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

Opening

The meeting was called to order on September 17, 2025, at 11:05 a.m. by Dr. Susan Wells.

Attendees

Voting Members Present	Non-Voting Members Present
Dr. Jason Beach	Jennifer Chavez
Dr. Susan Wells	Will Hoffert
Dr. Julie Baker	Hunter Kaller
Matt Smith	Tyler Farsoun
Dr. Eunsung Park	David Hales
Elizabeth Williams	Jason Luna
Dr. Thomas Payne	Angela Vick
Sam Bates	Brandon Walls
Dr. Michael Allen	Mike Renfro
Eric Brown	David Garrett
John Gabriel Salma	Rebecca Gooch
Dr. Anthony Skjellum	
Matt Nisbet	
Dr. Allan Mills	
Dr. Allen Mackenzie	
Voting Members Absent	**Non-Voting Members Absent**
Dr. Lisa Zagumny	John Woodard
Dr. Ethan Languri	Greg Holt
Dan Warren	Cody Bryant
	Amanda Staggs

Approval of Agenda and Previous Minutes

Dr. Susan Wells presented the September 17, 2026 meeting agenda for approval.

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

Motion passed.

Dr. Susan Wells then requested approval of the minutes from the previous meeting. No questions, comments, or corrections were raised.

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

Motion passed.

Welcome New Members

Dr. Susan Wells welcomed the committee's new members, including student representatives John Gabriel and Samantha Bates, along with Dr. Anthony Skjellum, Allan Mills, and Matthew Nisbet. The new members confirmed that they were present.

Jennifer Chavez directed both new and continuing members to the Information Technology Committee Teams site, where committee materials, documents, and ongoing conversations are maintained. Members were asked to review the committee charge, member roles and responsibilities, terms of office, attendance expectations, and related procedural information.

She explained that the committee provides institutional guidance and oversight for technology in coordination with Information Technology Services. The committee also recommends technology-related changes and policies and participates in decisions concerning the annual allocation of Technology Access Fee funds.

Members serving on the Spending Plan Subcommittee were specifically encouraged to review Tennessee Tech Policy 511.1, Section H.3, which provides guidance regarding the appropriate use of Technology Access Fee funds.

The full committee generally meets quarterly. Subcommittees are expected to meet between full committee meetings as needed. Jennifer Chavez estimated that the typical time commitment would be approximately two to three meetings per quarter, with meetings structured to remain within the scheduled one-hour timeframe.

Information Technology General Updates

IT Leadership Structure

Jennifer Chavez introduced herself to new members as Tennessee Tech's Chief Information Officer and provided an overview of the current Information Technology Services leadership structure. She explained that ITS recently completed a minor organizational restructure intended to clarify leadership responsibilities and strengthen service delivery. Amanda Staggs filled a position that had previously been vacant, and Jennifer Chavez reported improvements in application-related response times and support during the spring and summer. She advised David Hales is now focused on network services and capital projects, while Brandon Walls is focused on infrastructure and systems. Jennifer Chavez also recognized the continuing leadership roles of Mike Renfro, Jason Luna, and Will Hoffert.

Wireless Modernization and Residence Hall Connectivity

Jennifer Chavez provided an update on campus wireless infrastructure, noting that Tennessee Tech manages more than 1,700 wireless access points in academic and administrative areas and nearly 1,100 additional access points in residential areas. During late spring and early summer, ITS replaced wireless access points in the Volpe Library and Roaden University Center and installed new access points at the stadium as part of the construction work. These locations now have Wi-Fi 7-capable equipment, and ITS has observed improvements in wireless service in those areas.
Approximately 1,200 of the access points serving academic and administrative spaces remain on Wi-Fi 5 and are due for replacement. ITS plans a phased refresh, beginning with approximately 450 access points during the current cycle and continuing with roughly one-third of the remaining equipment each year through 2029. The replacement plan is intended to move older equipment to Wi-Fi 7 or newer technology as funding and project schedules allow.

ITS is working with Residence Life to introduce hospitality-style wireless access points inside individual rooms in New Hall North and New Hall South. The equipment will support wireless service, wired connections, and student-owned personal and Internet-of-Things devices. The installation was not completed before the beginning of the semester because procurement discussions started later than needed. ITS hopes to complete the work during the winter closure. Future residence hall projects are expected to use the same in-room wireless model.

Network Reliability and Wireless Roaming

ITS is implementing monitoring for uninterruptible power supply systems to identify failing backup-power equipment before failures result in building network outages. Jennifer Chavez also acknowledged continuing wireless roaming concerns. In some cases, devices remain connected to an access point after the user has moved to another area of

campus, affecting the quality of the connection. ITS is testing updated controller technology at the stadium to improve device handoffs and roaming between access points.

Research Software Approval Process and Service Portal Improvements
Jennifer Chavez reported that ITS is developing a pre-approved list of research software. The goal is to make installation easier for researchers while continuing to meet procurement, compliance, security, and state-law requirements. Colleges submitted requests covering 83 software packages, and ITS is continuing the review process.

