2013-2014 College of Engineering Information Technology Committee Final Report
April 1, 2014

Members
Mona Garvin (Chair)  Term Expiring
George Constantinescu  May 2015
Michael Mackey  May 2014
Doug Eltoft, ex Officio nonvoting  May 2016

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.

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 Eltoft and the members of the ITC have met with the DEO of each department to discuss the above-mentioned issues. Most DEOs first praised the overall efforts of the Engineering Computer Support (ECS) team (and the entire Engineering Technology Center) before discussing particular items of interest. Items discussed included access control issues (including lab security), plans for dealing with increased classroom capacity (along with “spillover classroom” options), the need for online graduate admissions options (especially letters of recommendation), a summary of the support options for departmental teaching labs, a summary of the support options for research, a summary of the services of the machine shop and electronics shop, senior-design support, and potential issues with the use of laptops with unencrypted disks.

2. Work with College of Engineering Teaching Committee to investigate the use of “spillover classrooms” in the Seamans Centers to allow class sections greater than 70 students.

ITC Response: The ITC primarily discussed the technological feasibility of “spillover classrooms” with Doug Eltoft. An example feasible solution that was discussed was the use of LectureTools, lecture capture software, and/or remote streaming software in combination with the planned enhancements of smaller classrooms (e.g., 3231 SC and 4030 SC) that will enable an interactive remote-classroom spillover setup (including in-class student use of laptops). Features to help support a remote spillover setup will be incorporated during the renovation of 3231 SC this summer and ITS classroom services has agreed to partner with ECS if the technology in 4030 SC is upgraded to support a spillover class.
3. Work with Engineering Computer Services to investigate social media and other related tools for graduate student recruiting. This would include identifying and/or developing software to assist in processing graduate student applications and web-based and social media approaches to advertise our graduate programs.

4. Meet with the DEO of each Department to determine how graduate applications are being handled and processed. Work with Engineering Computer Services to determine if the processing of graduate applications for all departments can be simplified/unified by new software or related technology.

**ITC Response for Charges 3 and 4:** Members of the ITC and Doug Eltoft have specifically discussed the graduate-application process with the administrative assistants for the graduate programs, Milan Sonka (in his role as the new Associate Dean for Graduate Programs and Research rather than as his prior role as DEO of ECE), and University-wide information technology team members. The graduate application process was also discussed with the DEOs as part of charge #1. The lack of a completely online graduate admissions process is not only a College-wide issue, but is a University-wide issue as well. The University-level Graduate Admissions software does not currently allow for the online submission of reference letters (and other application materials), so most departments currently require paper-based submission of these items. (Note that within the College of Engineering, the Department of Mechanical and Industrial Engineering, with the help of the Engineering Computer Support team, has been using a custom-built web application that does allow for online submission of application materials. According to Doug Eltoft, replicating this for the other departments would not be difficult; however, other departments have expressed concern regarding use of this system, in part, due to lack of integration with the University system and limitations regarding identity verification). Nevertheless, it has come to the attention of the ITC that supporting online graduate admissions has become a high-priority area for the University-level Information Technology Services team and that it is actively being addressed. It is correspondingly the ITC’s recommendation that the University-level progress in this area continued to be monitored, but that the College-level Engineering Computer Services team not expend significant resources in this area (as any efforts may duplicate the efforts of the University-level ITS team) at this time.

5. Monitor the process for entering student EFA selections into the computer system. Is it being handled in a timely manner?

**ITC Response:** Members of the ITC met with Megan Allen and Keri Hornbuckle to discuss the EFA-entering process. In the past, entering EFA selections was a particularly time-consuming and cumbersome process. One major limitation was that Megan Allen had to wait until the semester that a student took an EFA course to be able to manually enter the course into the University system. However, in the Fall 2013 semester, a new system was put in place by ITS (based on Megan Allen’s discussions with them) to allow her to now enter all EFA courses for each student the semester the form is submitted. Because of the new system, EFA selections should be up-to-date (internally) for the following semester’s advising session once a student submits an EFA form. However, limitations with the current degree audit system only display each EFA course the semester the student takes the course, providing limited feedback to the student and advisor that the EFA courses have indeed been entered. It is the intent of the University-level ITS team to provide the functionality to list all EFA courses on the degree audit so that they appear once entered into the system, but such
functionality will likely not be available until the system is updated for the new course numbering system. However, in the meantime, ITS has agreed to provide the functionality to indicate the date the list of EFA courses had most recently been entered. It is the ITC’s recommendation that the ITC follow-up with the progress in this area in the next year.


   ITC Response: The ITC recommends that the ITC continue to monitor progress regarding online graduate applications and the EFA-entering process.