



Information Technology Committee
January 22, 2026 - 11:00 a.m.
Virtual Microsoft Teams Meeting
Minutes

Opening

The meeting was called to order at 11:03 a.m. by Jennifer Chavez, who served as chair in the absence of Matt Smith.

Attendees

Voting Members Present	Non-Voting Members Present
Dr. Jason Beach	Jennifer Chavez
Eric Brown	Will Hoffert
Dr. Julie Baker	Cody Bryant
Dr. Lisa Zagumny	Tyler Farsoun
Dr. Eunsung Park	David Hales
Elizabeth Williams	Allan Jones
Dr. Thomas Payne	Angie Vick
Harrison Simpson	Brandon Walls
Dr. Michael Allen	Mike Renfro
Dr. Mustafa Rajabali	Triston Martin
Dr. Allen MacKenzie	Rebecca Gooch
	David Garrett
	Hunter Kaller
Voting Members Absent	Non-Voting Members Absent
Dr. Susan Wells	Jason Luna
Sharon Holderman	Greg Holt
Dan Warren	John Woodard
Dr. Lenly Weathers	
Matt Smith	
Braxton Westbrook	
Dr. Ethan Languri	
Sandra Bohannon	

Review of Agenda & Minutes

Jennifer Chavez called for a motion to approve the meeting agenda.

- Motion: Dr. Julie Baker
- Second: Dr. Mustafa Rajabali
- Vote: All members in favor; none opposed.

Motion approved.

Jennifer Chavez requested a motion to approve the minutes from the previous meeting, which had been distributed in advance by Angie Vick.

- Motion: Dr. Julie Baker
- Second: Dr. Lisa Zagumny
- Vote: All members in favor; none opposed.

Motion approved.

Follow-Up from Prior Meeting & Deans' Group Coordination

Jennifer Chavez noted that the meeting agenda was light, but that additional discussion from recent subcommittee meetings would likely be reflected in the upcoming minutes. She reviewed follow-up items from the previous meeting, highlighting the committee's discussion regarding the need to bring a list of TAF-funded software to the broader Deans group for review and feedback. Related discussion also included computer lab usage and needs.

Jennifer Chavez reported that she has worked with Angie Vick and Will Hoffert to prepare supporting documentation related to these topics. These materials are expected to be distributed to the Deans within the next week to allow adequate time for review.

Jennifer Chavez and Dr. Julie Baker confirmed that a meeting with the Deans is scheduled for February 25. The intent is for the Deans to review the provided materials in advance and share feedback so the scheduled meeting time can be used effectively.

Dr. Julie Baker added that she will distribute the materials to the Deans once they are received and expressed anticipation for the discussion in February.

Subcommittee Updates

Jennifer Chavez asked whether there were any additional questions or comments regarding the previous discussion before moving to subcommittee updates.

Spending Subcommittee

Jennifer Chavez confirmed that the Spending Subcommittee has not met since the last committee meeting, as spending plans for the current fiscal year have already been approved.

Angie Vick confirmed this information was accurate.

Jennifer Chavez noted that, depending on feedback received from the Deans, the Spending Subcommittee may reconvene, and any resulting feedback or recommendations will be brought back to the full committee at a future meeting.

Strategic Planning Subcommittee

Jennifer Chavez reported that the Strategic Planning Subcommittee did not meet during the fall semester due to her schedule with the Talon project and apologized for the delay. She noted that the subcommittee met this week and invited subcommittee members to add comments if desired.

Long-Term Vision, Alignment, and Priorities

Jennifer Chavez summarized that the discussion focused primarily on clarifying the Strategic Planning Subcommittee's purpose. The group agreed that the subcommittee should concentrate on long-term planning, looking three, five, and ten years into the future to assess where institutional technology needs to be and how those priorities align with the university's overall strategic plan. It was emphasized that initiatives from the Strategic Planning Subcommittee should not be framed as short-term or one-year projects, but rather reflect longer-term institutional direction.

Jennifer Chavez noted that the group acknowledged this had not historically been how the subcommittee was utilized and agreed that this refocused approach would guide its work moving forward. The subcommittee also agreed to begin evaluating broader technology trends in higher education, including reviewing EDUCAUSE trends, identifying potential gaps between the university and comparable institutions, and considering implications for the university's research growth.

