

To: Academic Senate Office  
From: F. Fernflores, Academic Senate Representative on IACC 08-09  
Re: Summary Report of Relevant IACC Activities  
Date: 1 June 2009

Enclosed is my report of the discussions that took place at the IACC that I believe are particularly relevant to the Academic Senate.

If you have any questions, please contact me.

Sincerely,

Francisco Fernflores  
Philosophy Department  
Cal Poly, SLO

---

# Report on Activities of the IACC

## AY 2008-2009

---

### Overview

The issues of greatest concern to the Academic Senate that were discussed this year at the IACC concern (a) the possible adoption and use of on-line anti-plagiarism services and (b) the use of social networking web sites for instruction. Because there is anecdotal evidence that faculty are using both on-line anti-plagiarism tools (such as Turnitin) and social networking web sites for instruction, the IACC is exploring whether guidelines should be established for faculty concerning the use of these technologies. Toward the end of the year, the consensus at the IACC was that (i) the Academic Senate may wish to be involved in developing guidelines for the use of on-line anti-plagiarism tools and social networking web sites through one of its committees and (ii) if guidelines are not deemed to be necessary, the IACC may recommend that CTL be responsible for an educational campaign concerning the use of such technologies.

### On-line Anti-Plagiarism Tools

#### Possible Adoption

During Fall quarter 08 the IACC discussed developing policies for a possible adoption of Turnitin.com. The Academic Senate representative met with the Instruction Committee to discuss the possible development of such guidelines. At that meeting, it was agreed that no new *policies* needed to be developed. The possible adoption of Turnitin was also discussed. There was not much interest among the members of the Instruction Committee in the adoption of Turnitin.

ITS decided, early in Winter 2009, *not* to adopt Turnitin.

#### Possible Guidelines

Although ITS has not purchased a license for Turnitin, there are instructors who use the service (they purchase their licenses through their departments or colleges). Consequently, there is an outstanding question concerning whether guidelines should be developed for the use of on-line anti-plagiarism services.

There are real issues to consider here, especially concerning student rights, fairness, and even intellectual property of student work. For example, the General Counsel at CSU Long Beach recommends to instructors who use such anti-plagiarism services to include very specific language in their syllabi. Other universities have adopted similar guidelines. See, for example, <http://www.library.umass.edu/tools/plagiarism/>. It is important, for example, that (a) students know that such a service will be used by the instructor, and (b) that students can opt out.

I recommend that the Academic Senate consider its role in this discussion.

### **Reconsidering Possible Adoption**

The annual SWEEPS survey on the instructional use of technology conducted by the IACC revealed that there is an interest in obtaining a license for an anti-plagiarism service. Approximately 75% of respondents indicated that they were either “somewhat interested” or “very interested” in such a service, with the greatest interest coming, as expected, from CLA.

### **Social Networking Web Sites for Instruction**

The IACC also considered whether guidelines need to be developed for faculty who wish to use social networking web sites, such as Facebook, for instruction. The SWEEPS survey revealed that only approximately 2% of respondents currently use social networking web sites other than YouTube. Furthermore, there is comparatively little interest by faculty in using such web sites for instruction.