University of West Georgia

2010-2015 Information Technology Strategic Plan

I. Introduction

The Information Technology Strategic Plan 2010-2015 is an updated version of the 2002 – 2009 IT Strategic Plan. Many of the original goals are still appropriate; however, updated strategies help ensure alignment with the UWG Strategic Plan for 2010-2015.

Definition of Information Technology (IT)

Information technology is a broad term used to describe a multitude of applications for computing and communications technology in support of an institution’s mission and activities. This typically includes computers, networking equipment, telephony, video distribution and transmission equipment, multimedia and similar computer-based audiovisual equipment, electronic or digital printing equipment, and other related hardware. Additionally, the term information technology may be used to include both software that operates on this equipment and data retained by these hardware and software mechanisms. When considering data, software, hardware (and their associated instructional, research, or business processes), the term information systems is generally used.

Information Technology Support at UWG

The University commits significant resources annually to incorporate technological advances into both its academic and operations areas. Information technology support is primarily centralized and provided by the department of Information Technology Services (ITS). Information technology assets are distributed across the University with equipment located within each College or School under Academic Affairs, within the divisions of Business and Finance, Student Affairs, and University Advancement, and under the Chief Information Officer (CIO). ITS supplies assistance in the effective deployment of technology to all areas of the University including Distance Education initiatives. Coordination of IT support is provided through participation in the Faculty Senate’s Technology Planning Committee (TPC), which includes representation from each division. Additional coordination occurs through the activities of various technology groups and committees within individual campus units and departments.

Scope of this Plan

This planning document applies to all information technology and information systems of the UWG. These include information technology systems planned, developed, operated and supported by ITS and by other divisions. In addition, this document may have implications relating to information technology contracted through outside entities and provided by the University System of Georgia and other statewide agencies. The major goals and initiatives recommended by this plan
are strategically significant to all units of the University. This document is intended to reflect major institutional directions with subsequent addition and modification to include corresponding plans of respective units within the University.

This Information Technology Strategic Plan is intended to be a living document, the primary purpose of which is to serve as an IT coordination tool for the institution.

II. IT Purpose and Vision

UWG’s Technology Purpose:

The purpose of IT for the University is to employ comprehensive technology resources, services, and solutions that support the achievement of its mission and goals. Those coordinating IT services will work together to provide campus-wide leadership through dynamic policies and practices, accountability, and responsive stewardship of resources.

A Vision for Information Technology Effectiveness

The vision for Information Technology Effectiveness at this University is that:

- All faculty, staff and students will have access to information via a reliable, secure and robust networking and computing infrastructure as appropriate to each individual or local unit of the University.

- Each faculty member will be able to make full and effective use of technology in instruction and research through individually appropriate training and use of resources.

- Staff will be able to make full and effective use of technology for administrative purposes and research through individually appropriate training and use of resources.

- Courses and programs that are delivered electronically, or have technology-integrated components, will be improved, supported, and expanded where effective.

- Support for all users of technology will not only be appropriate for their individual and local unit needs but also systematically deployed by the University as a whole to maximize delivery to and to minimize complexity and inconvenience for the user.

- Administrative support for the academic mission will be enhanced by appropriately employing information technology to enhance administrative process effectiveness and efficiency.
Selection of technology solutions will be informed by analyses of benefits and associated costs. The University will utilize enhancements in technology to strengthen and develop the many relationships that sustain an institution and its students, alumni, donors and partners.

III. Strategic Statements and Goals

Goal One: Enhance Teaching and Learning

The University will provide an environment for learning and development empowered by technology. Users will have access to informational, educational, communication, collaborative, and research resources both inside and outside the classroom. Delivery of academic services will be enhanced by the use and integration of appropriate technology. The University will seek to identify and increase the benefits accrued by the use of technology for instruction, learning, and the delivery of research materials.

Strategies

1. Facilitate collaboration among academic units to deliver quality instruction that uses technology to engage students.

2. Work with faculty to plan and create technology-enhanced classrooms and distance learning environments that encourage and support excellence.

