Stony Brook University Senate Standing Committee Report

Education Services and Information Technology (SCEDIT)

SCEDIT report to the University Senate Coordinating Council
Tuesday, May 13, 2025
Attending: Victoria Pilato, co-chair & Alaa Abd-El-Hafez, SCEDIT faculty member

Committee Charge

Education Services & Information Technologies (SCEDIT)

This Committee shall review and evaluate all aspects of the educational and information technology support services, including but not limited to
1. Implementation of new educational pedagogies, academic technologies, collaboration systems and tools, and administrative systems
2. Development of new learning environments
3. Application of new education & information technologies

The committee will have appropriate representation from all users of campus technology and educational support services.

The cognate administrative contacts are the Chief Information Officer of the University and the Director of Center for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT).

Membership

Committee Co-Chairs
Cynthia Davidson, Advanced Senior Lecturer, Program in Writing & Rhetoric
Victoria Pilato, Digital Projects Librarian, HSC

Administrative Cognates
Simeon Ananou, CIO / Vice President of Information Technology
Rose Tirotta-Esposito, Director, Center for Excellence in Learning and Teaching

Executive Senate Committee Liaison
Richard Larson, Distinguished Professor, Dept. of Linguistics

Committee Members

- Matt Reuter, Engineering (AMS), West Campus
- Moises Eisenberg, SOM (Health Sciences Center - School of Medicine), HSC
- Christopher Chan, Undergraduate Student Rep
- Shyam Sharma, Writing & Rhetoric (Humanities & Fine Arts), West Campus
- Diana Voss, Academic Technology Services, DoIT
- Victoria Pilato, HSC Library, HSC and West campus
- Cynthia Davidson, Writing & Rhetoric (Humanities & Fine Arts), West Campus
- Alaa Abd-El-Hafez, Mathematics, West Campus
- Yersson Gaona, Engineering (CEAS Dean's Office), West Campus
- Will Farr, Physics & Astronomy, West Campus
- Caterina Reed-Araujo, University Libraries, West Campus
- VACANT x2, Social Sciences
- VACANT, Professional
- VACANT, Graduate Student Rep

Education Services and IT Experts

Rose Tirotta-Esposito, Director for Teaching Excellence
Diana Voss, Director of Academic Technology Services
Simeon Ananou, CIO

Past Chairs (non-voting members)

Keri Hollander, SON (Health Sciences Center - School of Nursing)
Scott Campbell, Elec. Engineering (College of Engineering)

Summary of Discussions and Actions

- 2024-25 was a rebuilding year for SCEDIT, its first year as a standing committee. Membership is largely new this year, and new co-chairs were elected. Previous chairs remain on the committee as non-voting members, and the bylaws were amended to allow the past chairs to remain on the committee during a transitional period.
- Subcommittees on AI Advisory and AJC Technology Advisory were established.
- Concerns over the introduction of AI tools that impact pedagogy without consultation of faculty (NotebookLM) have been addressed with the CIO. We asked him to consult with SCEDIT before publicly endorsing an AI program that impacts pedagogy, like NotebookLM does.
- SCEDIT investigated faculty complaints over the Student Accessibility Support Center's use of GLEAN note-taking software. The issues were related to a lapse in communicating these guidelines and the introduction of AI into an existing tool. The

faculty were not made aware of their right to ask students to turn off recording software during sensitive discussions. The executive director, Wendi Mathews, met with SCEDIT in April to discuss strategies for better communicating guidelines related to its use. This conversation and a demo of Glean were shared with SCEDIT members. If members have further questions, Wendi will attend a SCEDIT meeting. However, SCEDIT members seemed satisfied with learning more about it and the actions to be taken.

- SCEDIT is working with DoIT to establish a formal procedure for evaluating new software purchases for pedagogical impact (impact on learning objectives, student experience, faculty effectiveness).
- SCEDIT discussed problems encountered by IT and CELT with oversight regarding programs currently used on campus that newly introduce AI.
- Victoria Pilato represents SCEDIT in the Digital Governance Framework committee led by CIO Simeon Ananou.
- The committee is being updated on the upcoming legal changes in NYS to accessibility (which includes all faculty PDFs and course content). Rose Tirotta-Esposito has been leading on this and informing the committee of upcoming deadlines (the current deadline is April 2026).

