

Technology Committee Annual Report 2016-17
April 2017

The college Technology Committee's focus this year was on the college technology infrastructure and data-storage solutions.

After surveying our constituents, we reviewed the policy on computer upgrades for faculty. We investigated the current standard, upgrades every three years, and found it to be adequate for most faculty needs. Those who believe they need an upgrade sooner are able to request that from the executive associate dean. No policy change is recommended.

After last year's decision to give two computer labs up to UF Classroom Support for makeovers, the committee was asked to recommend whether to give over two more Weimer computer labs (3024 and 3028), thus saving the College money but losing control over the labs and the technology in them. After surveying faculty who teach in those rooms, we learned that specialized software is taught in those spaces, and it is slow and cumbersome to access those resources via network. The committee recommends against giving up College control at this time, but it does recommend updating the technology in those spaces as well as in 3032. The latter room is, in many ways, the face of the college. It is the space most used for guests and demonstrations, and it is in need of a makeover as well as improved projection, teleconferencing and computing resources.

Along the same line, the committee investigated the status of the college's conference rooms and the technology available in them. We recommend that every space have at least a conferencing telephone, and that 3032 and 2066 have high-quality video conferencing capabilities. Simple web cameras are not enough to put our best foot forward. We also discussed installing a computerized scheduling system for the conference rooms, including a panel outside to indicate any reservations. We learned that UF is likely to install such a system campus-wide in the next few years for classrooms and it likely is much more cost efficient to wait.

The Faculty Senate brought to the committee's attention that some faculty are concerned about long-term storage of data sets they use or have used in their research. There are at least five options available beyond local storage on an office computer (which is a bad idea for many reasons). Options include UF Dropbox, UF OneDrive, the CJC L Drive, CJC S Drive and UF M and R drives. The data are stored off site in a secure building on the East Campus and are backed up just about continuously. Full information on the options and drives is available here: <http://its.jou.ufl.edu/2017/02/24/saving-files/>. It is recommended that researchers have at least two backup copies of any critical data.

We intended to work on an update of the college's computer policy for students, but we didn't get to that. It is recommended that the committee take that up next year.

Committee members:

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