

Faculty Senate

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Computing Resources Committee

Computing Resources Committee Report for 2001-2002

The CRC had two main projects this year. The first, undertaken fall quarter, was a proposal that set forth a process for acquiring technology or making other changes in the IT infrastructure when such acquisitions or changes would impact the entire campus. The second project was to create an Information Technology Coordinating Committee that would bring together IT managers from the Colleges and other units across campus. The purpose of this committee is to increase cooperation, reduce duplication and to solve campus wide IT problems efficiently.

I. CRC Activities

Technology impact report

In fall 2000, with the purchase of the Blackboard Portal system, the need for a more inclusive process for acquiring Information Technology became a topic for the CRC. The CRC suggested that a University Technology Impact Report should precede the purchase of new hardware, software or other changes in infrastructure that affect the entire campus. In response, the Executive Committee of the Faculty Senate asked the CRC to produce a proposal outlining the process and focus of the report. In fall quarter 2001, the CRC accomplished this goal and delivered the proposal to the FS Executive Committee in early winter 2002.

Planning

While drawing up the proposal, the CRC concluded that the process outlined in the University Technology Impact Report would require more planning and coordinating of activities concerned with centralized computing and Information Technology. During the previous year, the committee had talked with Vice Provost Curt Pederson about the IS five year plan. It became apparent that the colleges spend vastly more money on IT than IS does. The committee agreed to expand discussions about IT planning to include the colleges and other units with substantial budgets for IT. The Committee also noted that it was important for information to flow up from faculty, students and other IT users to the planners.

As a result, the committee compiled a two step proposal for an IT Planning Committee (ITPC). The first step would be to create an IT coordinating committee (ITCC) made up of IS and IT managers from the colleges and other units. This committee would coordinate on-going projects thereby reducing duplication. The second step would be the creation of a larger campus IT planning committee (ITPC) that would include the coordinating group (ITCC) as a subcommittee. This proposal was presented to the Executive Committee (EC) of the Faculty Senate early in winter quarter 2002 by Bill Uzgalis and Phil Sollins and the EC directed the committee to create the IT planning committee (ITPC).

To this end CRC Chair, Bill Uzgalis visited the Deans of the colleges and asked them to appoint appropriate persons to the IT coordination committee (ITCC) and urged the creation or revitalization of college computing committees. Such committees would solicit planning information from departments, collect information and produce college-computing plans. The college computing plans would then be passed on to the IT Planning committee (ITPC).

With the advent of the OSU '07 planning process, however, it became unclear whether to proceed with the establishment of the IT Planning Committee. The CRC decided, therefore, to simply proceed with the creation of the IT Coordinating Committee (ITCC) and to wait for the completion of the work of the IS Alignment Committee -- Mike Quinn, Chair -- (OSU'07) before proceeding with the creation of a planning committee.

Information Technology Coordinating Committee

The IT Coordinating Committee came into being late in winter quarter 2002. The committee chose Jon Dolan and Cherri Pancake as its co-chairs and has been meeting every two weeks since then. Several members of the CRC are also members of the ITCC. The ITCC members have been sharing information about ongoing projects and having working groups focused on various projects, e.g. a campus wide e-mail system and wireless technology. By all reports the committee is functioning well.

Other committees on which CRC members serve

Last year, various committees and task forces asked for CRC participation. This year the committee was expanded in order to accommodate such demands. This year Teena Carnegie and Bill Uzgalis are serving on the 2007 IS Alignment Committee. Paul Montagne is serving on the TRF committee, the Blackboard committee, and committee for the implementation of schedule 25. Rick Brand and Uzgalis are serving on the Academic affairs IT Accessibility Group, and Uzgalis remains co-chair of the Provost's Portal Implementation Committee. Brand, Pederson, Uzgalis and Sollins are members of the IT Coordinating Committee.

II. Information for the FS about IT matters

This section of the report is intended to provide the Faculty Senate with information about IT activity on campus. A number of committees have been meeting this year: each committee has a different set of objectives.

The IS Alignment Group (OSU 07)

This committee (Mike Quinn, Chair) is part of the OSU '07 process. It is charged with examining how OSU can best provide robust information and communication systems that enable first-rate instruction, research, outreach, and administration. As part of its charter the committee has agreed to analyze central resources commonly needed and used by the four areas of primary concern and to assess the needs of a representative group of stakeholders. Through the completed analysis, the committee will identify opportunities for short-term action and long-term improvements.

The Academic Affairs IT Accessibility Group

This group (Bob Burton, Chair) is charged with producing both a detailed accessibility policy and a plan for implementing it by the end of June 2002.

The Portal Implementation Committee

While the Portal Implementation Committee (Mark Merickel and Bill Uzgalis, Co-Chairs) has met two times this year, its subcommittee on Teaching and Learning has continued to meet and has produced a number of proposals that were presented to the full committee at its meeting on May 30, 2002. The production of these proposals has made it clear that there is no central location to house and manage these proposals. We believe that the central planning and coordinating committee proposed by the CRC might provide the ideal solution to this problem. The Portal Committee is producing a report to the Provost and seeking a clarification of its charge.

III. CRC in 2003

Plans for next year

1. The CRC will continue its efforts to promote IT planning on campus and faculty involvement in the planning. We will collect and/or produce tools such as questionnaires and examples of planning documents to help colleges and other units produce plans. We believe that all units should engage in on-going planning in respect to Information Technology. We will also continue our efforts to create the university wide IT Planning Committee we proposed to the EC in winter 2002.

2. It has also been suggested that we hold a series of forums where faculty can let us (and representatives of IS) know what kinds of problems they are facing in using Information Technology in Teaching and Research.
3. Faculty have reported that they do not know where to find information on technology resources available on campus. We will work with IS to produce a map of IT organizations, committees, contacts, sources for training, etc. From this we plan to develop a template for a Faculty Member's Survival Guide to IT at OSU with options to fill in at the college or departmental level. We will also suggest other ways of disseminating information about the IT structure at OSU such as a technology orientation for new faculty.

CRC members for 2001-02

Marcia Brett, Rick Brand (ex officio), Curtis Cook, Teena Carnegie, Dave Gobeli, Edith Gummer, Paul Montagne, Curt Pederson (ex officio), Jay Schindler, Phil Sollins, Warren Vernon, Bill Uzgalis (Chair)

Response from Curt Pederson, Vice Provost for Information Services

On behalf of Rick Brand and myself I want to thank the Faculty Senate for allowing us to serve as non-voting members of this committee. Over the past year we have gained a much broader appreciation for the technology needs of our faculty and have been reminded how vital it is to have faculty input and involvement in decisions affecting them and their important work.

As we have tried to walk in the shoes of faculty there has also been recognition of the fact that the information technology (IT) spending, outside of Information Services, is at least three times greater than what is invested by our central IT organization. My hope is that the current work of the ITCC will allow us all to make more collaborative and smarter technology investments in the future. Our overall campus-wide IT spending far exceeds any of the other OUS schools and current efforts to better plan and deploy IT should yield a better return on our investments.

In 2003, we need to find a way to implement the University Technology Impact Report. This is one area were the ITCC would be able to help us find a practical way to make this happen. There seems to be consensus on the need and value but we must find a way to incorporate this concept into the IT community and the value can be realized.

Lastly, I would be remiss if I didn't give kudos to Bill Uzgalis and the CRC Committee members for the collaborative and constructive spirit they brought to every meeting and every issue. The CRC has made a positive difference and it should be recognized and applauded.

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