
Rutgers University Senate
Information Technology Committee (ITC)
Update - Report on Charge S-2201
“Approved Electronic Notebook Programs”
February 17, 2023

Charge S-2201 – Approved Electronic Notebook Programs

Investigate the use of electronic lab notebooks. Review the current policies and practice of notebook creation and cloud storage. Recommend the best practices for maintaining the security, integrity, and accessibility of these notebooks. Due October 2022

Background: *Has Rutgers has approved electronic lab notebook programs?*

Normally the lab notebooks must be kept on campus and are the property of the school. If you take the notebook off campus and something happens to it, it is your fault since you shouldn't take it off the campus.

However, electronic lab notebooks are stored on offsite servers in the cloud. Therefore, I wanted the opinion from Rutgers what are approved electronic notebooks for the storage of Rutgers data.

This is an additional concern if Rutgers no longer continues their contract with Box.

Further Details:

There is confusion and a need for a clear university policy or guidance regarding the safe, timely, organized, and efficient long-term storage of research data.

Considerations:

The ITC first reported to the Senate on this charge in March 2022, when a committee of information technology and subject matter experts, outside of the ITC, was formed to review various ELN (Electronic Lab Notebook) software.

This original charge was intended to task the Senate with identifying and procuring a site license for an Electronic Notebook (ELN) program. The Senate Information Technology Committee (ITC) agreed this request should more appropriately be given to The Office of Information Technology (OIT). OIT manages various site-licensed software through the University Software Portal. Also, OIT has the university's centralized research computing and data science resource, The Office of Advanced Research Computing (OARC), who provides Rutgers researchers with essential computing, networking, storage, and data-handling capabilities. Selection and procurement of university software is not the role of the ITC.

Investigation and Findings:




The ITC met with the ELN Committee leaders, Keith Williams (The Center for Advanced Biotechnology and Medicine, CABM), Shaun Rumrill, Tom Vosseler (SAS) and Laura Palumbo (Libraries) to discuss their committee's findings and conclusions. There was an urgency for CABM to procure ELN software to satisfy compliance with NIH and other research requirements.

The committee hosted demonstrations from five (5) ELN software providers:

1. Benchling
2. SciNote
3. Labguru
4. RSpace
5. LabArchives

The committee chose **LabArchives** as the preferred ELN software and supplied its results and findings via the matrix below. It should be noted this matrix was developed based on the features sets available at the time of the evaluation in 2022.

A recorded demonstration is available here: <https://rutgers.app.box.com/s/4ob5ri56pqp7pv0151mft4iz8qyeugnv>

	 Benchling	SciNote [™]	labguru	 RSpace	 LabArchives Research Notebook
Researcher Rating (Natalie/Shawn)	Below Average (2/5)	Average (3/5)	Above Average (4/5)	Above Average (4/5)	Excellent (5/5)
IT Rating (Keith/Mike)	Below Average (2/5)	Very Poor (1/5)	Above Average (4/5)	Excellent (5/5)	Excellent (5/5)
21 CFR Part 11 Compliant (electronic records)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
HIPAA Compliant	No	No	No	No	Yes
Footprint among Research/Academic Institutions	High	Low	Medium	High	Very High
Inventory Component Pricing	Included	Included	Included	Included	\$30/user/year
ELN Component Pricing	N/A	\$300/user/year	\$200/user/year	\$120/user/year	\$120/user/year

Conclusion:

As a result of the Committee's findings, CABM bought the following LabArchives Enterprise Licenses:
 LabArchives Research ELN – 100 Users
 LabArchives Inventory – 100 Users

On January 17, 2023, LabArchives implemented single sign-on for all existing LabArchives accounts, enabling all Rutgers users to use their Rutgers login credentials for access.

For those interested in more information about the ELN committee's finding or on LabArchives licenses and pricing, please contact Keith Williams @ gambit@cabm.rutgers.edu.

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