IT Governance Committee
Meeting Minutes
9.25.14

Members in Attendance:
John Charles, Vice President for Information Systems and Technology
Professor Denny Freeman, Dean for Undergraduate Education
Professor Karen Gleason, Associate Provost (Co-Chair)
Professor Frans Kaashoek, Electrical Engineering and Computer Science
Anthony P. Sharon, Deputy Executive Vice President (Co-Chair)
Professor Maria Zuber, Vice President for Research

Guests:
Chris Hill, Principal Research Scientist
Professor Robert Redwine, Director of Bates Linear Accelerator Center
Professor Gregory Rutledge, Department of Chemical Engineering

Approval Items

I. Meeting minutes approved.

Discussion Items

II. Information Technology Policy Group (ITPG).
   - Professor Redwine summarized recent discussions about IT policy committees and thoughts about how many might be necessary. In addition to the new ITPG, there is a proposed Presidential Committee on Electronic Records and Online Data Privacy, and the proposed new Faculty Committee on Learner Data Access.
   - All agreed that the IT policy work of the Institute should happen in ways that are not overly complicated, and make good use of everyone’s time.
   - Professor Redwine noted that the ITPG would have a somewhat broader charge than the Presidential Committee on Electronic Records and Online Data Privacy, and that the proposed new Faculty Committee on Learner Data Access would have a much narrower charge.
   - There was general agreement to propose simplifying the IT policy development structure by having the ITPG serve as an “umbrella” group for the Presidential Committee on Electronic Records and Online Data Privacy, as well as for the Faculty Committee on Learner Data Access.

III. Portfolio Management.
   - Tony Sharon introduced a portfolio-based model for depicting the lifecycle of Institute-level IT projects, systems, and services, i.e., those designed for Institute-wide use and supported by IS&T or by specific DLCs (e.g., ODL for Video, Libraries for GIS, etc.).
   - The four-quadrant model depicts the lifecycle for IT systems and services (Innovate, Deploy, Manage, & Retire) along with the associated portfolio management strategies. The model calls for: investment of resources during Innovate & Deploy phases of the lifecycle (creating differentiation or closing a modernization gap);
Seeking Efficiencies during the Manage phase (when systems or services are no longer creating differentiation or when merely performing compliance activities); and the Reallocation of resources during the Retire phase (when the systems or services have reached their end-of-life or could be alternatively sourced).

- The four-quadrant model also highlights the need for hand-offs of systems and services from innovation teams to service delivery teams when deployment-at-scale occurs — thereby freeing up the innovation teams to focus on the next rounds of innovation. Innovation involving Scripts (SIPB), Grad Apply (CSAIL), COEUS (VPR), and MITx (ODL) were cited as examples where hand-offs needed to occur.
- IS&T and ODL are engaged in piloting the hand-off process — from the MITx ODL innovation team to the IS&T service delivery team.

IV. IT Governance Roadmap and ITGC Initiatives.

- Tony Sharon introduced a three-level model for depicting the proposed IT@MIT Governance Roadmap – noting that Level 1 activities and processes (such as transparency of decision making, roadmaps for systems and services, and initial allocations of IT Modernization investments) are mostly in place. Nevertheless, project prioritization processes in use by the subcommittees are typically ad hoc or reactive (rather than focused on programmatic outcomes), and they are limited to IS&T-supported services and systems (not inclusive of other Institute-wide IT services).
- In order to progress to Level 2, the ITGC will need to establish more of an institutional view of IT@MIT resources and services — this is item 1 on the list of ITGC initiatives for this academic year.
- Item 2 on the initiatives list involves establishing processes for effectively negotiating appropriate funding and service-level expectations for all IT units engaged in providing institutional (Institute-wide) IT services.
- Item 3 on the list involves establishing the IT Policy Group (ITPG) – with an initial agenda that includes developing data governance and data access policies and procedures, as well as policies addressing who gets to use “mit.edu” within their email and website addresses.
- There was agreement to proceed with collecting the IT@MIT inventory data.

V. Transformation Roadmaps.

- John Charles shared an overview of the Technology Strategy and Roadmap — the central component of the four-part IT@MIT Strategic Plan. The other three components include the Governance Roadmap, the IT Investment Plan, and the Communications Plan.
- Mid-November is the (no-later-than) target for completing version 1 of the full four-part IT@MIT Strategic Plan — giving us time to solicit feedback from key stakeholders prior to our December ITGC meeting.
- It can be difficult for staff to fully appreciate the core of such a major transformation. Therefore, it will be important to crystalize it for them in terms of “what it means for me”.
- IS&T will provide comprehensive staff development programs designed to retrain and retool as many of its current workforce as possible. Nevertheless, we will also need to successfully recruit a number of highly skilled and well-experienced staff with agile, devops, integration, and cloud brokerage skillsets. We will also need
faculty assistance with identifying more effective ways to tap into MIT’s talented pool of undergraduates.

**Endorsement Items**

VI. Committee on Research Computing (CRC) Roadmap.

- Chris Hill and Professor Rutledge presented the CRC Roadmap – noting that it is aligned with the vision outlined within the 2013 research computing report, and that it is designed to lay the foundation for a fully developed MIT shared research computing environment.

- Committee discussion focused on the percentage of servers that have moved off campus. Power and physical space are easiest to measure. MGHPCC is 25% occupied, Bates is higher. Physical space is filling faster than electrical capacity.

- Professor Gleason would like to receive progress reports that she can then reference as DLCs come to her with space requests. She would like to help the CRC move servers and research computing workloads to the appropriate places.

- In response to questions about public cloud providers, Chris Hill mentioned that he had conversations with Amazon, Google, and Microsoft, but price-wise they do not look that exciting – adding that we should let people vote with their feet. Science and Engineering workloads on Amazon will get expensive – but still lots of people are making the move.

- The committee thanked Chris Hill and Professor Rutledge for presenting the CRC Roadmap, and agreed that this work should move forward.