ITS launched a redesigned service portal organized around user groups, including students, faculty, and staff. The new portal is intended to make commonly used services and support information easier to locate based on the needs of each audience. Jennifer Chavez described the launch as the first phase of a broader, multi-phase documentation effort. She invited ITC members to identify missing information, documentation needs, and other improvements that would make the portal more useful to the campus community.

Ellucian Updates
Student and Faculty Experience
Jennifer Chavez reviewed the planned transition to Ellucian Student, with a target go-live of January 2028. The cloud platform will replace and modernize many functions currently associated with Eagle, including registration, degree-audit activities, financial-aid interactions, billing-related tasks, and other student services. The system is expected to provide a more unified and modern interface for students.

Allen MacKenzie asked whether the system would also support the faculty functions currently completed through Eagle.

Jennifer Chavez confirmed that Ellucian Student includes a faculty experience for class rosters, grade entry, and other routine interactions with student records. She emphasized that the implementation will affect faculty as well as students.

Campus Engagement and Implementation Planning and Approach
Jennifer Chavez and Amanda Staggs are working with the implementation steering committee and the Center for Innovation in Teaching and Learning to plan faculty and campus engagement. Broader communication is expected to begin around the first of the year and may include a central website, college meetings, town halls, Faculty Senate discussions, and other outreach channels.
Jennifer Chavez asked faculty representatives to offer ideas for making faculty aware of the change, collecting meaningful faculty input, and supporting the eventual rollout. Academic and advising units that will be affected by the implementation are also being identified so that they can be included in planning.

The cloud platform will establish a technology foundation that could support future workflow automation and AI-enabled access to student information. Jennifer Chavez offered examples such as answering student questions outside regular business hours or initiating a change-of-major workflow. She clarified that these are future opportunities enabled by the platform and are not commitments for the January 2028 go-live. Tennessee Tech selected the vendor's cloud product rather than first modernizing the existing on-premises system and migrating at a later date. Current implementation work is focused on establishing the environment and loading institutional data so that stakeholders can view the system and provide informed feedback.

Approved TAF FY27 Budget (Preliminary to October Revised)

Jennifer Chavez reported that the Spending Plan Subcommittee met on September 3 to review a preliminary Fiscal Year 2027 Technology Access Fee budget of approximately $2.6 million. The preliminary plan is based on early enrollment freeze data and remains subject to revision when final enrollment information is incorporated in October.

TAF-Funded Staffing and Special Project Funding

The TAF-funded IT staffing allocation has decreased to approximately $681,000 from approximately $830,000 to $860,000 in the previous year. Under an agreement with Dr. Claire Stinson, approximately $160,000 to $180,000 in staffing expense moved from TAF to IT operational funding for the current year. An additional $100,000 is planned to shift to IT operational funding in each of the following two years. Across the three-year period, the change is expected to return more than $400,000 to TAF for technology solutions and other eligible needs.

ITS distributed the annual request for one-time project proposals to Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, Enrollment Management, and the deans. Based on the preliminary budget, Jennifer Chavez and Angela Vick estimated that approximately $200,000 may be available for college-specific special projects. The final amount will be confirmed after the October budget revision. Project requests are due October 16. Once the requests have been received and the available project funding is confirmed, Jennifer Chavez, Angela Vick, Will Hoffert, and the Spending Plan Subcommittee will review the proposals and prepare project recommendations or approvals for the next full committee meeting.

D2L and Canvas Contract Costs and Budget Next Steps

In response to a question from Dr. Julie Baker, Jennifer Chavez explained that TAF must cover the remaining D2L contract obligation, which is less than $30,000 for the current year. The Canvas agreement was negotiated with Academic Affairs and the Center for Innovation in Teaching and Learning and caps the TAF-funded amount at $187,500 for the

contract term through 2032. The structure avoids annual percentage increases and helps preserve future TAF capacity.

Angela Vick confirmed that the Spending Plan Subcommittee will reconvene after updated budget information is received from the Budget Office, likely in mid-to-late October. The revised enrollment figures, confirmed special-project funding, and submitted project requests will be reviewed at that time.

Dr. Anthony Skjellum requested that future updates for initiatives described as "in progress" include measurable indicators, percentages, and estimated milestone dates. He explained that these measures would help committee members understand current status, expected progress, and anticipated completion timing.

Items for the Next ITC Meeting

Dr. Susan Wells identified the October TAF follow-up as an agenda item for the next ITC meeting. Approval of special projects is also expected to be discussed after requests are submitted, available funding is confirmed, and the Spending Plan Subcommittee completes its review. The next Information Technology Committee meeting is scheduled for November 19, 2026.

Adjournment

No additional business was brought forward to discuss.

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

Meeting Adjourned: 11:40AM

Miscellaneous

Rebecca Gooch, Recorder
Documents on file with minutes:

- Meeting Agenda
- Previous Meeting's Unapproved Minutes