

ACITAS RESPONSE – PROPOSED ALTERNATIVE TO ITPC SOFTWARE POLICY

4/3/12

Policy Statement

The aim of this policy is to provide appropriate resources to assure that computing software is available to meet the needs of two main university areas:

- The mission of teaching, learning, research, and community engagement, particularly in meeting teaching and scholarship goals, while protecting academic freedom in both individual and unit choice of tools
- Administrative goals in support of the university

The policy aim is also to define the relative limits of such support, and the criteria by which such limits are applied to a particular software, either acquired or proposed for acquisition.

In providing software support, the university will strive to achieve balance among three key areas:

- Supporting the academic and administrative needs stated above
- Controlling the costs of acquiring, using, and maintain such software
- Protecting the security of the university's overall computing environment and data

Definitions

Software support

Support consists of providing the resources to acquire, install, maintain, and train in the use of, and resolve problems resulting in the use of, the approved software. The university may provide all, or a part of, or none of these resources, depending on the category the software is placed in, as defined below.

Software categories

Type 1: Enterprise-wide software

These are core applications used by most of the university, such as Email (Groupwise), Learning Management System (Blackboard), Student Information System (Banner), Content Management System (Web site, dotCMS). These may be hosted by university IT resources, and/or hosted in an outside computing environment by an agreement with others providers.

ITS and CELT provide the necessary support for this category of software.

Type 2: General software tools and applications

This category of software may be provided as “utility” tools, or as applications providing specific capabilities shared among specific college, division, or department users. Typical of this category are Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS), AutoCAD, Adobe Suite, and other productivity tools. ITS provides network-based hosting, installation, and maintenance services. ITS and/or CELT may provide training and issue resolution, and/or these may be provided by areas with more specific expertise depending on the software functionality.

Type 3: Course-associated or personal productivity software

This category of software is used by a specific college, division, department or professor for a specific course or set of courses. It may serve a distinct purpose for the course, and/or come with the course’s text, such as myITLab from Pearson Publishing, or the various mathematics instruction and study tools. ITS may provide software hosting and network access by individual agreement with the requester. The using organization/individual is responsible for providing all support in installing and maintaining the software, and all user training and issue resolution.

Criteria for Software Adoption

It should be noted that the defining the above three Categories does not imply that funding to procure or maintain the software will necessarily be made available. Each software proposal must stand on its own merit in review.

Type 1: Enterprise-wide software

Proposals for adoption of such software are made to ITPC for consideration after prior reviews of purpose, value, cost, and a comparison of alternative approaches to achieve the purpose. The reviews and proposal creation will be conducted by the appropriate university committee charged with such responsibilities:

- For academic software - ACITAS (Academic Computing and Information Technology Advisory Subcommittee of the Faculty Senate), possibly in joint action with ITCO (Instructional Technology Coordinating Committee of ITPC)
- For administrative software – ADCAC (Administrative Computing Advisory Committee) and/or the Banner Steering Committee

ITPC will use its own criteria, in addition to that stated in the “Policy Statement” of page 1, above, for deciding:

- If the software is appropriate to university needs, at all
- If the recommended alternative is the best alternative to meet university purposes, and its overall mission

- If the university can provide all the necessary resources to procure, install, maintain, and support the proposed alternative, including which Category the software fits

The decision as to which software to support will become the solely supported software of that purpose.

Type 2: General software tools and applications

This software will be considered by ITPC after a review and positive referral by ACITAS, possibly in concert with ITCO, where appropriate. The proposal assumes that adequate resources to procure, install, maintain and train for the software use have been secured. Approval will be reviewed periodically by ACITAS to assure its continued adherence as to the original purpose stated, as well as to the continuing availability of needed support resources.

Type 2: General software tools and applications (cont'd)

It is strongly recommended that those seeking to procure and install such software consult with ITS before proceeding to avoid problems with its working within the existing university computing environment.

Type 3: Course-associated software

This software is not decided upon or procured by the university or ITS as a whole, but instead by specific colleges, schools, departments, or individuals, and therefore requires no ITPC review or approval. It is strongly recommended that those seeking to procure and install such software consult with ITS before proceeding to avoid problems with its working within the existing university computing environment. ITS will give due consideration to all requests with a view to supporting the aims of this policy in supporting academic goals.

Policy Enactment

- This policy will be reviewed and adjusted as needed to current needs at least biannually
- The current status of software in use is “grandfathered” into the appropriate Categories at the Policy enactment