Information Technology Committee

December 3, 2024 - 11:00 a.m.
Virtual Microsoft Teams Meeting
Minutes

Opening

The meeting was called to order on December 3, 2024, at 11:00 a.m. by Mr. Matt Smith.

Attendees

Voting Members Present	Non-Voting Members Present
Dr. Mohan Rao	Mr. Brian Seiler, CIO
Dr. Mike Reagle	Mr. Will Hoffert
Dr. Kumar Yelamarthi	Mr. Tyler Farsoun
Dr. Lisa Zagumny	Mr. David Hales
Dr. Jason Beach	Mr. Jason Luna
Dr. Julie Baker	Mr. Brandon Walls
Dr. Lenly Weathers	Mr. Matt Silva
Mr. Matt Smith (Chair)	MS. Angie Vick
Mr. Eric Brown	Mr. John Woodard
Mr. Dan Warren	Mr. Hunter Kaller
MS. Elizabeth Williams	Mr. Allan Jones
Mr. Braxton Westbrook	Mr. David Garrett
Mr. Harrison Simpson	Mr. Cody Bryant
Voting Members Absent	**Non-Voting Members Absent**
Dr. Curtis Armstrong	Mr. Greg Holt
Dr. Jeannette Luna	
Dr. Thomas Payne	
Dr. Susan Wells	
Dr. Sandra Smith-Andrews	

Approval of Agenda

Dr. Lisa Zagumny made a motion to approve the agenda, and Mr. Harrison Simpson made a second. Motion passed.

Approval of Minutes

A motion to approve the minutes of the previous meeting was made by Dr. Lisa Zagumny and seconded by Mr. Harrison Simpson. Motion passed.

Policy 855: Data Classification

Mr. Matt Smith started the conversation by stating that the policies were sent out for review on November 6th, 2024. He asks Mr. Jason Luna to briefly overview the changes and why the changes were made.

Mr. Jason Luna says the spirit of the policies has not changed at all. The biggest thing was updating and expanding on some of the information in the policies to allow it to read better than it was. Policy 855 changes the data classification from sensitive to restrictive to be more in line with industry standards. Those were the major changes. Adding more information on what particular types of information would fall into each category would make it easier to understand while also updating much of the grammar. The other thing that was added was policy language to make the policy language enforceable, and this was an item that did not exist in the policy before.

Mr. Matt Smith asks for questions regarding the policy after reviewing any clarification needed or if there are any discussion items needed.

Dr. Lisa Zagumny has a comment and a concern regarding the policy. She states that she appreciates the policy revision because all the policies need to be cleaned up and streamlined, but she thinks this still has some old tendencies to collapse procedures into policies. As a suggestion and question, she asks if it is possible to get Ms. Ellie Putnam's, who is part of the legal counsel, eyes on the policy as she is effective at separating policy from procedure and helping to streamline language.

Mr. Jason Luna states that Ms. Ellie Putnam will be part of the review of policies within PolicyTech. He continues by saying that he wanted to get this policy in front of the committee to get eyes on the policy and shared governance. Mr. Jason Luna appreciates any feedback provided as this is his first time writing policy in higher education. He assumes that when someone is talking about "in the weeds," Policy 856 is being referred to.

Dr. Lisa Zagumny mentions that she is not speaking specifically in either policy, but when someone gets superfluous with the language when working on policy because they are too close to it since they own it, it is in best practice to back out a little bit and make sure the language is super user-friendly and clear. It is emphasized again that there needs to be a separation of the process and procedure without separating out too much and losing the shared governance piece. Dr. Lisa

Zagumny suggests making a small group so that it is not all on Mr. Jason Luna to piece apart. She mentions that she is working on two different policies and can see the same thing happening with cleaning up but not really cleaning up.

Mr. Jason Luna is open to this idea.

Dr. Lisa Zagumny states that since she is suggesting she would volunteer to help, she asks if there is another person who would be willing to help.

Dr. Julie Baker volunteers to help with reviewing the policies and procedures. She asks if there would be only one small group for both policies.

Dr. Lisa Zagumny answered Dr. Julie Baker's question with a yes, saying that it would be one group for both policies to make consistency across policies to respective units. She mentions that Dr. Julie Baker and herself have been working on policies to help with the uniformity of things – like what is called departments and schools versus units.