She emphasized that this forward-looking perspective aligns with how ITS operates and should continue operating, while also recognizing that the institution is still working to address areas where technology may be behind. The goal moving forward is to better align projects, priorities, and initiatives, and to share that strategic direction with the full committee and the broader institution to ensure alignment with academic and research needs.

Strategic Initiative Highlight – Eduroam

Jennifer Chavez provided a high-level update on one specific initiative discussed by the Strategic Planning Subcommittee: the potential implementation of Eduroam. She explained that Eduroam is a global, secure wireless network designed for higher education, allowing students, faculty, staff, and researchers to authenticate using their institutional credentials both on their home campus and while visiting other participating institutions. This provides secure wireless access and the ability to connect to related applications.

She reported that ITS initiated work on Eduroam in late fall. Plans are in place to deploy the Eduroam SSID on access points for ITS staff testing during the February–March timeframe. Technical preparation is already underway, and testing is expected to begin within the next week in coordination with Network Services. End-user documentation is planned for release to the campus in March.

Jennifer Chavez stated that several key buildings will be selected as testing locations, with an initial SSID rollout planned for spring break. Committee members or units interested in volunteering buildings for early testing were encouraged to contact her to be included in planning. She then invited Brandon Walls and David Hales to share any considerations regarding preferred building types or testing requirements.

Eduroam Testing, Timeline, and Deployment Considerations

David Hales provided additional detail regarding the planned Eduroam deployment and testing approach. He noted that while testing is necessary, there is a possibility of service disruption due to interactions with client devices. To mitigate risk, ITS plans to select smaller test buildings representing different campus environments: an administrative, an academic, and a residential building. This approach allows ITS to evaluate Eduroam performance across varying network configurations while monitoring support tickets and user impact.

He also reported that testing in select buildings is planned for the week prior to spring break, as it is important to have regular campus users present to identify and address potential issues. If problems arise during testing, ITS will have the ability to roll back changes. If testing proceeds smoothly, the broader rollout to the full campus and all remote sites will occur during spring break.

Jennifer Chavez noted that this timeline supports visiting faculty, staff, and other higher-education users by allowing them to authenticate via Eduroam and securely access resources from their home institutions while on campus.

Jennifer Chavez and David Hales clarified that work extending into March and April represents final preparation and documentation efforts rather than delays.

David Hales confirmed that the official Eduroam go-live date is March 23, at the conclusion of spring break. As of that date, university users will be able to use Eduroam at participating remote institutions, and visitors to campus will be able to authenticate using Eduroam locally.

He added that following the initial rollout, ITS will continue to deploy enhancements aimed at streamlining connectivity, including tools and support resources to enable automatic Eduroam connections for university-managed devices. Ongoing improvements will continue after the official go-live.

There were no further questions from the committee.

Campus Wireless Enhancements and Wi-Fi 7 Planning

Jennifer Chavez noted additional discussion regarding campus wireless enhancements, clarifying that this topic is operational rather than strategic in nature. She emphasized the importance of continuing to modernize campus wireless infrastructure and ensuring alignment with current industry standards.

She reported that ITS is actively moving toward Wi-Fi 7 compatibility as part of its wireless access point (AP) replacement planning. With thousands of AP devices deployed across campus, this represents a significant investment. Future replacement cycles will prioritize Wi-Fi 7-compatible hardware, with installations initially focused on key locations.

Jennifer Chavez noted that while the transition to Wi-Fi 7 is beginning, fully upgrading the entire campus will be a multi-year effort due to cost, scale, and timing. She also acknowledged that by the time full deployment is achieved, newer technologies may already be emerging, requiring ongoing evaluation of advancements in wireless networking.

She concluded by emphasizing that ITS will continue to monitor industry trends in wireless technology and incorporate advancements as part of its standard equipment rotation and replacement cycle, ensuring the university remains positioned to take advantage of improvements in performance, capacity, and reliability as technology evolves.

Artificial Intelligence (AI)

Jennifer Chavez provided an update on strategic discussions related to artificial intelligence (AI). She noted that, as mentioned at the previous meeting, a small AI task force has been convened and is expected to provide a report by early March. The task force is reviewing how peer and comparator institutions are approaching AI across multiple areas.

