Selection of chair for 2017-2018: Barbara Parmenter was “elected” chair of the Committee by consent.

Key topics to focus on for 2017-2018:

- Methods for gathering faculty input and feedback – possibilities include having more targeted get-togethers like the Digital Humanities meeting last spring, or reinstating the Faculty Technology Liaison program
- Services for data science
- AV environments and supports including events
- Canvas migration

Presentations at the meeting:

David Kahle – brief overview of current IT initiatives

Tufts has completed a new integrated library system using Ex Libris which has been a major IT initiative. This is a widely used system at universities and will connect seamlessly with the new learning management system, Canvas.

Tufts is making good progress on 2-factor authentication. In ASE, 60% of faculty and staff are enrolled. Goal is for all faculty and staff to be enrolled before the health insurance open enrollment period as there is a significant uptick in fraud issues around that time. Student employees are next in line for changing to 2-Factor. SIS is not yet 2-factored enabled but will be at some point in the future.

Tufts is also developing services related to the DISC initiative (Data Intensive Studies Center), including ways to make data science available for across disciplines.

David introduced Jesse Anderson, the new Associate Director of Audio Visual and Media Services at Tufts and talked about efforts to create good AV environments for teaching.

Larry Thomas – brief overview of the NextGeneration Technology Stack

Tufts is doing changing its data warehouse system. In the current system, loading data is very difficult, it’s expensive, has limited computation ability, can use only structured data (rows/columns), lacks tools for metadata, and needs specialized support staff. The “NextGen” data warehouse goals are to handle any type of data, any volume of data, allow a range of computations to be performed, to decouple data storage from computation, and to do all this in a more economical way than the current system. Tufts has chosen HADOOP to be the platform, and Apache Spark, to run on that. Apache Spark is widely used
across the data analytics industry, is open source, and is easy to use with R, Python, and other languages.

The goal is to have both Tufts administration and researchers able to use the data warehouse. TTS is planning for a 4-node cluster for early 2018. This will be core support for the DISC initiative.

Patrick Florance and Annie Swafford – Digital Humanities at Tufts

Patrick Florance is the Associate Director, Geospatial Technology Services, and he introduced Annie Swafford, Tufts’ new Digital Humanities Specialist. Annie discussed the plans to support faculty and students to use digital humanities tools. She can act as a consultant for faculty and students interested in projects involving digital tools, can do classroom presentations about the variety of digital tools available, is organizing workshops like text analysis (see Data Lab workshop schedule) and will help connect researchers across campus who are using digital humanities tools. Her email is joanna.swafford@tufts.edu, and there is a Digital Humanities e-list, dh@elist.tufts.edu. The Digital Humanities web site will be up soon.