Mr. Matt Smith mentions that he has reviewed the policies, and from an administrative and financial side of things, most of the policies have a section called definitions that describes the levels of data classifications and what may be in there that might qualify for the information to be moved up. This follows what Dr. Lisa Zagumny said: a definition plate in the definition section should be put in. Then, when referred to, it's always referring to that definition of what this is what that means. This is what has been observed in other policies. He asked Dr. Lisa Zagumny and Dr. Julie Baker if this was something that would interest them.

Dr. Julie Baker mentions that Mr. Braxton Westbrook also volunteered to participate in the small group via Teams chat for the meeting.

Mr. Matt Smith asked Mr. Braxton Westbrook and Mr. Jason Luna if they could get with Ms. Ellie Putnam and bring something back to the committee at the next meeting regarding the policy being formatted in such a way that is described in the meeting.

Dr. Lisa Zagumny says she is game for this idea.

Mr. Matt Smith asks Mr. Jason Luna if this is acceptable and informs him that he is aware that it is running into December now. He is trying to think about the administrative and University Assembly, which all these policies would have to be approved, which would put the committee in the spring before this policy would be approved or could go through the approval process.

Mr. Jason Luna says he is fine with that. The policies exist but need to be better defined. He wants to align the data classification levels more with industry standards instead of using non-industry standard terms because it doesn't make sense. The terms, color coding, and everything else already exist. Tennessee Tech University should align with that standard, and Mr. Jason Luna would much rather put out a policy that is good with everyone on the front end than put something out and then get a lot of blowbacks and it turns out not to be enforceable in some way, shape, or form. He

would much rather get a refined policy out the door rather than put something out before it's ready.

Mr. Matt Smith asks Mr. Jason Luna if he does not mind getting with this group, and then they will try to make some changes before the next meeting, which will be in spring, and ask Ms. Angie Vick for the next meeting.

Mr. Jason Luna agrees.

Ms. Angie Vick says the next meeting is in February.

Mr. Matt Smith says that gives everyone a little over two months to make something happen and hopefully can make some headway before then. Dr. Julie Baker has her hand up via Teams.

Dr. Julie Baker has a quick question. This policy says ITC for approval or approval by ITC, and then it says University Assembly. She feels like this skips the Administrative Council.

Mr. Matt Smith believes that is correct, and the correct routing would be ITC committee approval; then, it should go to the Administrative Council, University Assembly, and finally, the Board of Trustees.

Dr. Julie Baker states that not all policies go to the Board of Trustees, but some do. She feels like the Administrative Council should be there.

Mr. Jason Luna says he was not part of the approval process initially, so he is coming into these policies that were written before his time. So, he submits them as they are with the chain on the current policy as it sits. He is not saying that it is right for it to be done, but he doesn't know if that is the case. He is happy to take additional feedback.

Mr. Matt Smith states that further clarification from Ms. Ellie Putnam can also be obtained. She should have that procedure down pat.

Dr. Julie Baker, thanks everyone.

Mr. Matt Smith asks for any additional discussion on policy 855. To recap for everybody, what is going to happen is Mr. Braxton Westbrook, Dr. Lisa Zagumny, Dr. Julie Baker, and Mr. Jason Luna, with the help of Ellie Putnam from legal counsel, will re-review this policy and try to get it more template type, boilerplate, more in line with the rest of the university policies to make sure everything is there. They will also clarify this policy's approval chain and bring the results to the next ITC Board meeting on February 15th.

Ms. Angie Vick corrects Mr. Matt Smith with the date of February 13th.

Mr. Matt Smith says this will be discussed at the February 13th ITC Board meeting for everybody's final review. This will be sent out before the meeting so there will be plenty of time to review it,

and then they can have the final discussion before a vote is taken on policy 855. He asks Mr. Jason Luna to move on to the next policy, policy 856.

Policy 856: Data Security and Handling

Mr. Jason Luna states that policy 856 is the same story as policy 855, and he is willing to accept the same fate for 856. He states that policy 856 does get into the weeds, and he is happy to have some eyes to pull some stuff out. The modifications were about adding more of the NIST language with standards from NIST. He is happy to get a lot of procedural-type stuff stripped out, but basically, the overview is the same. Expand on the purpose and overview, modify some language, change the labeling system to reflect the new one, restrict tags instead of sensitive ones, and make the data assignment and data handling section more in line with NIST 800-88. And then add some language to make it enforceable.

