FACULTY SENATE
SENATE ASSEMBLY
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Ruthven Building
1109 Geddes Avenue, Suite 1120
University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI 48109-1340

Information Technology Committee (ITC) Minutes

Meeting Date: November 12, 2024 11 am (regular meeting)
Circulated: 12/4/2024
Approved: 12/11/2024

Present: Quentin Stout (Chair), Mashon Allen (VP's Chief of Staff), Natasha Allen, Susan Borda, James Cranford, Ivo Dinov, Bob Jones (Assistant VP of Support Services and Emerging Technologies for ITS), (Sanjeev Kumar, Ravi Pendse (VP for Information Technology and CIO), Stephanie Rosen (IT Accessibility Assistant Director), (Deirdre Spencer (SACUA liaison), Jeffrey Yackley
Absent: Yasser Aboelkassem, Michael D Bohanon, Amir Mortazawi

1. Call to order and approval of the minutes

2. IT Accessibility update
   ● VP Pendse explained that there is a new ADA federal rule on digital accessibility (WCAG 2.1 AA) for public entities of 50,000 or more persons that applies to U-M, with a compliance deadline of April 2026. U-M also pursues best practices above and beyond minimum regulatory requirements.
   ● Stephanie Rosen, IT Accessibility Assistant Director, provided an overview of U-M Digital Accessibility efforts in relation to the new ADA standards. This covers digital usability, equitable access, inclusive design, invitations for feedback, and accommodations.
      ○ Efforts include working with procurement to ensure vendors meet the new standards, working strategically with units to provide training and guidance, and creating new tools, such as a Canvas-based application that can automatically check-for and/or implement accessible content. IT is in phase 2 (FY25) of a 3-year project.
      ○ The project is a collaboration between ITS, ECRT, the Office of General Counsel, the Strategic Initiative Team, and unit partners that include Digital Accessibility Liaisons and IT Leads.
      ○ Next Steps will include a U-M Digital Accessibility website relaunch and winter 2025 projects that include a central communication toolkit, web accessibility scan relaunch (with unit control), and the new canvas accessibility tool.

3. Discussion on IT and Accessibility
   ● Topics discussed included:
      ○ The work applies to all three campuses and Michigan Medicine (all umich.edu); examples of digital accessibility are correct use of headings, color contrast, screen reader compatibility; standards require retrofitting past content but date specifics are still tba; GrackleDocs is an example of a accessibility tool; this is work IT and U-M believes in as a value and priority.
      ○ A challenge is that U-M has over 1 million websites; work has already been completed to make the Office of the President website digitally accessible and next steps include supporting units (including labs) to make their website templates accessible; this is a data-led initiative; AI-powered tools may be especially helpful, e.g. in creating ALT text data and transforming LaTex into various accessible formats; U-M IT-created digital accessibility tools will have open access licenses for public and nonprofit entities; IT works in

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collaboration with disability communities on campus (including on their own staff) to test and improve tools; digital accessibility has many positive impacts including for sight, ESL, aging, low-bandith, older hardware, literacy and language, and temporary injuries; another app to check out is [be my eyes.](#)

4. The discussion on AI and environmental sustainability will be considered for future meeting topics.

5. Matters arising
    ● VP Pendse announced a small change to U-M spam filters. In some limited cases, phishing or other problematic spam may get past U-M filters. U-M IT has a new policy of retracting such phishing email to prevent harmful impacts. Note that this system is automated and in no way involves human access to U-M email.

Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Ann Marshall (FSO, Faculty Governance Coordinator)