New AI Software Vetting Procedure (under construction)

1. SCEDIT is working with DoIT to establish a formal procedure for evaluating new software purchases for pedagogical impact (impact on learning objectives, student experience, faculty's effectiveness)
   a. DoIT already has vetting procedures in place for cyber risk and accessibility
   b. SCEDIT will advise DoIT in adding a pedagogical assessment procedure to this existing structure. SCEDIT will consult the university community as we do this.
   c. This is a complex issue because AI impacts pedagogical goals differently in different academic units. We are just at the beginning of this task.

2. We discussed problems encountered by IT and CELT with oversight regarding AI programs used on campus:
   a. Current leased or used programs that introduce AI "suddenly."
   b. Units purchasing AI without consulting DoIT.
   c. People are using readily available free or cheap commercial AI programs with university data.
   d. It's like putting out a lot of fires, and is at least partly responsible for several of our faculty complaints this year (the NotebookLM rollout and GLEAN issues).

SCEDIT Sub-Committees

- Establishment of two subcommittees:
  1. Artificial Intelligence (AI) Advisory

> 2. Academic Judiciary Committee (ACJ) Technology Advisory
- SCEDIT members agreed upon both.
- SCEDIT members chose which subcommittee they wanted to join (no one is required to join).
- Charges are still being edited.
- Sub-committees bring motions to be approved by all SCEDIT members, and if approved, move to the senate for consideration.

- ❖ AI Advisory
  - ➢ CHAIR: Shyam Sharma
  - ➢ MEMBERS: Will Farr, Rose Tirotta-Esposito, Cynthia Davidson
  - ➢ CHARGE: Advise SCEDIT on emerging issues impacting students and faculty
    - ■ Invite stakeholders to share best practices
    - ■ What do we want to know – what's needed for faculty, students, and staff
    - ■ Help SCEDIT elevate AI issues to the larger senate
    - ■ Get experienced ourselves – test or consult/invite expert users
      - ● Teaching/learning
      - ● Research/scholarship
      - ● Administrative/leadership
  - ➢ Current Activities:
    - ■ AI Advisory will be focusing on development of a robust resource center for faculty and students.
    - ■ Discussions focus on AI in Education: Challenges and Implications.
    - ■ Sub-committee agreed on the importance of two-way communication, gathering feedback from the community, and providing evidence to inform the Senate's voice.
    - ■ The need for data on faculty's use of AI was highlighted, with the suggestion to pool data from various sources.

- ❖ **Academic Judiciary Committee Technology Advisory**
  - ➢ CHAIR: Matt Reuter
  - ➢ MEMBERS: Diana Voss, Christopher Chan, Caterina Reed
  - ➢ CHARGE: AJC subcommittee will continue discussions on the use of AI-detection software in Brightspace (TurnItIn). The Senate committee on AJC has concerns about more general data sharing policies for more routine plagiarism checking (i.e., what can faculty do when TurnItIn matches to a non-SBU document). The campus procedure is that we have to manually request that institution to share the data (how does this relate to FERPA?), and is one coarse-grained data option from TurnItIn.
  - ➢ Current Activities:
    - ■ The AJC subcommittee will continue discussions on the use of AI-detection software in Brightspace (TurnItIn). The Senate committee on AJC has concerns about more general data sharing policies for more routine plagiarism checking (i.e., what can faculty do when TurnItIn matches to a non-SBU document). The campus procedure is that we

have to manually request that the institution share the data (how does this relate to FERPA), and it is one coarse-grained data option from TurnItIn—ongoing discussion.

Title II: Update

- April 2026: All digital content must adhere to WCAG 2.1 AA for public entities with a population over 50,000
- This will impact every area of the university, but Academic Affairs & CELT are focusing on academic/course content.
- CELT offers self-paced trainings, consultations, department visits, and a PDF Remediation pilot
- Top three tips to get started
    - Get PDFs reviewed and remediated
    - Review and update automatic transcripts on course videos
    - Add ALT text or longer descriptions to images

Upcoming

- Discussions with Academic Judiciary on collaborations, if applicable.
- Membership of SCEDIT
    - Social Science reps needed.
    - Adding an IT professional from the HSC side of campus.