

Senate Computing and Information Technology Committee

March 5, 2019 -- 10:00AM

Room 717 CL

Attending: Kenny Doty, Irene Frieze, Arif Jamal, Alexandros Labrinidis, Marty Levine, Maura McCall, Adam Hobough, Ralph Roskies, Susan Sereika, Michael Spring, Steve Wisniewski

Minutes: Minutes from February 14, 2019 meeting were approved as mailed.

New Business:

No New Items

Chair's Matters (Michael Spring)

Spring indicated that he had sent an email to the Chancellor related to the CIO search. He shared the job description posted with the committee. The committee discussed the fact that there was no explicit mention in the description of teaching and instruction as a part of the CIO's support responsibility. There is no indication that it should be from an educational institution.

Spring indicated that the primary item he had was the discussion of IT study by Deloitte. See below.

CIO Report (Adam Hobough)

Learning Management System: Provost has approved moving forward. In line with the committee's concerns, more testing will be done. Alex agreed to serve as a volunteer. Spring reiterated his concern about doing testing for different types of courses. Canvas does provide a level of support directly to faculty.

Mobile application deployment and publishing at Pitt: J. Gram is moving forward with Babichenko on the mobile application development

Committee Discussion of the Information Technology Study by Deloitte

It is our understanding that the Deloitte report was not meant to be definitive – it was meant to say here are some potential ways to improve the operation. Action on the Deloitte study has been in stasis until the new CIO is hired. The Chancellor and Jinx are both aware of the comments made on the Deloitte study, but these comments have not been shared with the Senate despite our request to see them. Spring asked the Committee for any concerns they had with the report.

Spring reiterated his concern that the suggestions for governance did not reflect strong involvement of faculty. Data, research, security, are all listed but there is no mention of educational/instructional technology. Governance topics mention deans/directors and upper level administration, but not faculty/staff end-users. Governance issues mention research,

administration. There is no mention of teaching and instruction. Data governance is a concern in that may be different for academic institutions than for other kinds of institutions.

Decisions being made are somewhat different than a business decision. We need to make sure that these decisions are being made with higher education in mind and not just business decisions.

Roskies indicated that some of the centralization may be less than optimal, e.g. the number of helpdesks. Some of the bulk purchasing discussion may also present a problem.

Roskies suggested that the document seems to be over concerned with cloud computing. The question is where the cloud advantages us and when it doesn't. There should be a study of when the cloud is more cost effective. A lot of enterprise services we currently use are cloud based. These include box, outlook, people soft, etc. Cloud computing makes a lot of sense in some senses. In other senses we need for regulatory reasons or financial reasons it may not make sense for a university. This is a very hot topic in the area of research computing. Cloud service usage may be a matter of staff preparedness for this kind of endeavor – do the staff need to be retrained for this new environment. How does CSSD evaluate SLAs from cloud service vendors? Adam is looking into the ability to get a report.

In the context of a discussion of staff development within CSSD, several people observed that there should be more attention to providing staff development across the university.

Meeting adjourned 11:30.

Draft minutes submitted for review by:

Michael Spring
March 18, 2019