Mr. Matt Smith asks for any discussion on policy 856. He hears none. He asked Dr. Lisa Zagumny, Dr. Julie Baker, and Mr. Braxton Westbrook if it was possible to take this policy and apply the same lens that they are using for policy 855 and then bring it back to the spring ITC committee meeting. He continues by saying that the information will be shared before the meeting to give everyone time to consume the information and then be ready for discussion at the next meeting.

Dr. Lisa Zagumny agrees with this.

Mr. Matt Smith hears no objections to this plan

Other ITC Items for Next ITC Meeting

Mr. Matt Smith asked Ms. Angie Vick to put both policies in the next ITC meeting. These were the two main topics for the meeting. He asks if anything else has happened since the last meeting that others would like to ensure is on the agenda before the next meeting. In the last meeting's minutes, it was noted that several items were kicked down to subcommittees, and what Mr. Matt Smith wants to do is have a discussion with Mr. Brian Seiler about bringing back some summaries of what has been discussed in the subcommittee meetings and try to get an agenda item created for these topics. He mentioned some discussion in the spending subcommittee meeting and said they would try to bring back a report for the rest of the ITC committee. He asks for additional discussion items

Mr. Jason Luna has nothing to discuss, but he wanted to take a moment to thank everyone, especially Dr. Lisa Zagumny, for leading the way in training end-users. Thanks to their efforts, ISO only had to only disable 84 accounts this year versus 190 the previous year.

Mr. Matt Smith says this is a huge win.

Mr. Jason Luna agrees that this is a huge win, that he never expected to get into double digits, and that he truly appreciates the efforts made.

 Mr. Eric Brown says he reviewed the notes from the last meeting and noticed a significant discussion of AI. He noticed in this meeting that a Read.AI pop-up happened, and it is happening more frequently. He asked if there is a plan for more subcommittee work on AI, AI policy in

general, or what the next steps are since there was such a significant discussion in the last meeting. He has been in several meetings this week where Read.AI pops up. As stated in the minutes of the last meeting, this AI trains another model, and it could leak sensitive information. He continues by asking what the plans are around solidifying whatever will be discussed regarding an AI policy and asks if further work is needed.

Mr. Matt Smith answers Mr. Eric Brown by stating that, in recollection, there was talk of moving that down to the strategic planning and innovative computing subcommittee to have a more in-depth discussion where more things could be talked about that are not restricted within an hour. He notices that Mr. Brian Seiler has his hand up via Teams.

Mr. Brian Seiler says the subcommittees are addressing this topic. There is guidance in place that has not been fully published. For the Read.AI and Firefly in teams, there is a plan at the beginning to remove the ability for new people to add those and then talk to the people who have already enabled those kinds of AI and get those disabled in their accounts. So, it will not be done harshly for the people that are relying on the AIs because ITS does not want just to take it away, but it will be disabled for new users to enable it and then move forward from there. There may be an option. This is going to be something that must be reviewed and looked at. That is separate from the policy. The policy is more general on AI and is about understanding where data is going, how AI works, etc.

Mr. Eric Brown continues by assuming that there will be more guidance in the future in terms of Copilot becoming a manageable or sustainable item in terms of an AI product that can be managed via policy for production use in various environments and one that would snap into the environments where staff and faculty members are working in now. He defers to Mr. Jason Luna.

Mr. Jason Luna shares his screen to show Read.AI purchasing screen with information on its software packages. Mr. Jason Luna and Mr. Brian Seiler have been discussing an overarching policy and overarching guidance until a policy is in place. He mentions this is a common discussion among other universities. What is being looked at with Read.AI is the Enterprise+ licenses, valued at $29.75 per license per month. So, if someone's organization, department, college, etc., would like to buy Read.AI licenses, ITS would require enterprise support because, looking at security, Single Sign-On (SSO), and custom data retention – do not want data inputs to be feeding the larger language models without explicit consent to release inputs to large language models. Typically, this will be an enterprise- or professional-level license, or whatever the company calls it. For Read.AI specifically, it would be required to have the Enterprise+ level license because it has the needed SSO feature and allows for custom data retention.

Mr. Matt Smith asked for price clarification on whether it was $22.50 (Enterprise-level license) or $29.75 (Enterprise+ level license).

Mr. Jason Luna confirms that the Enterprise+ license is at $29.75. There is likely an education discount or something similar. Talking with Dr. Jason Beach regarding this, and this is their overarching guidance right now. They need the ability to control what gets released to the large language model. It has to have SSO, and custom data retention policies are always a plus.