She emphasized that the strategic focus is not on individual tools, but on defining what AI should represent for Tennessee Tech as an institution, recognizing that AI impacts multiple domains, including classroom instruction, operational processes, and administrative functions.

From an academic perspective, Jennifer Chavez highlighted the importance of addressing academic integrity and determining how AI can be responsibly and effectively integrated into teaching and learning. She noted that AI will remain a primary strategic topic for the committee moving forward.

Eduroam Costs & Related Federated Services Discussion

Referring back to the update regarding Eduroam, Dr. Mustafa Rajabali asked whether the implementation of Eduroam would result in additional costs to the university or require a subscription.

David Hales responded that there is a minimal annual fee of approximately \$700, which serves as a management fee paid to the organization that coordinates authentication across participating institutions. He emphasized that there is no significant cost to the university to provide the Eduroam service.

Jennifer Chavez added that there may be potential future costs related to ITS's ongoing evaluation of InCommon Federation services, which are of particular interest to research institutions. She noted that under the university's current InCommon subscription, certain services are not covered, and ITS is actively evaluating what additional fees or changes may be required. This evaluation is expected to take place over the next one to two years. She also emphasized that these items are on ITS's radar and encouraged committee members—particularly those representing academic units—to raise questions or concerns about technology needs through the committee. She noted that the Strategic Planning Subcommittee provides an appropriate forum to evaluate the value, cost, and institutional importance of such services as ITS continues its assessments.

Core Administrative Systems

Jennifer Chavez provided additional updates from the Strategic Planning Subcommittee, noting several major initiatives affecting core administrative systems. She referenced ongoing work on Talon and noted that a learning management system (LMS) replacement is currently underway, with broad campus impact.

She also noted that enhancements and changes to the student information system (SIS) are expected to be evaluated over the next 18 to 24 months. These efforts are intended to strengthen the university's core administrative technology and to improve how students interact with the institution, including processes for class registration, advising, and other student services.

She also emphasized that these initiatives are part of positioning the university's technology infrastructure to better support institutional needs. She then invited members of the Strategic Planning Subcommittee to add any additional comments.

With no further comments, Jennifer Chavez indicated she would turn the update over to Jason, noting that he had not been able to attend the subcommittee meeting and asking whether an alternative update would be preferred.

Innovation and Strategic Alignment – Categorization of Initiatives

Dr. Jason Beach provided an update, noting that Eric Brown attended the subcommittee meeting on his behalf and facilitated the discussion. Dr. Jason Beach summarized several key topics that were reviewed, building on prior discussions captured in the meeting notes. The subcommittee revisited ongoing conversations on AI, campus wireless, computer labs, and TAF-funded software, focusing on clarifying how these initiatives should be categorized within the committee's responsibilities. The group discussed whether specific items belonged within the Innovation, Strategic Planning, or Spending subcommittees.

As a result of this review:

- Campus wireless initiatives, which had been discussed in prior years, were aligned under a broader strategic framework.
- Campus lab discussions, previously addressed within the Innovation Subcommittee, were also shifted to the Strategic Planning area.
- Review of TAF-funded software was similarly positioned as a strategic consideration.
- AI initiatives were identified as a major area of focus, with recognition that the AI task force established by Jennifer Chavez will provide valuable insight to inform future discussions.

Dr. Jason Beach noted that peer institutions are approaching AI at varying levels of maturity. As an example, he referenced UT Knoxville, which has developed an internal, siloed AI system accessible to faculty, staff, and students, and showcased this work at EDUCAUSE. He stated that these examples highlight opportunities the committee should continue to explore as AI discussions move forward.

It was also noted that questions had been raised regarding Discord usage.

Jennifer Chavez responded that she is reviewing reported issues related to Discord channels not functioning as expected on the university network.

Dr. Jason Beach concluded by deferring to Eric Brown, who led the meeting, for any additional comments or clarification.

AI Models and Lab Modernization

Eric Brown provided additional commentary following the Innovation Subcommittee discussion, noting that many of the topics reviewed involved ongoing maintenance or continuation efforts. He focused his remarks primarily on artificial intelligence (AI) and longer-term considerations.

