

**Senate Committee on Information Technologies (SCIT)**  
**September 13, 2016**  
**Minutes of the Meeting**

*These minutes reflect discussion and debate at a meeting of a committee of the University of Minnesota Senate; none of the comments, conclusions, or actions reported in these minutes represents the views of, nor are they binding on, the senate, the administration, or the Board of Regents.*

[**In these minutes:** Senate Orientation/Overview; Academic Technology Formal Community of Practice Work Plans; Review of Agenda Items]

**PRESENT:** Geoffrey Ghose (chair), Nancy Carpenter, Karen Monsen, William Dana, Santiago Fernandez-Gimenez, Kate McCready, Al Beitz, Bernard Gulachek, Robert Rubinyi, Michelle Driessen, Kristin Janke, Charles Miller, Madeline Doak, Yoichi Watanabe

**REGRETS:** Tim Nichols, Rajkumar Vyas, John Butler, Carlos Brust Soria, Diane Willow

**ABSENT:** Brandon Vanderbush

**GUESTS:** Vickie Courtney, director, University Senate Office; Donalee Attardo, director of academic technologies, Office of Information Technology

Chair Ghose welcomed the committee and members introduced themselves.

**1. Senate Orientation/Overview** – Geoffrey Ghose, chair, introduced Vickie Courtney, director, University Senate Office. Courtney reviewed the [University Senate organizational chart](#), noting that there are over 1000 people participating in University governance. There are four senates that report to the University Senate: the Faculty Senate, Student Senate, P&A Senate, and Civil Service Senate. The University Senate and the Faculty Senate are chaired by the president, Courtney said; SCIT is a committee of the University Senate. Courtney summarized the membership of the University Senate, noting that there are 278 elected members, including 168 faculty, 60 students, 25 P&A employees, and 25 civil service employees. Each committee has ex-officio members, Courtney noted, who generally have an expertise relative to the committee's business; these ex-officio members are important liaisons to the administration, and can help guide committee discussions.

Courtney then summarized the history of the University Senate. The University Senate was formed in 1912; it remained all-faculty until 1969, when students were added. Civil Service and P&A employees joined the governance structure in 2004.

Courtney went on to discuss the difference between resolutions and statements. Resolutions request an action, Courtney said; statements do not require an action, but often certify a position for review by University administration and/or the broader University community. Courtney noted that consultation is an important first step in forming statements and resolutions, as consultation and coordination with other committees interested in the same issues can make a stronger impact than if those groups worked separately.

Courtney outlined the path of a statement or resolution, noting that once a statement or resolution has been drafted and approved by SCIT, it would be sent to the Senate Consultative Committee (SCC) for discussion and/or action. From the SCC, it may move to the to the University Senate, and then to the president and other relevant administrators with the expectation that they respond within 90 days.

In some cases, Courtney noted, a letter directly to a senior administrator requesting information may be helpful. Committee chairs, with the assistance of their senate associate, can draft letters to administrators requesting information, and invite those administrators to present at a future meeting.

Courtney added that in order to assist committees in their efforts toward effective consultation, the University Senate Office will soon add issues tracking as a feature on the University Senate website.

**2. Academic Technology Formal Community of Practice (fCoP) Work Plans** – Chair Ghose introduced Donalee Attardo, director of academic technologies, Office of Information Technology, to provide an overview of Academic Technology Formal Community of Practice (fCoP) work plans.

The Continuum of Support Affinity Group, Attardo said, was formed to create recommendations to help to ensure that the University community is able to find and effectively use technology resources. Their primary recommendations were:

- Coordination of support processes, to include in-person help triage, and promotion of a culture of sharing and coordinated resource management.
- Formation of a multi-pronged communications plan to make support more discoverable, meet users where they already are, and host strategically timed events or showcases.

The Improving Exemplary Use Affinity Group, Attardo said, was formed to research the issues impacting faculty use of academic technologies, and to make recommendations based on findings that address these issues. Their primary systemic recommendations were:

- Expect and reward learner-centered teaching practices, especially effective and creative use of academic technologies. Integrate the recognition and scholarship of teaching with technology into the annual review as well as the Promotion and Tenure processes.
- Develop a University-wide initiative that provides incentives and recognizes faculty for exemplary and innovative use of academic technology in support of active learning. The program could consist of honorary awards or monetary awards for the use of professional development, reduced teaching loads, etc.

Their primary recommendations related to engagement and perception were:

- Engage faculty in decision making regarding the selection and use of academic technology as well as provide leadership opportunities to advance emerging technologies.

- Create a communication strategy that provides consistent outreach to increase visibility/awareness of available resources, support staff, and training opportunities.
- Create a communication strategy that recognizes and celebrates innovative teaching with technology to internal and external audiences.

Their primary recommendations related to support were:

- Create a comprehensive curriculum representing 21<sup>st</sup> century academic technology skills aligned to faculty development opportunities that offer both breadth (awareness) and depth (expertise) that are delivered with a variety of modalities (online resources, targeted workshops, opportunities for sustained engagement).
- Create a centralized, digital, and searchable repository (website) of academic technology practices that were utilized effectively in the classroom and related resources.

