Senate Governance and Nominating Committee Report to Senate – Dissolution of the Senate Information Technology Committee April 29, 2014
Motion

Background:

As was reported to the Senate in April 2013, upon receipt of a report (attached as Appendix A) from the Senate Information Technology Committee [SITC], on April 19, 2013 the Senate Operations Review Committee [SORC] (now the Senate Governance and Nominating Committee [SGNC]) considered the following recommendations:

1) We recommend that the Senate not continue with the SITC in its current form as the committee lacks a relevant mandate and the value offered by the committee to the Queen's community is unclear.
2) We recommend that Senate determine whether it has a need for a Senate committee related to information technology.
    a. If Senate determines that there is a need for such a committee, we recommend that Senate work with the committee to establish a clear mandate and membership structure to better align the committee to Senate's mandate.
    b. If Senate decides that there is no need for such a committee, we recommend that Senate consider the risks associated with dissolving the committee and how best to ensure that issues related to information technology are aligned to Senate.

In 2013 it was recommended by SORC that in order to ensure that appropriate mechanisms are in place to address the SITC's justifiable concerns regarding the need for adequate opportunities for students, faculty and staff to be informed of, and comment on, IT plans and priorities, a mechanism should be established to ensure faculty input and awareness of IT initiatives that have academic impacts. As noted in the report from the SITC, such a mechanism had been established for students. SORC stated that it would undertake an evaluation of the effectiveness of the mechanism while SITC is on hiatus and report back to Senate in April of 2014 regarding this issue.

In response to the recommendation from the Senate Information Technology Committee (SITC) to the Senate Operations Review Committee (now the Senate Governance and Nominating Committee), the Senate placed the Senate Information Technology Committee on hiatus effective September 1, 2013.

Over the past year, the Senate Governance and Nominating Committee (SGNC) has met on two occasions with members of the Information Technology Services group to discuss the progress toward the motion passed by Senate on April 30, 2013 as follows:

> ***That the Senate Information Technology Committee be placed on hiatus for one year (2013/2014) pending a review of the recommendations contained in the committee report attached as Appendix A and that Senate recommend to the Chief Information Officer that a Faculty Advisory Committee within the Information Technology Services administrative committee structure be established.***

It is the view of the SGNC that ITS now has a well-developed advisory structure that allows the AVP-IT/CIO to receive input and advice from a variety of stakeholders, which was the role fulfilled by the SITC. The SGNC asked ITS to develop an advisory committee specifically for faculty to have an opportunity to be actively engaged in IT matters that may have teaching or research impacts. This is an important role fulfilled by the SITC, but is not a governance function The terms of reference for the Faculty IT Advisory Committee are attached as Appendix A and further information regarding the membership and meeting schedule is available on the ITS website.

Consultation structures were previously identified as areas needing to be addressed prior to making a recommendation regarding this matter to the Senate. SGNC is now of the view that ITS has put the necessary structures in place to address these needs. In a meeting on March 14, 2014, the SGNC further recommended that ITS also be mindful of the need for communication with non-faculty staff, and ensuring opportunities for receipt of input from these members of the Queen's community. ITS has advised that they will continue to actively seek staff opinion through regular assessment and through communication with departmental computing representatives.

In consideration of the above, and the recommendations of the SITC, it is the view of the SGNC that the academic and research implications of information technology applications are best fulfilled through the robust consultative and advisory mechanisms that have been put in place as a result of the proposal from the SITC. The committee structure of the Senate is an enabling mechanism to allow the Senate to fulfill its governance functions, but the SITC does not effectively enable any oversight or governance role.

The Governance and Nominating Committee recommends as follows:

Motion

That the Senate Information Technology Committee be dissolved immediately.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lynda Colgan, Chair
Senate Governance and Nominating Committee

Members 2013/2014:
E. Berkok
M. Blennerhassett
P. Hart
T. Krupa
P. Martin
I. Reeve
A. Tierney

Appendix A

Recommendations to the Senate Operations Review Committee Regarding
The Requirement for the Senate Information Technology Committee

Members of the Senate Information Technology Committee (SITC) have devoted several meetings to discussing whether our Committee has a relevant mandate and is providing value for the Queen's community. We offer the following recommendations to the Senate Operations Review Committee. Below, we expand briefly on our rationale for arriving at these recommendations.

