Academic Services Committee
Monthly Meeting Minutes
February 12, 2013

<u>**Committee Members Present:**</u> Sonit Bafna, Doug Britton, Amy D'Unger, Denise Johnson
Marshall, Raj Vuchatu (Executive Board Liaison)

<u>**Committee Members Absent**</u>: Peter Hesketh, Susan Liebeskind, Helena Mitchell, Carrie Shepler

Amy D'Unger called the meeting to order at 2.38 PM. Guests at the meeting were Jim O'Connor,
Director of the Office of Information Technology and Chief Information Officer, and Sandy
Simpson, the Director of Enterprise Project Management who were discussing the Strategic
Technology Investment Committee (STIC). STIC was put in place as part of the Strategic Plan to
help create a master plan for IT at the Institute and to help create a structure for governance and
decision making about the $60 - $70 million spent on IT each year. The STIC created a structural
plan for IT governance, under the guidance of the Executive Leadership Team. Members of STIC
include Lisa Sills at GTRI and faculty members across the colleges (about 25 in all). Proposals for
spending on IT projects are brought to the STIC, which can then evaluate the costs and benefits of
the projects and allocate funding.

Reporting to the STIC are four Technology Experts Councils (TECs): Business and Operations
(HR, payroll, benefits, grants management, etc.), Student Information Systems Governance
(Banner, admissions, student life), Teaching and Learning (C21U, Professional Education,
MOOCs, classroom equipment), and Research. Jim said that the Research group, led by Jilda
Garton, is the most well formed of the four. The TECs work in an investigative fashion by setting
up virtual task forces to explore proposals and then make recommendations up the chain to the
STIC team. Sandy's team in Enterprise Project Management facilitates the work of the STIC and
the TECs, helping to answer such questions as "why should we undertake this project" and "what
will the full cost of ownership be (not just the startup costs)?"

Jim suggested that the Academic Services Committee could represent the issues and needs of the
faculty to the STIC to assure that they are represented in the campus IT master plan (e.g., faculty
have expressed a desire for videoconferencing abilities). Sonit asked if the phone system was
under the purview of OIT and STIC. Jim said that it was. The current system, run by Nortel, has
been bought out and is no longer being supported. OIT plans to bring in a dial tone from off
campus and convert the majority of phone lines from analog to digital. Having VOIP will allow for
better service and better integration with mobile devices. There are also plans to upgrade the
voice mail system. An upgrade of the 911 phone system has already occurred.

Sonit then asked about the structure of IT governance, given that many colleges and even schools
have their own IT staff and IT committees (though this is not evenly distributed across units).
Sandy stated that one purpose of STIC is to see what services already exist and then leverage
those services and expertise across other areas of campus. Denise asked if STIC was involved
with providing assistive technologies and asked if there is a way to get multiple licenses for
programs that would allow students to access the services that they need. She gave the example
of a blind student who has been unable to complete his/her IRB proposal because the screen
reader cannot read the IRB page. Denise suggested that OIT check with third party vendors to
make sure that they have accessibility built into their products before purchasing them. She also
asked if OIT is able to assist faculty members in making their materials accessible to disabled

students. Jim suggested that this would be a great issue to discuss with Donna Llewellyn and a representative from CATEA and concurred that these issues need to be on the minds of both software/hardware developers as well as purchasers. He said that he would talk to both Donna and Dean of the Library Catherine Murray-Rust about this issue. He also stated that this could become an increasingly pressing issue with the advent of MOOCs. With such large numbers of students, there are likely those with disabilities in the class.

Doug then asked about data storage and accessibility. He said that many of his colleagues and particularly his students use Google Drive and Google Docs for storing their data because of easy cloud-based access. Jim stated that there are privacy and intellectual property rights issues with using Google, Dropbox, and other similar services. He said that the GT legal department is not supportive of using such services, particularly because of the potential of losing intellectual property rights to materials posted online. OIT is looking into creating a Dropbox-like service for Georgia Tech and is also in discussions with Amazon about cloud storage possibilities. Doug pointed out that GTRI has access to Sharepoint, but that it's cumbersome and few use it. Raj suggested using T-Square, which has many similar features to Dropbox and is in a controlled, GT environment. Doug encouraged OIT to remember that we sometimes forget usability in creating software products, but that it's usability that drives the behavior of the users/consumers (such as the example of his students). He also suggested trying to communicate the security and property rights issues to the campus community, particularly students, via some kind of FAQ document, articles in the *Whistle* and *Technique*, information on the OIT webpage, etc. Jim concurred that this would be a good idea, and that the focus had been on phishing, which has been a big problem on campus. He noted that anyone who suspects he/she has received a phishing email could forward it to phishing@gatech.edu to be explored by OIT.

Doug enquired about the student technology fee and how that is allocated. Jim said that about $460,000 goes for student printing (not including an additional $50,000 paid by OIT for printing) and $200,000 goes for free access to software for students. Money also goes to refresh classroom technology (e.g., projectors), services such a lynda.com, virus software for campus, and access to Microsoft software products.

Amy asked about the issue of differing versions of software across classrooms, which was a problem that Peter had brought up two years ago as we were crafting the Academic Services Committee action items. Jim said that there are about 160 – 200 centrally scheduled learning spaces, and about 500+ learning spaces total. Many of these are controlled by individual units, which make decisions about types and versions of software to install. OIT uses the same version of software for all learning spaces that it supports, and updates them all once per year. It also updates the computer hardware every three to four years, which is a massive expense. Jim said that he would like to get the computers out of the learning spaces and instead encourage people to use thumb drives that can be plugged directly into the podiums or use their mobile devices (iPads, phones, laptops, etc.) to access data and information on the servers/cloud. Amy asked if there was information about software available on the OIT classroom pages. Jim stated that he would look into the information that was available for faculty online and make sure that was included somewhere for learning spaces supported by OIT.

Jim concluded his presentation by stating that OIT includes "fuzzy funding" in the budget so that it can remain agile in the changing technological environment. Raj suggested that we take the information presented by Jim and Sandy and put together a list of services/needs/wants for the faculty and present it to STIC. This will be the topic of discussion for a future meeting, in addition to items brought up by other guest speakers and issues such as the new faculty profile system.

The meeting concluded with approval of the minutes from the February meeting. Doug made the motion to approve, Sonit seconded, and the minutes were approved unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 3.40 PM.

Minutes Respectfully Submitted by,

Amy D'Unger
Secretary, Academic Services Committee