



## Report on Activities of Information Technology Committee for 2025-2026

### Overview:

**From:** Quentin Stout, Chair, Information Technology Committee

**Subject:** Report on Activities of Information Technology Committee for 2025-2026

**Committee Members:** Quentin Stout (Chair), Natasha Allen, Michael Bohanon, Susan Borda, James Cranford, Ivo Dinov, Lydia Fetting, Sanjeev Kumar, Bruce Maxim, Ravi Pendse (VP for Information Technology and CIO), David Potter, Angelica Previero (RSG graduate student representative), Larissa Sano, Daphne Welter (CSG undergraduate student representative), Jeffrey Yackley

**SACUA Liaison:** Jesse Capecelatro

**Advisory to:** Ravi Pendse, Vice President for Information Technology and Chief Information Officer

**Meeting Dates:** September 9, November 12, December 10, January 21, February 25, March 25

### **Guests:**

- Bob Jones, Assistant VP of Emerging Technology and Support Services (11/12, 12/10)
- Asmat Noori, Interim Chief Information Security Officer and Executive Director of Information Assurance (11/12)
- Andy Palms, Executive Director of Infrastructure (12/10)
- Stephanie Rosen, IT Accessibility Assistant Director (2/25)
- Carrie Shumaker, Vice Chancellor for IT and Chief Strategy Officer at U-M Dearborn (3/25)
- Cathy Handyside, ITS Executive Director for Enterprise Application Services (3/25)

### 2025-2026 Committee Charge

1. Continue work on the University's technical and pedagogical posture in relation to AI, such as the following:
  - a. Discuss faculty perspectives on the impacts of AI on teaching. Should AI be so readily and urgently available for our students? What resources and technologies can the University create to foster and defend students' ability to think and write and create for themselves? What support can the University offer to teachers who are trying to ensure that their students are doing their own work in the classroom?
  - b. Work with SACUA and the Academic Affairs Advisory Committee to develop a public program of activity that brings into view the technological and pedagogical challenges that AI poses to humanistic and scientific teaching.
  - c. Consider ways AI can assist researchers, including in navigating grant guidelines.
  - d. Discuss sustainability concerns raised by AI use.



- e. Discuss efforts by [U-M and Los Alamos to jointly develop a Michigan-based AI research center](#)
2. Discuss the Universities' ongoing cyber security efforts, including (1) protecting faculty, staff, and students from being targeted by nefarious actors and (2) a DUO update that will offer the option of biometric identification options;
3. Consider strategies to improve software and hardware access across the U-M system, including the following:
  - a. Students' hardware needs. A faculty member has experienced challenges with students whose laptops are not able to run the needed hardware and/or software for course assignments. This may be exacerbated by students taking classes outside of their major. For example, Ross offers Ross Anywhere, but non-Ross students may not have easy access to this. Some loaner laptops are available, but it seems there is a patchwork approach with every school doing something different.
  - b. A more comprehensive IT integration with U-M Flint and U-M Dearborn. It was noted that U-M Flint is working on a new network, and also noted that duplication of IT services at U-M Flint and U-M Dearborn may not be ideal.
4. Hold a joint meeting with the Research Advisory Committee (RAC) to discuss ways that IT might enhance support for U-M researchers, including through AI technologies.
5. Consider the accessibility standards that are required by University policy in relation to faculty workload. What steps can and should be taken to ameliorate the time pressure and technological demands that conformity with Panorama now places on faculty? What practical support can the University offer to faculty who are finding it impossible to meet SSD guidelines?
6. Consider emergent issues or topics brought forward by ITC committee members or the Vice President for Information Technology for discussion over the course of the year. The committee may also continue discussing any issues or topics raised in the committee's most recent annual committee report.

### **Information Obtained, Discussion Topics, and ITC Member Input**

#### **I. Generative AI**

- On 9/29, VP Pendse shared that a university-wide AI in Education Working Group would be convened by Provost McCauley and VP Pendse. The committee's report is due on April 30th, 2026. VP Pendse recommended that the committee be allowed to do its work and the report can then be discussed and debated.
- On 11/12, ITC members were invited to suggest potential SACUA nominees to serve on the AI in Education Working group.
- On 1/21, VP Pendse shared that the working group would be chaired by Mika LaVaque-Manty. ITC member Ivo Dinov is a working group member. Ivo offered to bring issues from ITC to the working group.



