

Council on Distance Education, Libraries, and Information Technology

2013-14 Annual Report to the University Senate

INTRODUCTION

The Council on Distance Education, Libraries, and Information Technology (DELIT) is a council of the University Senate. The duties and responsibilities include:

- Formulate policies governing the delivery of distance education and the education and research activities and services provided by libraries and information technology;
- Assist in the interpretation of these services to the university community;
- Assist in the presentation of major needs in these areas to the university administration;
- Advise the appropriate administrative office on the appointment of the associate vice president for distance education, the director of university libraries, and the chief information officer.

DELIT consists of sixteen members:

- Eight faculty, at least seven of whom are tenure track faculty: Ann Allen, EHE, Peter Anderson*, ENG; Jose Diaz*, LIB; Scott Scheer, FAES; Michel Torbey, MED; Louis Ulman*, ASC/A&H; Karl Whittington, ASC/A&H; (* indicates outgoing member)
- Three students in the graduate, professional, and undergraduate categories: Mark Calhoun/Colin Odden (alternate), graduate; Stephanie Tower, professional; Adam Jackson, undergraduate.
- Four administrators (or their designees), including the associate vice president for distance education, the dean of the graduate school, the director of university libraries, the chief information officer: Michael Hofherr, AVP distance education; Kathleen Wallace, graduate school; Carol Diedrichs, libraries; Michael Hofherr, CIO (interim).
- One staff member, appointed by the University Staff Advisory Council: Tracy Grody.

The membership, duties, and responsibilities reflect a rules change that was implemented in March 2014 (see *Activities and Findings*). This included an increase from seven to eight faculty members (to be implemented in 2014-15) and an increase in administrators from three to four (fulfilled by Michael Hofherr serving as both CIO and interim AVP for Distance Education).

DELIT met seven times during the 2013-14 academic year: September 26, October 24, November 21, February 13, March 3, April 3, and May 5. All meetings were from 3:30-5 pm in 204 Thompson Libraries. We are grateful for the assistance and expertise of Quanetta Batts, who served as the council secretary. Minutes and other information are available at http://senate.osu.edu/?page_id=223.

KEY ACTIVITIES AND FINDINGS FOR 2013-14

Rules Change

A rules change was passed at the March 2014 meeting of the University Senate, thus changing the name and expanding the duties and responsibilities and membership of the council. The name changed from the *Council on Libraries and Information Technology* to the *Council on Distance Education, Libraries, and Information Technology* (DELIT). The change

reflected the growing importance of distance education. Membership increased from fourteen to sixteen to accommodate a new administrative position (Associate Vice President of Distance Education, created in Dec. 2012) and an additional faculty. The additional faculty member need not be tenure-track, reflecting the option to include distance education expertise and perspectives from non tenure-track faculty.

OSU Online Steering Committee

Associate Vice President for Distance Education Michael Hofherr formed the OSU Online Steering Committee on which two DELIT faculty members will serve in 2014-15. This committee will provide key guidance on evolving issues in distance education. See <http://oaa.osu.edu/distanceded.html>.

CIO Search

DELIT chair Peter Anderson served on an advisory committee chaired by Senior Vice President and CFO Geoffrey Chatas. The search resulted in the appointment of interim CIO Michael Hofherr to fulfill the position of Vice President and Chief Information Officer.

University IT Standards and Security Standards

Tom Mobray, Senior Director of Enterprise Architecture (OCIO), directs an effort to create a more uniform computing architecture that is more secure and less cumbersome to maintain. This committee will develop standard computing and networking configurations for the university and a process by which requests to deviate from these standards will be evaluated. Helen Patton, Chief Information Security Officer (OCIO), direct an information security initiative. The process involves assessing the state of information security at OSU and then recommending steps and costs to implement security measures.

Institutional Data Policy

DELIT provided feedback on a major revision to the institutional data policy. The revision aims to classify data according to security risks and identify the management structure to maintain security. Eunice Hornsby and Helen Patton received considerable feedback. Some key feedback points are summarized in the section to follow: Key Future Activities.

University Libraries Research Commons

Carol Diedrichs described a new physical space called the Research Commons that will respond to the needs of the research community (graduate students in particular). The Research Commons will provide consultations, education, and training related to searching and identifying information resources not only within OSU Libraries but also in various academic units across campus. The physical space will accommodate meeting areas with seating, computers, displays, and printing facilities. More details are available in a Research Commons Task Force report, available at: <http://library.osu.edu/staff/administration-reports/RCTFReport.pdf>. No DELIT members served on this task force.

