Committee Description: The Committee on Academic Technology (CAT) is a standing committee that reports jointly to the Provost and the University Academic Senate. It is concerned with the use of technology as regards the academic mission of the university. Its membership consists of representatives of each of the colleges of the university, the Center for Teaching and Learning, the Director of Information Technology Services, The Associate Vice Provost for Educational Technology, and the Vice Provost for Undergraduate Programs and Teaching. Two subcommittees functioned during the 2012-13 academic year: Hardware/Software Infrastructure and e-Textbooks; chaired by Patrick Loftis and Jon Pray respectively.

Committee Membership: Bruce Boyden, Lesley Boaz, Margaret Cinto (GSO), Michael Class, S.J., Steven Crane, Scott D’Urso (Co-Chair), Kathy Lang, Thomas Lenoir (MUSG), Patrick Loftis, Shaun Longstreet, Laura Matthew, Barrett McCormick, Gary Meyer (Co-Chair), Lars Olson, Jon Pray, Heidi Schweizer, Christopher Stockdale, Janice Welburn, Tom Wirtz

Committee Meetings: CAT scheduled monthly meetings during the academic year, and met six times: September 28, October 26, November 16, January 25, February 22, March 22 and will meet April 26.

University Academic Senate Charge: No charge assigned.

Committee Work and Accomplishments: CAT addressed a variety of topics this year including examining budget issues related to the use of academic technology on campus, examining the state of online and hybrid learning at Marquette University, examining the student needs for technology on campus, and assessing ways the committee can offer recommendations and suggestions to the University administration on upcoming academic technology issues.

- The committee began to discuss the issue of student needs in the area of technology access on campus. More and more colleges and departments are requiring multimedia work as part of coursework. Other departments are utilizing additional technologies as part of their curricular approach. As part of this process we also addressed the potential need for additional technology support and more formalized centers across campus (ex. Wakerly Technology Training Center in the Diederich College of Communication). Committee members sought input from each the colleges / areas they represented. This information was shared with the committee and the Hardware / Software / Infrastructure Subcommittee was assigned to investigate potential options that could be pursued by the University
• As part of a discussion on the promotion of technology use on campus, the committee brought up the concern that it was difficult to make recommendations regarding academic technology without understanding the associated budgetary issues with technology on campus. Kathy Lang offered and then provide some of this information as it pertained to the IT Service budget and placed it in the context of how we compared to our peer institutions. Gary Meyer offered to investigate the issue from the Provost’s office and the committee is schedule to hear a report from Mark Simonson at its April Meeting.

• Two separate presentations were made to the committee that focused on the state of online courses being offered at Marquette, and the state of MOOCs (Massive Open Online Courses) in higher education. These presentations and related discussion has led to the upcoming “Campus Conversation: The Status and Future of Online Learning at Marquette: Online, Blended, MOOC’s and More” that is being cosponsored by the committee, as well as the Committee on Teaching, The Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL), and the Instructional Media Center (IMC). The event is scheduled for May 2, 2013.

• Dr. Jeremy Fyke and several students, from his Communication Consulting (CMST 4600) course from Fall 2012, made a special presentation to the committee at its January meeting. Dr. Fyke and his students worked with the CTL as a client, in conjunction with the committee, to examine student and faculty perceptions of communication strategies employed by the CTL, and general academic technology use on campus. The students conducted the research through a series of focus groups. A brief summary of the findings is presented here:
  o Students do not like having to access more than one course management tool. Prefer everything centralized through D2L.
  o There is growing frustration about inconsistent technology use among faculty on campus, both in the classroom and with online resources such as D2L.
  o Faculty are concerned about being pressured to utilize technology with no established need or reasoning.
  o Faculty want more time to learn how to use and integrate D2L, and most technologies in general, as part of their overall teaching practices.
  o Students would like to see a more homogenized approach to technology use on campus for teaching and learning.
  o Faculty are currently split on the use of e-textbooks and tablet computers in the classroom environment.
  o Students desire greater freedom to use personal computing technology in their classes.
  o Most faculty are unaware of the CTL and its purpose or offerings.
  o Students recognize the need for some online course offerings, but prefer the face-to-face learning environment so as to not lose the Marquette/Jesuit interpersonal connection between students and faculty.
• The committee, over the course of many of its meetings kept returning to the issue of how to better serve the Academic Senate and the Provost by being a valued source of information and recommendations regarding future technology issues. The committee feels that many of the activities undertaking this semester are putting us in a better position to accomplish this task.
• Subcommittee reports are attached as appendices.