- VP Pendse shared an open invitation to ITC and the campus community to attend [Everything that is wrong about AI: A critical look at challenges & opportunities.](#)

#### **AI Topics Discussed at ITC:**

- AI scraping of web content. ITS shared the benefits of UM ChatGPT, U-M Maizey, and Canvas being behind U-M paywalls, and faculty shared concerns about AI tools scraping publicly available scholarly content.
- Einstein AI: VP Pendse shared that Einstein AI uses OpenClaw, has many security risks, and costs users about \$200 per month. If a user gives Einstein AI their sign-in credentials, Einstein AI may authenticate within Canvas. Discussion: What would be an appropriate learner-centered response if a student gave authentication credentials to Einstein AI? Do policies need to be reviewed given the rapid pace of AI development? Note, that since ITC's discussion, Einstein AI was [shut down](#).
- OpenAI: In response to a question, it was clarified that, 1) any potential endowment investment in OpenAI is separate from ITS, 2) ITS uses ChatGPT tools, but U-M's contract is with Microsoft and not OpenAI, 3) Any OpenAI research dollars given to U-M are related to the VP for Research and to faculty's own research (e.g. Michael Wellman's [research](#)).
- Additional AI topics discussed: Problems with AI eroding critical thinking; AI as a "people problem," not a "computer problem;" Challenges in the humanities with students failing courses because of AI use, GSIs' needing more time to grade, and pressure to assign less papers; Engineering challenges with needing to change assignments and problem sets. If AI can do students' assignments, are such assignments still relevant? There have been library requests for [sources that don't exist](#). U-M Ann Arbor Engineering offers a [minor](#) in AI and courses taught in [Dearborn's AI Master's degree](#) might be of interest.

## **II. Okta Roll Out and Launch**

- On 11/12, ITS shared plans for the January [roll-out of a new IT authentication system](#) and invited ITC faculty input. ITS prepared for the transition, had 70 ITS support ready to assist faculty on the day of launch, and by 11 am on 2/25, there were 60,000 authorizations.

## **III. Cybersecurity**

- ITS provided an update on U-M's new [Cybersecurity and Data Protection training program](#) for U-M faculty and staff.
- Faculty asked questions about whether vendors might misuse faculty member's private information. Safe guards include: A data security agreement (DSA) is signed with all ITS vendors as part of U-M standards for [third party vendor security and compliance](#). For example, U-M has a data security agreement with Google pertinent to [NotebookLM](#). The [Sensitive Data Guide to ITS Services includes a Google AI Services section](#) summarizes data permission levels. ITS does not release protected data unless required by law, in which case strict procedures are followed, e.g. a FOIA request for Slack content.

## **IV. Digital Accessibility**

- The federal deadline for the new [digital accessibility guidelines](#) was April 24, 2026 before being [extended](#) to April 26, 2027.



- Faculty shared their frustrations. Faculty are concerned about liability. Testing by Engineering IT indicated that making just one course accessible would require 100+ hours of labor. One faculty's PDF had a zero accessibility rating, and he has 10+ years of documents. Proprietary PDFs continue to present problems. A faculty had been asked to pay a vendor for assistance with accessibility. U-M faculty should reach out to ITS and should not have to pay a vendor for support.
- U-M ITS is working with Mistral AI to build open-source AI tools for PDF to HTML conversion. U-M Libraries works with PDF/A and PDF/UA for archival content which adds complexity. More tools are expected soon, such as [Overleaf LaTeX PDF accessibility](#).
- **Possible digital accessibility action items:** 1) new GSSA positions focused on accessibility, 2) Government Relations could communicate the difficulty of the April 2026 federal deadline with policy makers, 3) ITS could hold an accessibility townhall (with OGC as a partner), 4) Fall semester 2026 may be a more realistic target for implementation, 5) OGC might offer more clear guidance about legal risk.

