently sought representation from the Student Government Technology Council at the suggestion of ITS representative Lori Casile.

a) Tommy Mann, representing Student Government Technology Council, supports a required for-credit course on technology skills. Most students welcome the use of technology inside or outside the classroom. However, faculty use is inconsistent; as not all faculty have baseline technology skills. He notes that a large percentage of student research is conducted online.

b) Student representative James Lee and Greg Newby (I&LS) led a discussion on a [proposal](#) prepared by the Student Government Information and Technology Committee to include a technology competency course in the first-year undergraduate curriculum. The proposed course would consist of three major components: Building Blocks (technical concepts and application use), Information Retrieval and Resources, and Ethics.

Discussion: Students currently get redundant IT instruction in various courses, thus it may be efficient to move content to a single course requirement. But a requirement raises issues:

Include all students (e.g., distance ed)?

Is student body ready to accept yet another course requirement?

How can students place out, and how would you evaluate students' information ethics?

Faculty currently have full accountability for the integration of skills into the curriculum. Does this relieve them of this responsibility?

Comment: UNC's leadership in infrastructure (CCI) needs to be matched with information literacy, but pointing students to self-paced modules would be more feasible during a time when resources are so stretched. (See II.1.d above.)

3) *IT Infrastructure and Administrative Issues*

- **a) Search for new VC for Computing.** The committee responded to a request from Sue Estroff for FITAC input on desiderata for the University's CIO. Opinions from faculty and staff were summarized and forwarded to Estroff and Provost Shelton.
- **b) The Academic Plan.** The Academic Planning Task Force draft proposal was studied by FITAC, and suggestions for improvement were summarized. The FITAC recommendations were forwarded to Deans Gless and Allred as well as the Provost. FITAC members Noblitt and Bollenbacher met with the Deans to discuss wording of the Academic Plan that affected educational uses of IT.
- **c) New security policies for IT.** John Oberlin, Jeanne Smythe, and Jim Gogan (ITS) reported on IT new security policies required by new, state-mandated security audit. The auditor now has authority to take away campus budget flexibility (not just for IT). There will be two major policy changes: 1) regular update of ONYEN passwords and 2) new wireless network configuration requirements. Passwords will begin expiring January 20 on a staggered schedule, and will expire again every ninety days. ITS is implementing an online system that will allow users to reset password themselves in case they forget. New tools will allow departmental and other non-ONYEN systems to synchronize with the ONYEN account. Wireless cards and access points must be reconfigured to support the required encryption protocol (WEP). Will likely move toward a standards-based wireless security when it becomes available. WEP is short-term solution.
- **d) New Course Retention Policy.** Jeanne Smythe (ITS) sought FITAC input in drafting a new policy for retaining course websites. She noted that some faculty members are not aware that course syllabi are public records. Records Office was eliminated in the budget cuts. In the past, department chair bore responsibility to retain records of course documents. Maximum statute of limitations on how long course documents should be kept is two years. Four years would be conservative guideline. Some instructors may need to delete portions of old course websites (e.g., exam keys) before the statute of limitations. Legal Counsel will have to consider on a case-by-case basis. In a follow-up meeting Jeanne Smythe and Libby Evans (ITS) pointed out that ITS would adopt a general policy, but there may be some instructional content that is difficult to track (e.g. discussion forums). Thus it is difficult for ITS to know when term of limitations begins. Some instructors may need to delete portions of old course websites (e.g., exam keys) before the statute of limitations. Legal Counsel will have to consider on a case-by-case basis. Response from Legal Counsel still pending. ITS needs clear direction on parameters, exceptions, etc. Comments should be sent to jeanne_smythe@unc.edu or cit@unc.edu.
- **e) New Classroom Podium Design.** Rick Peterson (OASIS) sought input for the next generation of podia for classrooms outfitted with multimedia technologies. Committee members opted for as many rooms as could be economically accommodated, stressing the need for flexibility of design for a variety of conventional and multimedia presentation styles.
- **f) Accessible Electronic Content.** Linda Carl (Continuing Education) and Bob Henshaw (CIT) briefed the committee on the University's Web Accessibility Policy and Initiatives. New policy announced last fall to strengthen University's readiness to accommodate students with disabilities. Anticipated increase in distance education enrollments is driving policy, since it is difficult for Department of Disability Services to act as intermediary for remote students.

Comment: FITAC will study implications and consider how new policy should be presented to Faculty Council.

III. The FITAC Agenda: Priorities

The committee's focus for the rest of this academic year will be on direction, assessment, and support for the intelligent educational uses of IT. Our priorities are as follows:

1. **Advisory Committee for Vice Chancellor for IT**

The committee continues to support faculty representation for IT resource allocation. Our recommendation for an Advisory Committee for the new Vice Chancellor has been communicated to the Provost and to the search committee, now meeting. We feel that governance structures relating the Academic Plan to the IT infrastructure may be profitably reviewed at this time.

2. **Funding to Reinstate Innovation Grants Program.**

The committee continues to support a grant program for funding intelligent and innovative uses of IT for research, teaching, and learning. We are particularly concerned that the infrastructure created to generate, evaluate, fund, and support initiatives will fall into neglect. Thus the mention of this program in the Academic Plan is particularly welcome. We note that having to cancel the awards announced last year have created a negative impact on faculty morale. FITAC will investigate the possibilities of funding from the private sector as an interim measure.

3. **Academic Incentives for Scholarly Uses of IT**

The committee continues to support a policy of academic reward for scholarship and teaching that requires the digital medium for its proper realization. We recognize that quality assurance is a function best performed at the at departmental level, and that discipline specialists with an understanding of the new medium will be needed to oversee the meaningful use of IT on this campus.

4. **Assessment of IT Use on Campus**

The committee will continue to sample actual uses of IT for educational purposes on this campus. Our intent is to create an Internet resource that allows faculty and staff to understand how the design of content and IT infrastructure are may be optimized for meaningful access to educational material.

Appendix A

Teaching Statement

Final Draft - **Spring 2002**

The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill exists to teach students at all levels in an environment of exploration, free inquiry, and personal responsibility. To accomplish this goal, we are committed to providing high-quality undergraduate, graduate, and professional instruction to future generations of scholars, educators, professionals, and informed global citizens prepared to succeed in an increasingly complex and inter-connected world. Our instructional tools include service-teaching and learning, pioneering cross-discipline approaches, undergraduate research

opportunities, advances in the use of technology, and other innovations that extend teaching and research to address the needs of the state of North Carolina and broader publics.

We are committed, as a research university, to energetic engagement in research, scholarship and creative work. What faculty and students discover and produce contributes to the generation and dissemination of knowledge that improves human life, enhances cultural experiences, and expands opportunities in personal, professional, and civic spheres. As scholars, we pursue inquiry and scholarship to discover knowledge, and we pursue teaching to help others understand, generate and evaluate knowledge for themselves. Teaching and learning are intertwined with scholarship and service, each being informed by the other.

Effective teaching in the 21st century must cope with an increasingly diverse student body and our assessment of teaching should acknowledge the increasing diversity of effective teaching practices and locations. Teaching and learning occur in venues such as classrooms, offices and public meeting spaces, research laboratories, and distributed or virtual spaces; and teaching and learning occur through instructional practice, collaborative projects, clinical and fieldwork, internships, study abroad, and mentoring. Our instructional practices should encourage critical thinking, creative expression, and rigorous scholarship. Innovative methods and perspectives contribute significantly to the fulfillment of our instructional goals as they maintain the vitality of teaching, learning and the intellectual environment at the University.