He noted that part of the AI discussion involved exploring federated AI models for local campus use. He shared that he is currently working with the Amplify group on this topic and that conversations are underway with the CISO's office and other stakeholders. He referenced Vanderbilt University's Amplify project as an example of a federated AI approach, noting that Vanderbilt has invested significantly in developing a multi-model AI environment that is deployed university-wide, including within its medical center.

He emphasized that future discussions will need to address AI not as a single-platform solution, but as a multi-model ecosystem capable of supporting both academic instruction and research activities. Eric Brown stated that similar approaches could provide meaningful value to Tennessee Tech and that there will be substantial opportunity for continued dialogue as the AI task force progresses.

Eric Brown also returned to discussions on computer lab renewal and modernization, noting ongoing conversations about whether the university could gradually shift to a Bring

Your Own Device (BYOD) model. He described scenarios in which labs would be equipped with monitors and docking stations, allowing students to connect their own devices rather than relying on fixed desktop computers. He acknowledged that such an approach intersects with software licensing, funding, and other operational considerations. Looking further ahead, Eric Brown suggested that a long-term goal could be transitioning to a campus-wide BYOD expectation, where students are required to own a personal laptop—potentially supported through financial aid options. He noted that such a transition would require significant planning, budgetary discussion, and technology coordination, and would be appropriate for future strategic conversations.

BYOD and VDI Considerations

Jennifer Chavez noted that the points raised aligned with other conversations she has had and asked whether the committee had any feedback on the comments presented.

Brandon Walls raised a question about the direction of future lab and device strategies, specifically asking whether the university might lean more toward Virtual Desktop Infrastructure (VDI) solutions than toward requiring Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) laptops that meet certain hardware and software requirements to run applications natively. He noted that shifting workloads to centrally hosted infrastructure is not a cost-saving measure, as costs are typically redistributed to IT rather than eliminated. He emphasized that while the ideas discussed have merit, it is important to remain cognizant of the associated infrastructure and operational impacts.

Eric Brown responded that this is a broader and more complex discussion with no single solution. He emphasized that a university of this size and complexity will require a mixed approach, balancing support for BYOD devices alongside continued use of VDI solutions, which will remain necessary due to licensing constraints and other technical requirements. He noted that BYOD alone is not a comprehensive solution and that infrastructure-based resources will continue to be an essential component supporting certain academic and instructional use cases.

BYOD Scope, Faculty Labs, and Compliance Considerations

Jennifer Chavez noted that the discussion aligned with prior conversations and asked whether the committee had additional feedback.

Dr. Mustafa Rajabali raised questions from the perspective of faculty who teach and conduct research in laboratory settings. He described scenarios in which faculty bring their own personal laptops into teaching labs to support specialized software or equipment that cannot be easily vetted, licensed, or installed on lab computers in advance. He asked whether the BYOD approach being discussed would support this model, particularly in

situations where faculty temporarily use personal devices to enable student lab activities without creating additional overhead for ITS.

Jennifer Chavez clarified that, within the context of the current discussion, BYOD refers specifically to students, not faculty, staff, or researchers. She noted that faculty-installed software introduces licensing and compliance considerations, for which ITS serves as a gatekeeper on behalf of the institution, including coordination with procurement and compliance offices. She acknowledged the complexity of this issue and stated that ITS is actively exploring whether there are opportunities to shift aspects of compliance responsibility back to individual faculty in certain circumstances, while recognizing historical challenges that require careful navigation. She reiterated that, in her view, BYOD in this discussion is student-focused.

Dr. Mustafa Rajabali added that, in practice, some student labs already rely on students bringing their own devices to install and run required software, as this approach can be faster and more manageable than maintaining specialized software on lab machines. He expressed support for BYOD in these contexts and suggested considering a middle-ground approach in which research labs may be permitted a limited number of devices for testing or one-off scenarios, with responsibility for software compliance resting with the device owner.