#### **V. U-M and Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL) research center**

- The [UM-LANL project](#) is physically one [new facility](#), to be owned by U-M for high-powered computing. The project is a research collaboration and is not necessarily focused on AI but on computing capacity. LANL maintains a nuclear arsenal. [Open houses](#) were held. Data centers can be implemented badly (diesel engines, coal power plants) or more efficiently. UM-LANL is working with U-M sustainability and efficiency should increase for U-M and LANL. It doesn't impact the river or wetlands and uses 1/3 of the land at the site.
- **ITC members raised the following issues:** Concerns about pollution, climate change, impact on the local community, increased DTE rates, and a lower ROI on AI than projected; With the new facility, U-M will now have classified research on campus; Poor communication about the UM-LANL project -- U-M has needs for a new supercomputing similar to OSU, etc. and there has been doxing of faculty working on the project; Concerns about the cost of living increases for grad students living in Ypsi.

#### **VI. ITS Engagement with the General Public**

- VP Pendse shared IT's engagement with MI communities. ITS developed [GotoCollege](#) and is developing a student career dashboard, with interest from MI and USDA. [Michigan Answers](#) is a campaign to communicate U-M's value. Campaigns are needed for U-M Flint and U-M Dearborn. [Senator Gary Peters gave a shout out to U-M](#) during a federal hearing.

#### **VII. Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system transition planning**

- U-M has [begun plans to replace the current Enterprise Resource Planning \(ERP\) system](#) (Peoplesoft) which is the backend of HR and Finance. This is a big change for the university and will require a lot of campus engagement. The new system will likely not allow for the extent of unit-level customization that has been available in the past.
- The vendor will no longer support U-M's ERP within 4-10 years. UM ITS will work with partners to establish executive alignment, a legal structure, employee definition, accounting methods, and a planning partner.



### **VIII. Open Discussion on ITC member topics – Great Lakes 2**

- VP Pendse offered that, at a future meeting, Brock Palen could provide ITC with an update on [Great Lakes 2](#). U-M’s current high-powered computing cluster needs updating, and there is a growth of 2+ petabytes of storage every three months. Such computing requires electricity, computer chips, and storage. ITS is working on a RFP with legal counsel to lease a facility. There is sensitivity to people’s feelings about the planned Ypsi center. How does life-cycle planning for such facilities work, i.e. plans after 5 years? VP Pendse will look into options to more easily archive Canvas data.

### **IX. U-M Ann Arbor ITS collaboration with U-M regional campuses**

- Information was shared about how U-M Ann Arbor collaborates with U-M Flint and U-M Dearborn. Examples include 1) cybersecurity (mandatory by ITS), 2) Enterprise (fully funded by ITS), 3) ITS negotiated vendor services (e.g. Canvas), and 4) Dearborn paid services provided by ITS (e.g. Internet).

### **Overall Summary of Committee Work (100 or less words)**

ITC enabled faculty review, discussion, and input on a number of 2025-2026 IT issues facing faculty and the U-M community. Two of the most pressing issues were Generative AI and digital accessibility. Other key issues included the DUO to Okta transition, cybersecurity, the Los Alamos research center, ITS engagement with the public, the upcoming Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system transition, and ITS Ann Arbor collaboration with U-M Flint and U-M Dearborn.

### **Recommendations:**

- **AI:** Review the AI in Working Group report, liaison with SACUA and other SA committees on AI issues, and serve as a venue for providing faculty input to VPIT-CIO.
- **Digital Accessibility:** Receive updates from VPIT-CIO on new tools, training, and support. What is ITS doing to make digital accessibility easier for faculty and the campus community? What is the status of in-progress digital accessibility conversion tools?
- **Los Alamos UM-LANL:** This project has received a variety of responses, including campus and community concerns and also misunderstanding about the goals of the project. What is the status of the project and how are concerns being addressed?
- **Great Lakes 2:** This topic was raised by ITC members and VP Pendse offered that plans for the Great Lakes 2 project would be a useful agenda item for 2026-2027.
- **Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP):** This is a 3+ year project currently in its “strategy” planning phase. Does the ITS-ERP planning team have questions, documents, and/or areas of feedback that ITC might discuss and provide feedback on? While centralization has many benefits, how will the varying needs of units be supported with the new system?
- **Projects and initiatives identified by VPIT-CIO:** ITC looks forward to discussing additional topics identified by VP Pendse and the ITS team in 2026-2027.