

2010-2011 Academic Computing and Telecommunications (ACTC) Final Report

Committee Members:

Chair: Larry Hoyle, Institute for Policy & Social Research (2011)
Faculty Senate Rep & Comm. Member: Sara Wilson, Mechanical Engineering (2012)
Robert Coffeen, Architecture & Urban Planning (2011)
Arienne Dwyer, Anthropology, (2011)
Argun Saatcioglu, Ed. Leadership & Policy studies, (2012)
Michael Williams, Journalism, (2012)
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Joe Gillespie, Student Health Services, Unclassified Staff (2012)
Lea Chaffin, Academic Technology Services, Support Staff (2011)
Ex-officio: Julie Loats, Co- Director, IT Services
Jane Rosenthal, Director, Privacy Office

Standing charges:

1. Monitor current and proposed policy concerning security of information, intellectual property rights and responsibilities, and other matters relating to information technology. Identify issues for which policy should be developed or revised. Report issues and any recommendations for action to SenEx. (ongoing)

Specific charges:

1. Continue to monitor the development of the "Initiative One" strategic program. Report issues or recommendations for action to SenEx. (ongoing)
2. Obtain a report from Information Technology and consult end users concerning the effect of the Libraries' separation from IT as a result of the dissolution of Information Services. Report issues and recommendations for action to SenEx by 12/1/10.

Specific Charge 2:

The committee submitted a report on November 22, 2010.

Specific Charge 1:

The committee devoted part of several meetings to information gathering and discussion of the progress of Initiative One. We found that while there has been no information updated on the Initiative One website since spring 2010, several components of the initiative are still under active development. These include: central file storage, high performance computing facilities, desktop and laptop purchasing, and document management & imaging.

Committee members felt that the process could benefit from more transparency. Current communication channels, such as through technical liaisons, are not reaching broad segments of the campus. Increasing the information given to new faculty about information technology resources at KU should receive special attention. Some members of the committee also felt that the software licensing component of the initiative could be pursued more vigorously. A need for Adobe products was one suggestion.

Research Data Management

The committee identified the issue of management of research data through the whole lifecycle as an important emerging issue. Funding agencies, such as NSF, are beginning to require data management plans as an evaluated part of the proposal process. Ensuring that research data remain available beyond the funding phase of grants will require institutional resources. Both policies and infrastructure will be required. From the proposal stage, when IRB review will need to ensure that permission to archive and distribute data are obtained, to final disposition, when someone will have to decide that the data are to be maintained no longer, both the researcher and the institution will have a role.

At the institutional level, Information Technology, the Library, and RGS have cooperative roles to play, with support from central administration crucial. Coordination with external entities – archives such as the Interuniversity Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICPSR), and the Incorporated Research Institutions for Seismology (IRIS) will also be useful.

Some Policy Questions

How is the responsibility for data management and preservation allocated between the individual researcher and the institution? The researcher is closest to the process, but the institution has an interest in maintaining integrity, security, and visibility of the data.

Who has rights to, and control over, the data? For what period should the researcher generating data have sole access to them? How are profits allocated if data have commercial value?

How will policies enhance the ability to perform research? What policies will increase the burden on researchers?

How are decisions to maintain data made? Who makes the decisions?

How are privacy and access needs balanced? When, if ever, are privacy restrictions relaxed? An example: raw U.S. Census records which are made public after 72 years.

Should publication of data be given greater weight in the promotion and tenure process?

Infrastructure Needs

Secure storage for data as they are collected, cleaned, explored, and analyzed. Special facilities for confidential data.

Long term archival facilities (OAIS compliant?)

Standards for data and metadata representation. Standards vary by discipline and sub-discipline. At the university level there may (will) be a need to harmonize at the least the resource discovery metadata. Federation with other institutions will require cooperative standards.

One or more facilities for making the data public. This technology will probably evolve. Possibilities include a dynamic web site, web services, and a Semantic Web endpoint.

Tools to facilitate the data collection lifecycle. An example would be tools for metadata driven survey design and implementation – integrating the capture of metadata into the research process so that it is not an extra burden on the research.

Staff. People with specialized expertise will be needed to maintain the infrastructure. Researchers will also need access to experts in data science. Not everyone needs to become an expert in metadata standards, but everyone may need access to that expertise.