

Proposal 20-15
“Policy on Michigan Technological
University Information Technology
Services”

Senate IT Committee

Genesis: Evaluation of the University President

- On April 16, 2014, Administrative Policy Committee released its report on Evaluation of the President of the Michigan Tech
- Among the 32 survey items that called for scaled responses, the **lowest score** for both faculty (2.2) and administrators (2.67) was in response to the statement

“The executive team has created an IT environment that meets my work needs.”

President's Response (Senate's April 23, 2014 meeting)

“administration had anticipated negative comments about IT, but people need to understand that IT is “a big beast” that does much more than just support students and faculty; it also runs all of the university’s billing and records.”

“although there’s dissatisfaction with some of the changes IT has introduced, in light of some of the disastrous things that have happened at other universities—such universities—such as people breaking into systems and cleaning out bank accounts—Michigan Tech is not in such desperate straits.”

“we need to find out more about what the concerns are.”

Anecdotal Reports of Concerns

- Acknowledgment of the overall positive role of IT services
- Belief that Central IT has problems explaining how they are looking out for the rest of campus, leaving some people suspicious, even cynical
- Some IT professionals are not fully aware of how their decisions affect the day-to-day teaching, research, and service responsibilities of others.
- Little communication or solicitation of input from Central IT
- Need for taking a more user-focused approach and ask others how they might be of greater service to the overall campus community

Key Concerns

- IT policy changes have been made with little or no consultation with the University Senate.
- If these policies are rightly construed as Senate A-List items (that is, items on which the Senate is charged with establishing policy), then these changes are in violation of the Senate Constitution and, hence, of Board of Control policy.
- Addressing pedagogical concerns is a faculty and University Senate prerogative that should supersede IT mandates.

Survey Report by IT

- “40% of the faculty and undergraduate students who participated in the survey are either somewhat dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with the overall IT environment. “
- “It is a major concern that over 20% of the faculty members are very dissatisfied. This is not an acceptable situation, and it must be addressed. “
- Users’ support gets a high rating
 - *e.g.* A computer or Microsoft Office question

Formation of Senate IT Committee

- In an effort to assess and improve IT services on campus, the University Senate's Executive Committee has proposed forming an IT Committee.
- In an effort to begin the work of that committee this summer, tentative members of the committee were solicited, via the Senate's listserv.
- This Fall the University Senate's Information Technology Committee was established to develop policies on all matters relating to IT services, including support for research and scholarly activities, teaching and learning, support for administration, and all other policy matters relating to the allocation and distribution of funds in support these activities.

Major Issues for the Committee (1)

- The need for transformation of IT
- The level of service that the average user gets is lower than it should be
- The lack of an equitable prioritization mechanism with IT for handling the IT needs of the Academic Departments and Administration.

Major Issues for the Committee (2)

- The lack of knowledge within IT support for IT needs of campus departments and users.
 - Anything more than a computer or Office question is often times delayed or handled very poorly in response rate or quality.
 - Due to the reorganization over the last few years IT has lost many seasoned system administrators and that has left our current IT organization with a skills gap.
- Lack of proper guidance and oversight for IT as service organization
 - IT should serve the needs of its user base – without a guidance system built in IT has no way of knowing what those needs are.
- Lack of financial transparency within IT

Proposal 20-15 (1-2 of 6)

Working with all university stakeholders (including, but not limited to student affairs, academic affairs, faculty, staff, research, administration, and student government):

1. IT shall create an annually updated strategic plan that includes a clear mission, duties, and responsibilities that guide management, operations, developments, and investments.
2. IT shall conduct an annual needs assessment to guide formulation of an annual work plan that corresponds with assessed needs, stakeholders' priorities, and the strategic plan, and shall present this assessment to the Senate and to the IT Governance Group.

Proposal 20-15 (3-4 of 6)

3. IT shall establish an annual framework for the implementation of an annual work plan for restructuring, designing, and delivering services that meet the requirements of its stakeholders (e.g., instructional labs and print services), and shall present this framework to the Senate and to the IT Governance Group.
4. IT shall present an annual budget and cost structure that meets the requirements and priorities of its stakeholders, referenced to the annual work and strategic plans, to the Senate and to the IT Governance Group.

Proposal 20-15 (5 of 6)

5. IT shall provide three reports with accompanying presentations to the Senate and to the IT Governance Group (beginning of the fall semester, beginning of the spring semester, and near the end of the spring semester) relating to all aspects of IT services, the usage level of those services, a budget analysis, IT's various ongoing and future operation, and progress according to the annual work and strategic plans. The reports shall also include statements and documentation supporting deviation from the annual and strategic plans, and the third report shall include a summary of annual work and strategic plan progress, operations, and budget.

Proposal 20-15 (6 of 6)

6. IT shall conduct a university-wide annual evaluation that reflects its current work and strategic plans. The criteria and the process for evaluation should be conducted in cooperation with the Senate and the IT Governance Group. IT shall present the evaluation results and mechanisms for addressing evaluation results to the Senate and to the IT Governance Group.