Tufts University  
Arts, Sciences, and Engineering Faculty Information Technology Committee  
Annual Report  
2009-2010

During the 2009 – 2010 academic year, the AS&E Information Technology Committee met six times. The October 21, 2009 meeting was chaired by Austin Napier. At this meeting Lee Minardi was elected chair of the committee.

The Committee focused this past year on a few IT topics it deemed important to the AS&E community. These included:

- Learning Management Systems (LMS) and the replacement of Blackboard
- Computer Security
- Email and Calendaring systems
- Classroom technology

The massive virus attach on many PC’s in AS&E in Fall 2009 pushed network border security to the top of our topics list. Chuck Young and Phil Pascale of UIT provided the committee with an excellent summary of the magnitude of computer security problems as well as an understanding of the trade-offs between computer network security and the ease and extent to which a Tufts employee can access the internet. Further discussion is needed between UIT and faculty to help define where the line should be drawn between these competing goals.

The pending phase-out of the Blackboard system was a catalyst to review the status of selecting a replacement for Blackboard to serve AS&E. Neal Hirsig, Assistant Director of Instructional Services for ITS, gave an overview of the Moodle and Sakai Learning Management Systems as well as a comparison of their capabilities. Some committee members participated in hands-on workshops to gain a better understanding of these two leading candidates to replace Blackboard. In March, the LMS evaluation committee recommended Sakai for the new University-wide learning management system.

The massive adoption of smart phones such as the Blackberry, iPhone, and Treo by faculty and students coupled with the increased reliance on commercial web-based email products (e.g., gmail, and Yahoo) has demonstrated a need to phase out Tufts webmail and replace it with something better. The need to provide a robust calendaring system that supports multiple platforms and calendaring sharing on the personal, department, and group level is evident. It was announced in April that AS&E will move to a Microsoft Exchange email server for all faculty and staff. This should provide improved email and calendaring from office, home, and on the road.
Committee Wiki

Sheryl Barnes of UIT and Lee Minardi designed and implemented a wiki website for the committee to act as a focal point for information regarding committee business. The site may be viewed by the entire Tufts community but can be edited only by committee members and designated contributors. It was hoped that the wiki would provide a model and template for other faculty committees. The link to the AS&E IT Committee wiki is: https://wikis.uit.tufts.edu/confluence/display/itcomm/Home

2009 – 2010 Meetings – Minutes available from the Committee Wiki

October 21, 2009
- David Kahle provided an update on UIT activities and Tony Suprizio for ITS.
- Debbie Nanni of UIT provided information about software licensing.

December 4, 2009
- Network Border Security with Chuck Young and Phil Pascale of UIT.
- Blackboard Replacement Plan with Neal Hirsig of ITS.

January 27, 2010
- Learning Management Systems discussion comparing Moodle and Sakai with background information by Neal Hirsig of ITS and Sheryl Barnes, UIT.

February 10, 2010
- Joint meeting with Tisch Library committee.

March 10, 2010
- Email and calendaring, issues and future plans. Presentation and discussion led by James Moran and Ray Wallet of UIT.

April 7, 2010
- Joint meeting with UIT Liaison program.

Acknowledgement

The Tufts UIT and ITS organizations have been extremely supportive of the committee this past year. I would like to thank David Kahle, CIO, and Tony Sulprizio, Director of ITS, for their participation at committee meetings, for providing staff to inform the committee, and for being very open in receiving committee input regarding IT matters that affect us all. I’d also like to thank those ITS, and UIT representatives highlighted in this report

Submitted May 4, 2010
Lee R. Minardi, Chair
Home page of the AS&E IT Committee Wiki site.

https://wikis.uit.tufts.edu/confluence/display/itcomm/Home

Tufts Arts & Sciences and Engineering Faculty IT Committee

This is the home page for the Arts & Sciences and Engineering IT Committee.

A Committee on Information Technology, to monitor and provide advice on the delivery of information technology services provided to AS&E to support the University’s teaching and research missions.

Members

Current list of Members

Complete Bylaws:

http://asae.tufts.edu/faculty-committees/asaeinformation.htm

Current priority topics:

- Blackboard and Learning Management System software - http://co.tufts.edu/ims
  Blackboard History by Neal Hirsig
- Research Computing
- Computer Network and Security
  Network Security Presentation by Chuck Young and Phil Pascale
- Wiki’s for faculty
- Windows 7
- Email and Calendar (see March 10, 2010 meeting minutes)
- Smart Phones
- Classroom Technology
- Improving Faculty IT Awareness