Specifically, for Read.AI, since it came up in the discussion, this would be required for a customer to buy if the product was being pursued. Mr. Jason Luna stops sharing his screen, and the screen shows members with cameras on.

Mr. Matt Smith notices Dr. Jason Beach has his hand raised via Teams.

Dr. Jason Beach states that Mr. Jason Luna and himself have been discussing this and explain why he thinks looking at the enterprise solution with SSO is a good idea. He continues by stating that not all software is the same. So, in this software that has been discussed, enabling SSO is an extra $4000 on top of the actual software package. Each company will do it differently, and this discussion will have to be more of a granular conversation about whether Tennessee Tech University will be moving towards SSO on every license. He asks if that cost will be deferred or picked up by the department unit that wants to utilize this software and how the cost will be distributed. So, it is going to vary depending on which software platform is being looked at. There is a cost to SSO.

Mr. Matt Smith recommends doing what was said during the last meeting, which is the first thing to happen. The Strategic Subcommittee will take this and discuss how Tennessee Tech University is going to embrace AI. That is the first discussion that needs to happen. Either embrace it, figure out how it will or will not be used, and then start conversing about paying for it. He asks if it is a department only, the people using it, or if it is only an enterprise. A lot of this starts with where it is going to be used. Where does the university feel comfortable about allowing its users to use AI and share information or not share information? Those types of questions need to be discussed first, and then a sandbox is drawn out. Then, the question of how to make it work within that sandbox.

Dr. Jason Beach thinks Mr. Matt Smith is correct. He says that every university is dealing with this right now, and they are all on the same team trying to figure out the best way to utilize the software for the students while ensuring they are protecting the students' data. It will take more conversations and a deeper dive, and he thinks that is what the subcommittees will be useful for. Additional information provided by Dr. Beach: he was at a conference before Thanksgiving, and UNC-Chapel Hill was there, and they had announced that they are deploying copilot for their faculty, staff, and students. UNC-Chapel Hill is known for being forward-thinking and getting a lot of software. With that being said since everyone is on the same team as far as this goes, they also got a lot of discounts from these big colleges for Adobe and Microsoft and similar software, but there are some larger universities doing copilot deployments.

Mr. Matt Smith asks Mr. Brian Seiler if it is possible to make sure that this is discussed with the strategic subcommittee and that a report is brought back to the committee at large about those discussions and setting those ground rules or recommendations to what those ground rules could be so progress can be made on this topic.

Mr. Brian Seiler says there are a couple of issues. The data classification policy discussed earlier really comes into play if people follow that policy and Tennessee Tech University does not allow the exfiltration of data; then it doesn't matter if it is an AI product or not. There needs to be an

understanding that if someone agrees to software on behalf of the university, they can do that first. Second, do they really understand where that data is going? So, the data classification policy is something that must be understood, as well as where the data is living, regardless of whether it is AI or not. He thinks the subcommittees can look at that from Copilot's point of view. There was a presentation at the last ITC Meeting that involved costs there. That is something that can be done on an AD HOC basis and, as a supportable option, probably is the right way to go because it keeps it in our tenant with Microsoft and the ability to have some control over that. However, it is not the end all. It does not do everything. There will be some issues, but yes, they can be taken down to the subcommittees for further discussion.

Mr. Matt Smith asks for any other discussion on AI or any other topic before adjournment. Hearing none, he provides a quick recap. The first meeting is in early February, where policies 855 and 856 will be re-reviewed and sorted through by Dr. Lisa Zagumny, Dr. Julie Baker, Mr. Braxton Westbrook, Mr. Jason Luna, and assistance from the legal counsel. Hopefully, after the policies are looked at, a motion can be made to vote on those and move those on to the Administrative Council in the spring term. Those are the two main agenda items that will be covered in the spring. If anyone has any additional topics they would like to bring up at the spring meeting, e-mail Ms. Angie Vick or himself, and they will make sure they get in there. They would like to have the additional agenda items at least two weeks prior so they can get any kind of related information or if there is any kind of related research that needs to be done, and there is plenty of time to be able to present that information at the meeting. He calls for adjournment.

Adjournment

With no other items to come before the committee, Mr. Matt Smith requested a motion to adjourn at 11:30 AM. A motion to adjourn was made by Dr. Lisa Zagumny and seconded by Dr. Julie Baker. Motion passed.

Minutes prepared by Tyler Farsoun