3. Support the innovative use of instructional technology by:
   - Demonstrating how effective use and integration of technology impacts and enhances student learning.
   - Modeling effective IT use for faculty emulation.
   - Disseminating timely information about new and emerging technologies that can impact teaching and learning.

Goal Two: Support Information Accessibility and Enhance the Campus Infrastructure and Manage IT Operations

The University will develop and maintain a robust, secure, and flexible infrastructure that allows efficient and reliable access to information and accurate data for learning, teaching, research, and decision-making. Services are expected to be ubiquitous, to enhance the user's ability to accomplish work, and to present no significant obstacles for accomplishment. The University will provide an IT operational environment where collaboration and communication are given priority.
Strategies

1. Ensure that costs are effectively managed, appropriate funds are provided, and life-cycle replacement plans are developed for classroom technologies, major IT infrastructure, equipment, and applications.

2. Match resources with services, explore resource alternatives, and ensure that resources are shared and used to their maximum potential and that services are continually improved.

3. Support campus wide efforts to develop assessment plans, business continuity plans, disaster recovery plans, and security awareness.

Goal Three: Increase Customer Focus

The University will use IT to encourage and support an environment in which characteristics of its customers - students, faculty, staff, and the West Georgia community – are identified, their needs are understood, relationships and expectations are effectively managed, and high-quality services and support are fostered. The University will enhance processes associated with establishing, servicing, and retaining relationships with students, faculty, staff, alumni, vendors, the University System of Georgia, and the community.

Strategies

1. Develop a set of comprehensive support services that include traditional and just-in-time training opportunities for customers.

2. Provide a means for the dissemination of information about the accessibility of IT resources to the campus community by developing a service catalog and associated service level agreements for IT services.

3. Increase opportunities to collect and review customer feedback.

4. Develop a set of strategies that improve relations with the campus and external constituents.

Goal Four: Ensure Continuous Innovation and Improvement

The University will anticipate, plan, and implement information and instructional technology capabilities and solutions in a manner that provides the greatest overall benefit to the communities served by the University of West Georgia. Planning, assessment, and process reengineering will be a part of a culture of continuous improvement.
Strategies

1. Develop a process for the identification and adoption of effective technologies that evaluates a broad set of factors, including user needs, total cost of ownership, sustainability, and security.

2. Review current methods of assessing IT service and support delivery, and make improvements as needed.

3. Provide professional development opportunities for IT staff to ensure that they have the skills necessary to support and improve the campus IT environment.

4. Develop a life-cycle for policy and procedure management that ensures business practices are up to date and well managed.

IV. Process for Evaluation and Change of this Strategic Plan

Documentation of Unit Participation

All university unit assessments and annual reports will include a section addressing any action taken to align its activities with the strategies listed in this IT Strategic Plan.

Evaluation of Participation

The Faculty Senate Technology Planning Committee will conduct a periodic (ideally a three year review cycle) evaluation of campus technology and unit alignment with the strategies articulated in this Strategic Plan. The TP evaluation will include a summary of the committee's findings and may include recommendations for increased activity to fulfill participation in the IT Strategic Plan.

V. Map of IT Strategic Goals to UWG Strategic Plan Goals

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<td>Support Information Accessibility &amp;</td>
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VI. Resources

1. UWG Strategic Plan 2010 – 2015
   http://www.westga.edu/vpaa/index_7819.php

2. UWG Mission Statement
   http://www.westga.edu/index_2427.php

3. USG’s IT Strategic Plan
   http://www.usg.edu/usgweb/iitsp/documents/docs/Learning_Without_Limits_4_1_02.pdf

4. USG Strategic Plan
   http://www.usg.edu/strategicplan/

5. USG Vision, Mission and Goals Statements
   http://www.usg.edu/regents/vision_mission_goals/

6. UWG Unit and Department Mission Statements

7. UWG Annual Reports

8. Town Hall meetings conducted fall, 2008 by the Technology Planning Committee and departmental responses to the annual "Evaluation of IT Report" questions.

9. University of California at Northridge IT Strategic Plan

Prepared by Technology Planning Committee

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