

# **Faculty Information Technology Advisory Committee (FITAC)**

## **FITAC Annual Report February 10, 2014**

Jim Porto, Chair, Suzanne Cadwell, Gregory Copenhaver, Anselmo Lastra, Ryan Madanick,  
Michael McNeil, Marc Serre, David Thissen, Barbara Wildemuth  
From ITS: Chris Kielt, Ramon Padilla, and Stan Waddell

The charge of the FITAC 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 committee has met several times since the last report. In the fall of 2013, Jim Porto was appointed Chair of the FITAC.

In fall of 2013, FITAC worked with ITS (Stan Waddell) to produce a University "Public Service Video Announcement") for the new VPN policy and capability.

The use of VPN reduces the possibility of IDs and passwords being sent over networks that are "open" and that would send information like passwords and IDs in the clear. Public wifi is a good example of this where people have been known to electronically sniff/observe IDs and passwords sent over the network in the clear, intercept those credentials and re-use them to gain access to things on our network that require credentials. We want to reduce the risk, and using a VPN is one way to do so.

With adoption of a VPN, material on the UNC network will be placed behind a firewall to prevent unauthorized access. The old system functioned as an opt-in system; the new system functions as an opt-out system. By going to an opt-out system, UNC networks will have more extensive coverage.

The only fall meeting held in 2013 covered the following topics.

- o Turnitin Software : an update on the advisability of acquiring this service.
- o Data Scanning
- o Wireless, VPN, Secure Storage Update
- o Classroom technology update.

The bulk of the discussion, however, was focused on extending the mission of the FITAC to be more prospective, rather than reactive and to finding better ways to represent the faculty community when advising ITS.

The Chair of FITAC met with ITS personnel as well as with the UNC Information Technology Executive Council to discuss how faculty can give a more representative response to issues vetted with the FITAC.

From these discussions emerged a proposal to develop an extended Faculty Information Technology Advisory Panel (FITAP).

The following information was circulated among ITEC and FITAC members.

We are looking for 30 to 50 faculty across the campus who are both interested and knowledgeable about information technology issues to advise the Faculty Information Technology Advisory Committee (FITAC), the Information Technology Executive Council (ITEC) and the Vice Chancellor for Information Technology (Chris Kielt).

Here is what we are asking the Faculty Information Technology Advisory Panel (FITAP) to do:

1. React to, and evaluate, proposals for change to Information Technology systems and polices. (These will most likely take the form of brief Qualtrics Surveys, with one open ended question for comment).
2. Generate ideas for improving information technology in research, teaching, and administration.
3. Participate (voluntarily only) on small committees or focus groups to vet new ideas.
4. Be willing to share information with colleagues at faculty meetings.

Here is what we are NOT asking the FITAP to do:

1. Have regular meetings.
2. Mandatory response on surveys.
3. Mandatory participation in activities to advise the FITAC and the Vice Chancellor.

Here are additional benefits for members selected for the FITAP:

1. When IT considers adopting new software across campus, FITAP members will be given the option to test the service first and react to its usefulness.
2. FITAP members will be automatically included in the invited only annual "Future IT at UNC" symposium and luncheon to discuss directions for Carolina IT.

As of this report, we have 15 volunteers from 5 Schools. A major goal for the spring will be to obtain representation from the remaining 9 Schools.

The Vice-Chancellor for IT has agreed to sponsor a symposium, originally scheduled for the spring of 2014, but now likely to be held in the fall of 2014.

The topic of the Symposium will be forecasting the type of IT systems UNC will need in the next 25 years. This will be an invited only Symposium for FITAP, FITAC, and ITEC members along with key administrative staff.

Universities are facing increasing criticism of their core missions. We need to think ahead to improve the effectiveness, relevancy, and value of University activities. Technology is a key driver and enabler of the changes to come, so we must be able to look far enough afield to chart our course forward: a bi-annual “visioning” symposium may be one way to help.