I. Introduction

Definition of Information Technology (IT):

Information technology is a broad term used to describe a multitude of uses 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. UWG’s technological support environment is decentralized with many colleges and divisions having their own technology groups that effectively deploy technology. Information Technology Services (ITS) supplies assistance in the effective deployment of technology to those units not having a specific technology group. Coordination of IT support is provided through participation in the Faculty Senate’s Technology Planning Committee (TPC), which includes representation from each division and college. 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 State University of West Georgia. These include information technology systems planned, developed, operated and supported by the institutional information technology units, schools, colleges, departments and administrative units. 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 University 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 Vision and Mission

UWG's Technology Vision:

"... to integrate information technology into West Georgia's academic and administrative mission to ensure that students, faculty, staff, and the community are well prepared for life in a knowledge-based and technologically-dynamic society."


UWG's Technology Mission:

The mission of Information Technology (IT) for the State University of West Georgia (UWG) is to employ comprehensive technology resources, services, and solutions in support of the University's mission and goals. Those coordinating IT will work together to provide campus-wide leadership through dynamic policies and practices, accountability, and responsive stewardship of resources.

III. A Vision for Information Technology Effectiveness

As part of the planning process, a Vision for Information Technology Effectiveness at the State University of West Georgia has evolved. The major goals and initiatives presented later in this plan reflect this vision. The vision is that:

- All faculty, staff and students will have information accessibility 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 an individually appropriate use of training and resources;

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

- Courses and programs that are delivered electronically, or have technology-integrated components will be improved and expanded;

- Support for all users of technology will be appropriate for their individual and local unit needs, yet systematically deployed by the University as a whole to maximize delivery to and 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 -- students, alumni, donors and partners.
IV. Strategic Statements and Goals

1. **Enhance Learning:** The University will provide an environment for learning and development empowered by technology. Users will have access to informational, educational, and research resources both inside and outside the classroom. Delivery of academic services will be enhanced by the use 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.

2. **Support Information Accessibility:** 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, research, and decision-making. Services are expected to be ubiquitous, to enhance the user's ability to accomplish work, and to present no obstacles for accomplishment. Services should be provided routinely to all users: faculty, staff, and students.

3. **Increase Customer Focus:** The University will employ IT to encourage and support an operational 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 quality assurance is fostered for high-quality services and support. 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.

4. **Ensure Continuous Innovation:** 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 State University of West Georgia.

5. **Effectively and Efficiently Plan and Manage IT Operations:** The University will provide an IT operational environment where collaboration and communication are given priority, resources are matched with services, costs are effectively managed, resource alternatives are explored, appropriate funds are provided, resources are shared and used to their maximum potential and services are continually improved.

V. Process for Evaluation and Change of this Strategic Plan.

1. **Documentation of Participation in Strategies:** All university area assessments and annual reports will include a section addressing any action taken to participate in the strategies listed in this IT Strategic Plan.

2. **Evaluation of Participation in Strategies:** Once a year, the Faculty Senate Technology Planning Committee (TPC) will produce a Yearly Evaluation of Campus IT. One component of this document will be an assessment of these annual reports, area assessments and other documents that provide evidence that the university is actively participating in the strategies articulated in the UWG IT Strategic Plan.

3. **Status Summary and Recommendations:** Also included in the TPC Yearly Evaluation of Campus IT will be a summary of the committee’s findings and any recommendations for increased activity to fulfill participation in the IT Strategic Plan and/or recommendations for changes, additions or other improvements to the UWG IT Strategic Plan and accompanying process.
Appendix

A) Sources:
- GSU’s IT Strategic Plan. <http://www.gsu.edu/~wwwist/files/it052001.PDF>
- Board of Regents Technology Initiatives <http://www.usg.edu/admin/policies/tech_principles.html>
- USG’s Vision, Mission and Goals Statement <http://www.usg.edu/admin/regents/statements.html>
- UWG Unit and Department Mission Statements
- UWG Annual Reports: Where appropriate, campus annual reports will address activities relevant to the strategies expressed in this University IT Strategic Plan.

B) Assessment:
- Campus SWOT <http://www.westga.edu/~library/itspsc/assess/>