

## **ISC Annual Report 2005-6 August 3, 2006**

### **Overview**

This past year has been a productive one for the Instructional Support Committee; in general members of the committee felt that the topics addressed by the committee were substantive and our deliberations and decisions had impact on the college. The committee this year continued some new directions begun in 2004-5 to minimize the amount of time spent on discussion of minute details of faculty development proposals and to increase involvement in long-range planning for facilities and instructional support and in issues relating to computing and the library.

Of the changes from 2004-5 that have been continued and refined this year are the following:

- Fast-track approval of small requests by chair and Assoc. Dean
- A general principle of preferring to fund expenses for curricular development projects rather than give stipends
- Expansion of the field trip category to include classroom visitors.

In addition, this year's committee made some significant changes through:

- Funding of off-campus training workshops for faculty
- Increasing its advisory role in construction and renovation of academic facilities
- Revising Funding Guidelines to reflect the above changes, supplemented with a new ISC Handbook.

Members of the committee for 2005-06 were:

Faculty (elected): Katya Gibel Azoulay, Jennifer Green (fall), Cecilia Knight (spring), Kara Lycke, Margarita Pillado, Mark Schneider, and Anatoly Vishevsky

Administration/ex officio: Jon Chenette, Bill Francis, John Kalkbrenner, Christopher McKee, and Terri Phipps

Student: Justin Abramson (SGA) and Megan Goering (SACC).

### **ISC Role in Facilities**

The Instructional Support Committee assumed a significant advisory role in the planning, construction and renovation of academic facilities on campus. In some cases, this was a reflection of the library and ITS oversight mission of the committee (e.g. Burling master planning, Cultural Education Center policies in the AV Lab, or layout of the public—aka Creative Computing Lab —computing space in the Forum), and in some cases this was a reflection of a lack of a natural constituency for a particular facility (e.g. classroom spaces in the Campus Center). For many, perhaps most, renovation or construction projects, a logical advisory committee emerges naturally, typically through the oversight of departmental or divisional structures. The committee agreed that a reasonable precedent to set was that ISC would assist identifying a suitable advisory committee, and at its discretion would include one or more ISC members on that committee so as to keep ISC informed of developments. No one wished to see ISC meetings become bogged down in construction planning.

In this fashion, the ISC assisted in details of classroom renovations in the following instances over 2005-6:

- Reviewing Campus Center classroom furnishings
- Steiner 305 renovation planning
- Raising concerns about capacity (and scheduling beyond capacity) of ARH 120 and 131
- Creation of the Cultural Education Center

Several members of ISC served on the Burling Planning Committee over the two academic years 2004-6, considering both long-term Library Master Planning and short-term Burling First Floor (reference area) renovation with the assistance of the Boston architectural firm of Shepley-Bullfinch. The former project, initiated by the Library, has proved to be surprisingly controversial, and the planning for a relatively small-scale renovation involving mostly furnishings and shelving has dragged on for several years. The latter project was designed to answer the questions of 1) what facilities would be needed for a library facility that would house the foreseeable future needs of the Library and ITS, and 2) could such a facility reasonably come from a renovated and expanded Burling. The conclusion of Shepley-Bullfinch and the committee was that a new structure would be more cost-effective and functional, although a few members of the committee felt that additional options could still be profitably explored.

After the decision was made to move ITS into the Forum, the ISC was asked to help with planning of the public (Creative Computing Lab) area that replaced the Grill. ISC discussed this in regular meetings, and ISC representatives met with the architects (Holabird and Root) advising on furnishings and layout. ISC (led largely by student representatives) advocated for keeping this area a public and inviting campus crossroads, including some lounge-like aspects. We advocated for support of a full spectrum of computing, from e-mail to multimedia, and for a plan that would be adaptable, both in terms of space and funding, to respond to future needs.

### **Support of Strategic Plan**

The ISC provided some support for the implementation of the strategic plan, primarily in two areas:

#### **•Expanding Knowledge Initiative**

To make support of faculty investigating new EKI curricular directions consistent with other curricular development support, ISC accepted the responsibility for disbursement of funds for interdisciplinary lunches. Additional sources of funding were made available to ISC, and ISC did not have to make any decisions to turn down any applications.

#### **•Technology Goals**

As ISC has an advisory role to both ITS and the library, ISC was quite active in a number of areas that relate to technology goals of the Strategic Plan. Discussion of some of these areas arose independently of the Strategic Plan, and some were initiated specifically with the Strategic Plan in mind. 1) ISC undertook a survey of departments regarding needs for wireless network access as a way of gauging the priorities and urgency of this

implementation. We also discussed improving the ease and control of guest wireless access, primarily in the library. 2) ISC discussed a variety of collaborative/interactive technology tools relevant for instruction. We reviewed the default PioneerWeb course template, and discussed and made recommendations regarding access to online advising tools (especially faculty access to end-of-course grades). We made a preliminary design of an online instructional support web site that might provide a variety of instructional resources for faculty. We have also discussed and been supportive of the library's initiative for an electronic institutional repository of student and faculty scholarly works. 3) ISC supported faculty to attend training sessions and workshops off-campus for enhancing technological skills. 4) ISC has played an advisory role in the partial integration of the A/V collection with the Library's resources. We have also had discussions regarding classroom A/V/digital interfaces. 5) ISC continues to play an advisory role regarding ITS infrastructure, such as with the Creative Computing Lab described previously, and, with the encouragement of ITS, self-assessment of the effectiveness of equipment and training.

### **Librarian of the College search**

ISC had representation on the search committee, and also interviewed all three final candidates and made committee recommendations on each candidate to the search committee.

### **Faculty Development: Workshop and individual faculty support**

For 2005-06, the faculty development budget was nearly \$70,000. This budget was overspent by about \$10,000, about two thirds of the funds going to summer (on-campus) workshops. The overage can be largely traced to EKI/Strategic Plan activities, and the committee was given access to funds from a Mellon grant to support those additional activities. Given the various changes in faculty development (EKI, cutting stipends in favor of expenses, and greater support of faculty training off-campus), it is difficult to predict future budgetary needs. Although ISC did not have to turn down any proposals for lack of funds, this would not have been the case were it not for the Mellon funding that spans 2005-07.

### **Continuing business**

There are several items of business ISC began in 2005-06 that next year's committee will almost certainly have to deal with:

- Copyright policy

A committee was formed, with ISC representation, to reformulate the college's copyright policy -- in particular to more directly address contemporary electronic dimensions of copyright issues. A specific aspect of copyright policy that has raised concern is the practice of placing electronic copies of copyright materials on course sites on PioneerWeb and other college servers. Effective utilization of the library's e-reserve system is hoped to provide a legal alternative to individual faculty members posting of copyright materials that does not compromise effective instruction.

- Instructional support site

As mentioned above, an outline was developed for an on-campus instructional resource web site for faculty with general resources and posting of questions, answers and comments from faculty.

- Institutional repository

The development of an electronic repository for MAPs, faculty scholarship, and the like has been planned by the library for several years. While ISC has not had direct involvement in this topic, the committee strongly endorsed the development of the repository and hopefully will continue to advocate for it.

- In 2005, ISC proposed to Executive Council a move from stipends for faculty and curricular development efforts to an expanded support of only expenses associated with these activities. Executive Council approved this move on a one-year trial basis. Although the 2006-07 council will have little institutional memory of this issue, it might be valuable to present this to council as a more permanent policy.

Respectfully,

Mark Schneider  
ISC chair 2005-06