Committee Recommendations:

• The CAT urges that, as the University moves forward with its strategic planning effort, Marquette University should approach the issue of academic technology use in a more active manner by utilizing available technology more efficiently and preparing for potential changes to these technologies by maintain a vigilant watch over technological developments affecting higher education. This should be done with a solid pedagogical approach that best meet the needs of students and faculty.
• The CAT is still awaiting a charge from the Senate or the Provost. Future years will benefit from such a charge to better serve them. In the meantime, the committee is preparing as best it can to understand and face the upcoming opportunities and challenges associated with academic technology use at Marquette University

Respectfully Submitted,

Scott C. D’Urso, Ph.D., Co-Chair

Gary Meyer, Ph.D., Co-Chair
Appendix I:

Annual Report
eTextbook Subcommittee
Committee on Academic Technology
April 2012

Subcommittee membership:

Bruce Boyden (LAW), Laura Matthew (HIST), Michael Class, S.J. (PRST), Heidi Schweizer (CTL), Steve Crane (ECON), Janice Welburn (Dean, Libraries), Gary Meyer (Vice Provost for Undergraduate Programs and Teaching), Jon Pray (IMC, Associated Vice Provost for Educational Technology)

Subcommittee charge:

The e-Textbooks Subcommittee will work to ensure that Marquette University is ready to meet the rapid changes by textbook publishing companies as they shift toward electronic delivery of content. The subcommittee will investigate the various platforms and policies that are beginning to emerge and how the institution can ensure student and faculty have wide access to and/or ownership of electronic media.

Motivators:

Provide students more affordable textbook options; pursue the concept of a “library on a device” vs. overstuffed backpack; promote technology delivery and use and; take advantage of changing content models (multimedia enriched e-Textbooks).

Summary of Activities:

The eTextbook subcommittee met three times this year. Our emphasis last year was on research and it provided a good overview of the state of the industry and the associated technology. This year, we monitored changing business models and followed a several major national pilot efforts. Notably, the joint pilot from Educause and Interet2 which was, “…the latest in a series of efforts to provide campuses an opportunity to explore, evaluate, and advance the transition from traditional media models, including textbooks, to electronic platforms.” Participation in the pilot required a fairly significant investment ($27,500 provided no-cost eTexts to 100 students). While Marquette did not participate directly, the subcommittee was briefed on the project by Bruce Maas, the CIO of the University of Wisconsin system.

We also met with Follett/BookMarq representatives to discuss the student’s retail eText options, current penetration (much increased among freshmen) and other satisfaction topics. The first 8
slides of the attached PowerPoint are of particular interest to this topic.

We attempted to organize a pilot with several large courses last spring and summer with an eye toward the fall of 2012. This would have given us an opportunity to test not only the functionality, but negotiate some pricing advantages with freshmen courses in biology, English and history. Each discipline had its own issues ranging from lack of interest (biology) to changing leadership (English).

Finally, we conducted a survey at the end of the spring 2012 semester of two courses that had adopted eTextbooks (see attached). Student responses were mostly neutral in terms of efficacy of the electronic volume as a method of study and preparation. They did find the eTextbooks easy to use.

The Tumblr page that chronicles recent articles on the subject continued to be updated: http://muetextbook.tumblr.com/
Appendix II

Hardware/Software/Infrastructure Subcommittee

Subcommittee Membership:

Lesley Boaz (NURS), Scott D’Urso (COMM), Patrick Loftis (Chair, PHAS), Tom Wirtz (DENT), Kathy Lang (CIO)

Subcommittee Charge:

We began our first full year as a subcommittee in the 2011-12 school year. Our goal was to address the Topics/Issues for exploration as we were able over the coming year. Below is our mission and a summary of the past year’s activities.

Mission - The Hardware/Software/Infrastructure Subcommittee will work to ensure that Marquette University coordinates with the use of technology in the classrooms so that we can provide a superior learning environment without placing additional costs on the students and University to purchase redundant equipment and software.

Summary of Activities:

The CAT hardware and software subcommittee was tasked with 1) exploring the utilization of academic technologies within the University amongst faculty, staff and students 2) assessing the attitudes of individuals in said groups towards the use of current and future technologies and 3) make recommendations to the committee on ways to further utilize current technologies or implement new technologies with the goal of improving the learning experience for our students by improving the teaching experience of our faculty.

The first part of the year, various student focus group sessions were coordinated by Shaun Longstreet and the Center for Teaching and Learning and held in order to gauge student’s impressions on the use of academic technologies at Marquette University. These findings were presented to the Committee as a whole. Themes included D2L utilization and alternative technology hardware use by faculty. The subcommittee is having ongoing discussions on how best to use the information obtained from these groups. The subcommittee has also had discussion on the potential of tablet PC devices as a replacement for the current CRP in the future. We are awaiting vendor feedback regarding demonstration, capabilities, and pricing of these devices to determine their viability in our institution. Other items that are being discussed are to assess individual departmentally funded software licensure agreements currently in place to see if there is any duplication with the hopes that a more cost effective option such as a group buy or University license may exist. Lastly, we are working on developing a questionnaire to be distributed to faculty. The target would be to assess attitudes towards and usage of academic
technologies in teaching as well as to assess for any barriers in implementation/usage, especially in low use groups. The goal is to assist in the removal of barriers when possible.