Faculty Information Technology Advisory Committee (FITAC)

FITAC Annual Report
February 16, 2016

Jim Porto, Chair, Cheryl Bolick, Gregory Copenhaver, Brad Hemminger, Amanda Henley,
Michael Hoefges, Cal Lee, Ryan Madanick, Tessa Nicholas, David Thissen
From ITS: Chris Kielt, Suzanne Cadwell
From Faculty Governance: Anne Whisnant

The charge of the FITAC is the following.

The committee considers, and relays, information technology concerns of faculty and others to the chancellor, to the Faculty Council and to the University community. The committee's functions include the following:

1. consider issues that affect the use of information technology in teaching and learning, research, and other professional activities within the University; and
2. advise University officers and offices of administration on faculty needs and interests relating to information technology.

New members added to the Committee since last year are the following: Tessa Nicholas.

The committee has met several times since the last report. Over the past year information sessions were held on Classroom Enhancement, CUNY Academic Commons, IT's Annual Report, Microsoft 365, Sakai issues, ConnectCarolina, Classroom Enhancements, planned decommissioning of AFS, Open Resource Education Initiative, IT Security Update, Instructional Technology Update and Cybersecurity, IT Governance, InfoPorte, Web Conferencing, the Interactive Classroom and Carolina Cloud Apps.

The major effort over the past year has been developing a cybersecurity best practices list to be disseminated to faculty, staff and students. Many members of the committee read Future Crimes by Marc Goodman (http://www.futurecrimesbook.com/) as a point of discussion for security issues on the UNC Campus. Goodman's Best Practices List (UPDATE) was used as a starting point for the development of UNC's best practice's list. The list should be distributed in late spring of 2016.

Because of a shared interest in developing an electronic space for faculty and staff collaborative work on campus, FITAC, the Faculty Welfare Committee, and Dr. Anne Whisnant in the Office of Faculty Governance conducted a preliminary exploration of whether an Academic Commons built on the free, open-source "Commons in a Box" platform would be appropriate for UNC.

Kate Hash in ITS developed a bare-bones mockup of what a Carolina Commons might look like and rolled it out for limited testing to the Office of Faculty Governance, FITAC, and the Employee Forum. Dr. Whisnant discussed the idea with the Faculty Executive Committee in early fall of 2015, but response was lukewarm. Use by FITAC members was also minimal. By mid-fall, it had become apparent that a compelling use case for a Commons had not yet been made. Therefore, with other pending campus web development projects in process that may address most of the faculty's and staff's needs, Hash and Whisnant decided to put the Commons project on hold for now. Further reports to FITAC will be provided in the spring of 2016.

IT governance and faculty role have been discussed and members of FITAC have volunteered to attend IT sub-committee meetings and report significant actions affecting faculty.

The committee still struggles with dissemination of information to the full faculty.

Submitted by

Jim Porto, Chair Faculty Information Technology Advisory Committee
16 February, 2016