College of Engineering Information Technology Committee Final Report

*April 1, 2013*

Members
Sarah Vigmostad (Chair) May 2013
George Constantinescu May 2014
Mona Garvin May 2015

Ex-officio Member
Doug Eltoft Director of CSS

General Charge

The Information Technology Committee shall be responsible for reviewing and evaluating policies governing hardware, software, and computing services within the college, and for making appropriate recommendations regarding computer resources to the dean and the faculty.

IT Committee Response

The IT Committee (ITC) has met to discuss and work on the charges for the year. As has been the case, specific issues are handled on an ad hoc basis, as necessary. Doug Eltoft will begin providing annual reports to the ITC with information about how ECS (Engineering Computing Services, formerly CSS) funds are being spent. We feel there is an opportunity for the ITC to play a more active role in “reviewing and evaluating of policies” related to computing, and believe our recommendations in Specific Charge #3 will help to enable this. Further information and recommendations are described in response to the Specific Charges, below.

Specific Charges

1. Meet with the DEO of each Department to get their input on issues involving the deployment and use of information technologies and services to support the teaching and research missions of the college. Where appropriate, arrange to attend departmental faculty meetings to facilitate broader discussion with the faculty. Report the results of these meetings and discussions back to the EFC.

ITC Response

Doug and members of the IT Committee have met with each DEO to find out about IT needs and deployment of new technology. Consistently, we heard that the departments have similar goals with regard to automating or streamlining certain processes related to student advising and graduate applications. While ECS is supporting these on a case-by-case basis, we have discussed the benefits of ECS providing this support college-wide simultaneously. For example, we have learned that ECE is working with ECS to create an online process for entering EFA information. CEE is working with ECS to develop an online process for graduate applications. The members of the IT Committee believe that all departments would benefit from these new capabilities, and that it may be less work for ECS if this were to be
executed a unified fashion (and thus only once) for all departments, rather than one department at a time.

2. Work with the College of Engineering Teaching Committee to identify any new or special information technology needs associated with the incorporation of universal design for learning concepts into College of Engineering courses.

**ITC Response**

This work continues to ongoing, and should continue to be discussed in the upcoming year. There is no clear timeframe at the University level and while there exist some infrastructure for supporting and implementing universal design concepts into College of Engineering courses/web sites, even the definition of “university design” was interpreted differently by different individuals with whom we spoke. While there are resources on campus (ITS’s Assistive Technology; Student Disabilities Services; Office of Equal Opportunity and Diversity; ICATER’s Universal Access Project), until a consistent definition and set of requirements (and timeframe) is defined for College of Engineering faculty, it will remain unclear which route faculty should follow in order to incorporate these principles into specific classes. We suggest that someone from ITS (or ICATER or Center for Teaching) discuss these ideas with either the EFC, the upcoming Fall *Engineering Lecture and Something More* Teaching Workshop.

3. Consider possible expansion of the role of the Information Technology Committee to include evaluation and review of the entire scope of the newly constituted Engineering Technology Center (ETC). Recommend whether or not such an expansion in scope is warranted and, if so, whether an expansion of the membership of the committee to include a representative from each department or program would be appropriate.

**ITC Response**

We are supportive of the expansion of the membership of the ITC, and believe it should consist of a faculty member from each department. We believe that in addition to expanding the membership, the scope should also be expanded, to include the issues and policies related to the Engineering Prototyping Center and Electronics Shop, in line with the newly formed ETC. We suggest that the IT Committee be renamed the Engineering Technology Committee, in light of the restructuring of CSS with the Electronics Shop and Prototyping Center.

One benefit we see from an expanded committee is based on the ITC’s discussions with Doug, and his need to quickly get ETC-related news and/or feedback to/from each department. Our conversations indicate that having a committee that represented each department would enable the ETC to better communicate with departments, and also provide a clearer role to the IT Committee. For example, as a committee that has representatives from each of the departments, this may provide an opportunity for the ITC to better advise the ETC and liaise between the ETC and the college’s departments.

We are working with the EFC to develop a motion to expand the ITC membership and rename it the ET Committee.

**ITC Response**

We suggest the expansion of the ITC (see item 3). Additionally, we recommend that if item 3 is adopted, regular communication between the ITC and the ECS is established. Historically, the ITC has not had sufficient representation to serve as an adequate advisory body or means to communicate between the ECS and the departments, but it is our hope that this expansion of the size and role of the ITC will support the improved functioning of this committee.


**ITC Response**

Part one of this charge was completed in January. This report satisfies part two of this charge.