Recommendations

1) We recommend that the Senate not continue with the SITC in its current form as the committee lacks a relevant mandate and the value offered by the committee to the Queen's community is unclear.

2) We recommend that Senate determine whether it has a need for a Senate committee related to information technology.
    a. If Senate determines that there is a need for such a committee, we recommend that Senate work with the committee to establish a clear mandate and membership structure to better align the committee to Senate's mandate.
    b. If Senate decides that there is no need for such a committee, we recommend that Senate consider the risks associated with dissolving the committee and how best to ensure that issues related to information technology are aligned to Senate.

Rationale

Our rationale revolves around several recurring themes which emerged during our discussions regarding the Committee:

A) The Committee was established by Senate in the 1970's. Since then, to our knowledge, Senate has never referred any matter to SITC to consider, other than reviewing our mandate on several occasions.

B) The Committee has never seemed to have a strong link to Senate, and at times has functioned without a Senator as a member.

C) Since the Committee was established, the University has developed a comprehensive governance framework for information technology matters, with structures to enable decision-making and input from stakeholders. For example, the recently established Information Services and Technologies Student Advisory Committee and Enterprise Information Technology Advisory Committee now ensure that students and IT leaders and managers from all faculties have a forum to raise issues, influence priorities and provide input and direction to IT planning. The need for this Committee is greatly diminished with this governance framework in place. It is unclear if there is a requirement for a separate additional forum for faculty to have input.

D) One potential loss we can see in the demise of the Committee is the opportunity for students, staff and especially faculty to be informed of IT plans and priorities and provide input to the AVP-IT/CIO on matters relating to IT. This is the rationale behind our recommendation that Senate

consider how it has IT represented. If Senate supports the idea, an IT presence at Senate could potentially be more effective than a separate committee.

We believe it is Senate's responsibility to decide on the future of the Senate IT Committee, and we respectfully submit these recommendations for consideration by the Senate Operations Review Committee and Senate.

Respectfully,

Michael Vandenburg, Chair – Senate Information Technology Committee

Appendix B:

Faculty Advisory Committee (FAC)

The FAC is being formed by ITServices to provide a forum for Queen's faculty members to share their concerns and priorities about IT@Queen's. The Committee discusses current and new IT initiatives and is mandated to develop a report each year and to present this to ITS management. ITS management in turn responds to the report to answer faculty concerns and to continue the communication process.

Objectives

- Provide a forum for dialogue between faculty and the IT programs/service providers on campus.
- Annually review IT related programs and services used by faculty, for teaching, research and administration.
- Assess and recommend changes or additions to programs and services for the future.
- Submit an annual report including the review and recommendations of ISAT-FAC
- Provide feedback on new or potential services and technologies.
- Liaise with ISAT_SAC with one overlap meeting per year to share student and faculty perspectives

Membership

ITServices - Chair & Vice/Past Chair (2 staff)
ITServices - CIO (1 staff)
Faculty of Arts and Science (2 faculty)
Faculty of Engineering and Applied Science (1 faculty)
Faculty of Health Sciences (1 faculty)
Faculty of Law (1 faculty)
School of Business (1 faculty)
Library (1 librarian)
Society of Graduate and Professional Students (1 student)
Faculty IT Director/Manager (1 staff)

Meetings

- Meetings will be convened monthly, when possible, during the Fall and Winter terms. Dates for future meetings will be established at the beginning of each term.
- Quorum – A quorum shall at all times consist of a majority of members. All questions shall be resolved by a majority of the members present.
- Minutes – Minutes will be taken by an ITS staff member at all meetings and will include a summary of the major items discussed. These will be posted on the web and used to help develop the final report.

Additional Information

https://wiki.queensu.ca/display/itfac/ISAT+Faculty+Advisory+Committee