Annual Report, 2018-2019
Arts, Sciences, & Engineering Faculty IT Committee

*Larry Ford, Chair (Barbara Parmenter, Chair in Fall 2018)*

The Committee met four times during the 2018-2019 academic year, on September 24, October 15, and December 10, 2018 and on February 20, 2019.

At the **September meeting**, Paul Bergen (Educational Technology and Learning Spaces Director) and Theresa Regan (Enterprise Infrastructure & Operations Director) updated the committee on some existing and some new initiatives. There was an extended discussion of Canvas, which had recently been introduced. Some faculty have found it more difficult to use than the previous learning system, Trunk. The more general issue of complex software packages was debated. It was agreed that feedback to TTS to improve easy of use was desirable. Mechanisms for faculty feedback were discussed, especially for a survey of TTS services.

The planning for a survey was continued at the **October meeting**, where committee members gave their input about the timing and nature of the survey. At this meeting, Theresa Regan updated the committee on some new initiatives, including Mobile device encryption to enhance security and the TTS Virtual Lab. The latter allows faculty, staff and students to use university licensed software on their personal computers and tablets at any time.

The discussion of these initiatives continued at the **December meeting**. Theresa Regan gave updates on both software access and security issues, including 2-factor authentication. David Grogen of TTS gave a presentation on the form of the planned survey and the schedule for its development. Barbara Parmenter stepped down as chair of the committee due to her impending retirement from Tufts. The committee thanked her for her service as chair. Larry Ford was selected to become chair in Spring 2019.

At the **February meeting**, there was a discussion of a proposal from the undergraduate members that course syllabi and faculty evaluations be made available to students before they register for courses. It was noted that departments differ considerably in the amount of detail about their courses on the departmental websites. The committee agreed that making more course information readily available to students is a good idea, and there was some discussion of ways to do this. However, the specific suggestions of posting syllabi and
student evaluations of faculty were viewed more skeptically. Syllabi seem to be the intellectual property of the faculty who create them, so posting them on a webpage would require permission. There are privacy concerns regarding posting student evaluations. It was suggested that intellectual property and privacy issues involve policy decisions which are beyond the scope of this committee. At this meeting, Paul Bergen gave the committee an update on the planned Faculty IT Survey.

Subsequent to the meeting, the individual committee members participated in a trial run of the survey. The final version of the survey was issue to the entire faculty in April, and the committee expects to learn about the outcome in Fall 2019.