University Libraries Digital Humanities and Data Management Positions

University Libraries recruited a cohort of 6 librarians that offer expertise in data management, digital humanities, and geology/GIS. These additions and the recruitment of an Associate Director for Research and Education are critical to the creation and oversight of the proposed Research Commons.

Research Computing

John Heimaster reported on the findings of a research computing committee formed by Vice President for Research Carol Whitacre. Key recommendations are to include the research community in policy-making decisions, recognize the need to improve our on-campus

network for data transfer (OSU received a NSF grant to assist with the creation of a separate research network), and foster hiring of IT and library positions to support research.

MOOC Position Paper

AVP Hofherr requested that DELIT provide a 2-page position paper regarding the role of MOOCs in the undergraduate curriculum. Specific questions involve the role of MOOCs in the education process, faculty compensation, cost, role in the promotion and tenure process, graduate teaching assistant support, etc. DELIT member Louis Ulman headed a subgroup (with Karl Whittington and Mark Calhoun) to investigate this issue. Louie provided a verbal summary at the closing (May 2014) meeting but no formal position paper was submitted by the subgroup. ODEE will have a position paper that will be shared with DELIT in 2014-15.

KEY ISSUES AND ACTIVITIES FOR 2014-15

Distance Education and MOOCs

DELIT should provide key leadership on distance education, through membership on the OSU Online Steering Committee, and through policy development on distance education and MOOCs. Compensation, funding models, the positive and negative impacts to on-campus instruction are important considerations. New DELIT members Jim Fowler and Avraham Benatar will provide key expertise in MOOCs and distance education.

Staff Perspectives on DELIT issues

The USAC member should pursue dialogue with the USAC concerning how distance education policies can benefit continuing education and career development, as well impact demands on staff to support DE activities.

Increased Representation of Research Needs

The research computing report (described earlier) highlighted several needs of the research computing community. DELIT should consider the impact of university security and data management policies on research. There are concerns about treating all data the same and creating a cumbersome research environment. John Heimaster has offered valuable input to DELIT and has been invited to all DELIT meeting. We are appreciative for his input and leadership on research computing issues.

Increased Interaction/Representation with the Medical Center

There are many parallel issues affecting the Medical Center and DELIT should promote interaction and feedback with this community. Representation from the Medical Center was not strong this year. A suggestion is to contact the Research Steering Committee at the Medical Center to discuss ways to improve interaction.

Institutional Data Policy (IDP)

The IDP should be reviewed by DELIT to confirm that key concerns have been addressed. In particular,

- the proposed IDP does not clearly distinguish between administrative data and research data. This can lead to unnecessary and cumbersome security requirements and precautions on research data. The policy does not acknowledge the inter-institutional nature of developing, using, and storing research data. For example, the policy indicates that faculty and students must relinquish institutional data upon leaving the university. This may be appropriate for some types of administrative data but not research data. Other concerns are in the May 2014 meeting minutes.

Recruiting Membership and Expertise on DELIT

The expanded duties for DELIT require membership that brings expertise in distance education, libraries, and information technology. This will require membership that is not generic but focused on these needs. Membership should reflect a desire to increase interaction with the medical school, and a need to represent the needs and perspectives in the arts, humanities, and sciences. DELIT leadership should work with the senate president and secretary in February and March 2015 to identify and carefully select DELIT members for 2015-16. DELIT should also consider inviting guest faculty, staff, and students where needed to solicit feedback and expertise on certain topics.

Transition from a Reactive to Proactive Council

The administrators, students, staff, and faculty on DELIT should work in a proactive mode to identify issues and needs collectively, and to formulate policies on these issues as defined in the DELIT duties and responsibilities. Proactive examples this year include the involvement by DELIT on IT standards, information security, and the invitation to develop a position paper on MOOCs (the latter is an ongoing task that DELIT should complete). Examples in which DELIT operated in a reactive mode include the Research Commons, where DELIT provided little input on the process. Overall, DELIT serves as an excellent forum for dialogue and interaction between administrators, faculty, students, and staff. This council will benefit from meetings that are focused on proactively identifying needs and developing policies to address them, rather than reactively listening to decisions or activities over which DELIT can effect little change or input.

Leadership for 2014-15

Profs. Tim Rhodus and Avraham Benatar were elected (unanimously) as the chair and vice-chair of DELIT for 2014-15.

Respectfully submitted,
Prof. Peter M. Anderson
Chair, 2013-14
Council on Distance Education, Libraries, and Information Technology
June 27, 2014