



Ad Hoc Faculty Senate IT Committee Meeting

23 June 2025
11:00 AM, 206 Frey

Approved Minutes of the Meeting

Attendance:

Present: Param Singh (Chair), Gerry Knapp (Secretary), Scott Baldrige, Fabio Del Piero, Thomas Douthat, Samuel Robison, Larry Smolinsky, Craig Woolley (Ex-officio), Sumit Jain (Ex-officio). Absent: Kenneth Lopata, Juana Moreno.

A regular meeting of the ad hoc FS IT committee convened at 11:00 am on June 23, 2025, in room 206 Frey at the LSU campus, with the Chair and Secretary being present.

The minutes of the last meeting (5/21/25) were adopted on a motion by Del Piero.

Chair Singh reminded everyone our next meeting would be Monday, 6/30/25.

Smolinsky moved to “add discussion of Grammarly and Zoom to the agenda”, passed unanimously. Baldrige moved to “put discussion of Grammarly and Zoom first on the agenda”, passed unanimously.

Woolley noted that he and Vice President Arbuthnot are recommending to the Provost the enabling of AI features for Grammarly and Zoom licenses, due to many requests being received for these from faculty and staff recently. For both software’s, any AI learning is constrained to the LSU environment. There are no additional licensing costs associated with enabling these features. Grammarly is only available to faculty and staff at present, and must be requested (there is a GROK article detailing how to request for any employee). Zoom AI Companion could technically be available to faculty/staff and students, but Jain indicated it should be possible to remove AI Companion access for students if needed.

Zoom AI Companion is primarily used for transcribing, summarizing, and scheduling meetings. Jain shared a link describing its capabilities (https://support.zoom.com/hc/en/article?id=zm_kb&sysparm_article=KB0058013).

Singh asked Woolley to hold off enabling Zoom AI Companion for students until the Generative AI Committee is able to discuss and give a recommendation. Zoom AI Companion will be enabled for faculty/staff.

Woolley provided an update on the ongoing IT Centralization efforts. He has met with Interim President Matt Lee, who indicated centralization is still a priority and efforts and direction will continue. Woolley has had individual meetings with many College Deans (often with academic unit heads present) and Administrative department heads. The Phase I survey has been completed in a good number of colleges and administrative departments; this survey is collecting information on personnel’s titles, what types of activities they are doing & a rough proportion of time spent on the activities. 2nd survey will start soon and is more technical. Many IT staff will stay located in the colleges even if moved under ITS umbrella. ITS will be providing support in general purpose classrooms under college control. Some staff may be left under academic or administrative units if activities can’t be supported centrally.

Woolley noted even Athletics and LSU Online are in scope for the centralization. Efficiency is the primary goal, not cost cutting. No one will lose job as a result of this process. Service will be equal or better than current. Centralized staff will have opportunities to change the type of work they are doing if desired for career development and there is a need.

Woolley estimated IT spend on campus in total is \$80-90 million per year, of which \$25-30 million is thru ITS. Expenditures outside of ITS includes grant spend, software/hardware purchases from units, college/unit level data centers, etc.

Concerns were raised about possible long lead times on installing software on laptops, office computers as needed, with centralization and loss of local admin rights by end users. Woolley noted they are currently researching a path forward that people can have local admin rights granted temporarily on request (will be a cost to university though); would be largely automated for quick turnaround. The need to make ITS 100 process more efficient and have more packages waived was briefly discussed in this context.

A question was raised as to whether centralized ITS staff would help users with personal PCs, which happens currently at least in some departments. Jain was not in favor, but Woolley indicates that such support will be considered as ongoing service.

Next meeting of the committee is planned for Monday June 30th, at 9am. Meeting adjourned on motion from Douthat at 12:12pm, passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,
Gerry Knapp, Secretary