Jennifer Chavez thanked Dr. Mustafa Rajabali for the feedback and emphasized that, consistent with prior comments, BYOD is not a one-size-fits-all solution, even for students. She noted that the university must continue to support students who do not have the financial means to purchase their own devices, whether through checkout programs, targeted funding, or access to dedicated labs. She described BYOD as a broader national shift, reflecting changing student technology habits, but emphasized the need for continued institutional accommodations to ensure equitable access and student success. With no further discussion related to subcommittee updates, Jennifer Chavez transitioned the meeting to Angie Vick to review upcoming ITC membership changes.

ITC Membership & Chair Updates

Angie Vick reported that four committee members' terms will expire at the end of the current cycle on June 30, 2026. Replacement recommendations are gathered from across campus and submitted to the President for final approval. Confirmation of approved appointments is expected after July 1. She also clarified that Dr. McKenzie's term does not expire until 2028 and noted that her omission from the document was inadvertent. Additionally, she explained that the two student members of ITC are appointed by SGA, with those appointments typically finalized in August.

With no questions from the committee, Jennifer Chavez introduced the next agenda item: the election of an ITC Chair.

She clarified that the names of eligible members are listed on the agenda and asked whether the committee would be voting at this meeting or simply soliciting interest. She stated that, per policy, she cannot serve as Chair, noting that although CIOs have served in that role in the past, the committee documentation indicates that members should select their own Chair.

Jennifer Chavez encouraged committee members to consider volunteering or nominating a colleague, emphasizing that the role primarily involves scheduling meetings and collaborating on agendas, with support available from ITS staff. She noted that previous Chairs often had limited administrative support within their units, and that ITS has previously offered assistance to help manage logistical tasks. She reiterated the importance of the committee and invited members to share their interests or suggestions for the Chair's leadership.

ITC Chair Nomination Discussion

Dr. Lisa Zagumny nominated Matt Smith to serve as Chair of the Information Technology Committee.

Angie Vick noted that, since Matt Smith was not present, he would need to be contacted to determine whether he would accept the nomination. She also expressed doubt that he would have the capacity to serve, given current commitments related to the Talon project.

Jennifer Chavez acknowledged similar concerns regarding Matt Smith's availability but stated that his nomination would be communicated to him. She noted that no other members volunteered to serve as Chair at that time.

Dr. Julie Baker asked whether Dr. Susan Wells was present on the call.

Angie Vick and Dr. Thomas Payne confirmed that she was not.

Dr. Thomas Payne and Dr. Julie Baker both noted that Dr. Susan Wells would be an excellent candidate and shared that she had previously volunteered to help chair a subcommittee if needed.

Angie Vick confirmed that Dr. Susan Wells had expressed willingness to serve in a leadership capacity in the past.

Jennifer Chavez asked Dr. Thomas Payne whether he would be willing to reach out to Dr. Susan Wells to gauge her interest in serving as Chair. She suggested that outreach also be

made to Matt Smith, and that any confirmed interest be brought back to the full committee for consideration if multiple candidates emerge.

Eric Brown stated that he has previously served as ITC Chair and would be willing to serve again if needed. However, he expressed a preference for rotating the role to someone who has not previously served in that capacity. He noted that while he was willing to put his name forward as a last-resort option, he believed it would be beneficial for new leadership to step into the role.

Dr. Thomas Payne expressed support for Eric Brown's leadership and said he would endorse him if needed.

Jennifer Chavez thanked Eric Brown for his willingness to serve. She also clarified with Angie Vick that the committee would plan to hold the Chair vote at the next meeting, rather than during the current meeting. Jennifer Chavez reiterated that outreach would be made to potential candidates, including Susan Wells and Matt Smith, to gauge their interest and availability. She noted that, based on prior conversations, Matt Smith may share Eric Brown's view on stepping aside if another willing candidate emerges.

Angie Vick confirmed that this assessment was accurate.

Jennifer Chavez concluded that conversations would continue offline, and any confirmed interest would be brought back to the full committee for consideration at the next meeting.

Adjournment

With no additional items brought before the committee, Jennifer Chavez called for a motion to adjourn.

- **Motion:** Dr. Julie Baker
- **Second:** Dr. Lisa Zagumny

Meeting adjourned: 11:43 AM

Miscellaneous

Rebecca Gooch, Recorder

Documents on file with minutes:

- Meeting Agenda
- Previous Meeting's Unapproved Minutes