Architecture Governance

Architecture Governance Framework - Conceptual Structure

Conceptually, architecture governance is an approach containing a series of processes, a cultural orientation, and set of owned responsibilities that ensure the integrity and effectiveness of the organization’s architectures.

![Diagram of Architecture Governance Framework](image)

Keeping process, content, and context separate makes architecture governance initiative flexible and allows easier introduction of new governance material (legal, regulatory, standard-based, or legislative) without impacting the processes. The processes are typically independent of the content and implement a proven best approach to active governance.

Key Architecture Governance Processes

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• **Policy Management and Take-on:** All architectural amendments, contracts, and supporting information must come under governance through a formal process in order to register, validate, ratify, manage, and publish new or updated content. These processes will ensure the orderly integration with existing governance content such that all relevant parties, documents, contracts, and supporting information are managed and audited.

• **Compliance:** Compliance assessments against Service Level Agreements (SLA), Operational Level Agreements (OLA), standards and regulatory requirements will be implemented on an ongoing basis to ensure stability, conformance, and performance monitoring. These assessments will be reviewed and either accepted or rejected depending on the criteria defined within the framework.

• **Dispensation:** A Compliance Assessment can be rejected where the subject area (design, operational, service level, or technology) are not compliant. In this case the subject area can:
  - Realigned or adjusted to meet the compliance requirements
  - Apply for dispensation

• **Monitoring and Reporting:** It provides a framework to ensure both the operational and service elements are managed against an agreed set of criteria. This will include monitoring against service and operational-level agreements, feedback for adjustment, and reporting.

• **Business Control:** It provides framework to ensure compliance with the organization’s business policies.

• **Environment Management:** It identifies services required to ensure that the repository-based environment underpinning the governance framework is effective and efficient. This includes the physical and logical repository management, access, communication, training, and accreditation of all users.

**Architecture Governance Framework - Organizational Structure**

Architecture governance bodies in the enterprise/institution provides mechanisms to ensure effectiveness of architecture practices. Below diagram illustrates governance bodies established in Columbia University.

Below is the list of governance bodies along with working groups.

**Architecture Steering Committee**

Architecture Steering Committee meets monthly and is primary oversight body for enterprise architecture.

Following are the main responsibilities of the group:

- Translate vision into enterprise changes.
- Review architecture plan, recommend changes to the EA framework.
- Issue, review and approve architecture standards, reference architecture.
- Identify improved architectural practices and promote their adoption across the department.
- Review and approve Roadmaps.
• Review project teams request for exceptions.

**Architecture Assessment Group**

Architecture Assessment group meets monthly and is responsible for providing alignment and compliance of solution delivery in the organization or institution.

Following are the main responsibilities of the group.

• Update enterprise architecture framework in regular basis.
• Conduct reviews of new projects to ensure architectural alignment and compliance
• Build Standards, patterns, templates, and reference architectures
• Assist in adopting best-practices and process improvements in business areas.
• Make recommendations regarding products, methodologies, industry standards, based on the Columbia University's mission and strategy.
• Develop and evaluate technology options

**ITLC- EA**

ITLC-EA meets monthly and provides oversight on sharing standards and procedures across Columbia University and its affiliates in federated model.

Following are the main responsibilities of the group.

• Share Best Practices, Data and Services across University IT.
• Identify Business Stakeholders and Communicate Value of EA.
• Develop Shared Enterprise Architecture Capability for University IT.
• Partner in Evaluation and Contracting for Cloud Services.
• Partner in Evaluation and Contracting for Strategic Technology Solutions.

**ITANA (IT Architect iN Academia)**

ITANA is focused on developing the skills, tools and a suite of resources to assist institutions with their enterprise, business and technical architectural needs. ITANA serves higher education while drawing from other architecture groups (The Open Group, Microsoft, etc.) and vendors as needed. ITANA also acts to help architects build their peer-group and find a mentor or become a mentor.

ITANA meetings are help bi-weekly.