The Decision-Making Process Affinity Group was formed to create a sustainable and transparent process that involves the University of Minnesota community in order to make good decisions about the implementation and use of academic technology, Attardo said. Their primary values were:

- Transparency
- Inclusiveness
- Nimbleness
- Multiple drivers of process
- Sustainability

Academic Technology Innovation Resources Assistance (ATIRA) may assist faculty and departments with testing new academic technologies on a local level, Attardo said. University Learning Technology Advisors (ULTA), Attardo said, meet three times per year and discuss testing of potential University-wide technologies. Campuses, colleges, and departments can bring forward technologies to be considered, Attardo said, by proposing them to ULTA; ULTA will then decide whether to move forward with testing the technology, postpone to a future cycle, or send to ATIRA.

In July of 2016, Attardo said, Karen Hanson, executive vice president of academic affairs and provost, and Bernard Gulachek, interim vice president, Office of Information Technology, approved these recommendations from the three affinity groups. In September of 2016, work plans were drafted by fCoP participants, Attardo said, and the work plans will now be refined by Academic Technology fCoP leads and presented to Hanson and Gulachek for review.

ULTA will be tied in to the Canvas pilot, Attardo said, and the Office of Information Technology (OIT), University of Minnesota Libraries, and the Center for Educational Innovation will be participating in formal evaluation and assessment. As specified in the AT Decision-Making recommendations, Attardo said, participating in the Canvas Pilot will be:

- One faculty member from each college and system campus, recommended by their dean or chancellor.

- Representation from academic leadership; only faculty vote.

Recommendations will go to the provost and vice president of OIT, Attardo said, and the first meeting will be in early October 2016. To view the UMN 2015-16 Canvas Pilot Report, [click here](#).

Santiago Fernandez-Gimenez asked Attardo if the University would be potentially replacing Moodle with Canvas, or if they would both be used. Attardo said that the University would go with one or the other due to cost and student preference for one system.

Robert Rubinyi asked what metrics were being used to make the decision between Moodle and Canvas. Attardo said they are taking into consideration the market, features, connection to Amazon web services, security, accessibility, student and faculty preference, ease of implementation, and cost. Bernard Gulachek added that content relay and open education resources are also important features.

Committee members asked for more information about the value of our participation in Unizin. Gulachek said that the Unizin effort offers more value than merely the evaluation of different learning systems. There is the potential for learning analytics, Gulachek said, and we can avoid paying others to put together that data for us, which gives us a comparative or competitive advantage as an institution.

Nancy Carpenter asked when the change from Moodle to Canvas would potentially take place. Attardo said that the University would have at least one year when both systems (Moodle and Canvas) would be in use, and that they would follow the Moodle instance model.

Ghose asked for further clarification of the ULTA structure, and how the Canvas pilot fits in to that model. Attardo said in the ULTA model, Canvas would be submitted as a potential new technology to ULTA. For example, Attardo said: there are five different clicker options, which ULTA could arbitrate.

Ghose asked if students should be formally represented on ULTA. Attardo said that this had been discussed, and that they may add student representation after the first year pilot evaluation. Attardo added that technology that impacts students will be taken to student governance groups for consultation.

William Dana asked what the University could do during the current transition period to make the next technology transition easier for users. Attardo said that OIT will meet with college and administrative units, and will complete initial testing on courses with special requirements. Gulachek added that it's important to understand that technology platforms are under continuous change; the University should not become wedded to a specific platform. It's important to help users understand that it's critical for the University to stay on top of developing technologies, Gulachek said, and it's important to always have an exit strategy.

Rubinyi noted that P&A and student input will be very important when evaluating these new technologies, and asked when the transition from Moodle to Canvas might take place. Attardo

said that a transition is not imminent, but that a sense of our direction is desired in the May 2017 time-frame following the pilot, its associated feedback mechanisms, and the faculty consultation that will occur throughout this academic year.

**3. Review of Agenda Items for the Year** – Ghose walked committee members through proposed SCIT agenda for the 2016-17 year, and the committee discussed the following items:

- Educational Technology
  - Software: Unizin, Canvas pilot update
  - Hardware: classrooms
- Infrastructure/data security/network upgrade
  - Network upgrade funding as presented to the Board of Regents
  - Identity updates; making updates more simple, automated
  - 2-factor authentication
- Tracking students/participants across programs, units, and time
  - Constituent Relationship Management tool is currently in use on all 5 campuses; how does it work, and how is it currently used?
- IT training for students and faculty
  - Potential for assessing training needs through exit surveys
  - Explore the potential of providing workshops and training in specific areas for both faculty and students (database management, presentation software, graphic design tools, etc.)
  - Role of University Libraries
- Collaborative tools and technologies: beyond broadcasting and lectures
  - Current state of learning technologies (webex for meetings; Google Docs for documents, etc.) and shortcomings
- Technology and personal/campus safety: what role can technology play?
  - Leveraging phone apps, GPS, etc.
- Research Units: ease of use, ensuring compliance, training
  - Research protocols: IACUC/IRB
  - Research grants: SPA
- Account provisioning/deprovisioning
- OIT Governance Input

Hearing no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Barbara Irish  
University Senate Office