
Academic Information Technology Council

Minutes of 19 February 2024

Call to Order

The regular meeting of the Western Michigan University Faculty Senate Academic Information Technology Council was called to order at 10:03 a.m. on 19 February 2024 via Webex video conferencing by Timothy Broadwater, chair.

Members Present: Amy Bocko (substitute for Geraldine Rinna), Timothy Broadwater, Brian Carnell, Jessica Cataldo, Colin Cork, Matthew Fries, Paul Gallagher, Annette Hamel, Andrew Holmes, Pavel Ikononov, Michael Kahwaji, Katie Marshall, Cara Masselink, Joshua Naranjo, Ryan Tay

Members Absent: Scott Puckett, Zoann Snyder

Ex Officio: Kieran Fogarty

Guests: Katie Easley, Student Success Services; Bryon Glock, Office of Information Technology; Amy Vance, Office of Information Technology

Quorum

A quorum was present with 16 members in attendance, of the 10 needed to establish a quorum.

Agenda

[MOTION] It was moved by Ikononov, seconded by Cork, to accept the agenda as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

Minutes

[MOTION] It was moved by Ikononov, seconded by Naranjo, to approve the 22 January 2024 minutes as presented. With one abstention, the motion carried.

Student Success Hub Presentation

Glock presented a system overview including data sources (e.g., Banner, DegreeWorks), the university's Customer Relationship Management (CRM), GoWMU portal, and communication tools. System brings together learning and fulfillment, self and belonging, and health and well-being services and programs at the university. Vance presented Secure Socket Shell (SSH) tools, including the team, appointments, alerts, advising notes, referrals, tasks & success plans, text messaging, live chat & chatbot, success program usage tracking, and marketing cloud journeys. Vance showed the student-facing website to AITC. Easley explained alerts within the system and how the alerts are generated. There are three sources: data integration, such as a change of major or a low midterm or final grade; academic and holistic well-being concern forms; and the Thriving survey. Alerts go to academic advisors, peer navigators, navigation specialists, or success navigators. The Navigator Network is a group of professional staff and student employees who focus on supporting students' academic, financial, and/or well-being needs. It was established through the Empowering Futures gift. The referral system in SSH serves as a warm handoff; it puts the responsibility on the staff member to close the loop rather than on students to navigate. A question regarding SSH utilization was posed. Easley noted that all undergraduate students will need to use it because it is how they make appointments with members of their success team. All students receive at least one alert, as every student is assigned an alert in their first semester at WMU as an introduction to the system. Glock also noted that students should schedule appointments with their advisor in the SSH, and that the case record in the system follows the student through their undergraduate career and serves as a central point for the student. Glock also noted that they have not done a thorough analysis of system analytics yet, though they are working with the Evaluation Center to conduct an evaluation of the system, as well as WMUx to conduct focus groups. Another question was asked regarding faculty use within the system and whether it could be used as a communication tool (e.g., text messaging) for faculty-student communications. Glock noted that there is a program that texts students via one central phone number; however, the system does not currently have the capacity to support all faculty. It could be something for future considerations, or other options could also be explored. A third question was asked about how student concern forms link with the system. Easley noted that student concern forms go to Student Affairs and "live" in another system. Academic concern forms are contained in SSH and trigger the alerts shown. Glock also encouraged faculty to submit midterm grades, as these grades also trigger alerts and follow-up in the system. A fourth question

was asked about mental health support. Easley noted that students can schedule an appointment with a navigator who oversees mental health support, but that appointments through the Sindecuse Health Center do not go through SSH. Lastly, instructions were shown on how to differentiate between different forms and when to use each. It was also noted that graduate students are not in SSH yet, but forms completed still go to the staff.

Reports of Officers

Chair Broadwater did not provide a report.

Ex Officio Fogarty reported that the Artificial Intelligence (AI) Subcommittee will be presenting the results from its survey at the April Faculty Senate meeting. After that presentation, the subcommittee will dissolve.

Reports of University Representatives

Holmes reported that the Office of Information Technology (OIT) is working on operationalizing its new governance structure by 1 July. The structure will be led by the Information Technology (IT) Executive Council and will oversee the IT Governance Chairs Committee (a committee made up of the chairs from the Strategic Governance Committees). OIT is currently working to support the Instructional Technology Committee with the thought that the current AITC chair could also serve as chair of the Instructional Technology Committee. Holmes and Fogarty will discuss what this may look like to ensure no one person is too overloaded. Fogarty also asked about faculty involvement expectations on these committees. Holmes anticipated at least one faculty in each, more as needed, based on topic/focus. A “quick reference” guide for chairs of the committees will be developed that identifies the home for specific topics to ensure they are being addressed in the right space to reduce duplicated efforts. Holmes also noted that OIT is putting together Academic Affairs' shared goals, working with deans to put together goals for the colleges and goals from OIT, which will focus on culture and tracking/visibility of projects. Holmes also reported that the communications collaboration survey is complete. The survey is going through the university survey committee to get it on the calendar, ideally before summer. Holmes put the link to the survey in the meeting chat and asked AITC members to complete it and send any feedback for improvements. Lastly, Holmes reported that the instructional technology standards for classrooms, developed in 2021, have been met with some suggestions or requests for changes. Prior to moving forward with additional classroom updates, OIT wants to put together a task force to revise standards. Marshall, Cataldo, and Tay volunteered to serve on the task force. Ideally, this will be completed by the first week in April.

Carnell reported Instructional Technology Center (ITC) now offers live chat support via Teams. Announcement was made on eLearning.

Glock reported that their first launch of a journey in the SSH indicated that spam and phishing protections are working as intended.

Tay reported that the Artificial Intelligence (AI) Committee will be working in small groups to identify AI tools.

Unfinished Business

Glock and Carnell noted that once the communications collaboration survey is approved, the results will be used to generate a report. Marshall noted there are works to condense policies and brainstorm other ways to approach policies. Holmes stated a goalpost deadline of 1 April to have a draft to the University Policy Committee. There are works to move toward broad policies with more specific guidelines and rules that could be adapted more rapidly if needed in the future.

New Business

None.

Announcements

A reminder from Chair Broadwater to email him any specific information to share at the 29 February Faculty Senate meeting.

Adjournment

[MOTION] It was moved by Cork, seconded by Carnell, to adjourn the meeting at 11:15 a.m. The motion carried unanimously. The Academic and Information Technology Council will meet next on 18 March 2024 at 10 a.m. via Webex video conferencing.

Approval

Submitted by Jessica Cataldo, Substitute Secretary

Minutes were approved on 18 March 2024.