

ITGC Meeting Minutes

February 11th 2008

10:00 – 11:30am

Attendees

Dave Lewis, Dave Garcia, Brian Harrington, Mike King, Lori Packer, Doug Wylie, Susan Gibbons, Nancy Speck, Tom DiPiero, Joe Meister, Eric Fredericksen, Anjan Bagchee, Julie Buehler, Ted Vaczy, Alvin Lomibao, Samantha Singhal

Unable to attend

Jerry Powell, David Krusch, Holly Crawford, Adam Frank, Ron Hansen, Helen Smith, John Barden

Minutes

Welcome

Binders containing the IT strategic analysis for 2009-2013 were distributed to members of the ITGC.

President's Cabinet Meeting, January 29th

Dave (Lewis) ran through the information presented to the President's Cabinet and facilitated a group discussion on the same.

Slide 1 – IT Strategic Planning Updates


Recurring Prioritization Themes

After the meetings with the Deans, some common themes and priorities emerged:

- ◆ Coherent Electronic Identities –a concentrated effort will be required in this area to support the University's communication needs such as electronic newsletters distributed via email by role, electronic mailings to support Advancement efforts, etc.
- ◆ Web Modernization – with the importance of the web presence to the University (it is often the first point of contact for prospective students, faculty and staff), the need to keep the web presence fresh, and increasing security risks (multiple hacks to the University website in the last 4 – 6 months), there is agreement that web infrastructure needs to be updated.
- ◆ Fix Email – there is growing frustration with the separate email systems and the amount of workarounds that are required to send mail internally. The extremely decentralized nature of our current email environment is causing inefficiencies in operations at multiple levels—from the sender perspective, for triage, for security and in our ability to provide delivery information. It was agreed

IT Strategic Planning Updates

- Initial meetings held with Berk, Borasi, Chiverton, Lennie, Lowry, and Zupan about prioritization and feasibility **COMPLETED**
 - Some recurring prioritization themes
 - Support for collaborative, multi-year planning approach to IT
 - Cost allocation concerns (need more info)
 - Interest expressed in follow-up joint key stakeholder meeting

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that we need a better architected email solution for the University– that will address the needs of faculty, staff and students.

- ◆ Research Computing – we need to invest at a minimum level in a general purpose research computing cluster in order to simply maintain our competitive position with our peers and combat *Redshift* (*we do not want to get so behind our peers that we cannot reasonably catch up as they continue to move forward*).

With regard to Administrative Systems, the general theme of the conversations was that the level of priority appears to be decreasing because the cost and risk of replacement is so high that it would prevent other priority investments, and that we have accommodated gaps in functionality in many cases through shadow systems that are now in place. Questions remain on how long we can defer these replacement projects. If the decision to begin these projects is postponed, the University will need to make accommodations to support that decision. An example of this would be the need to hire additional staff to shadow and document the currently limited IT and functional resources that support our finance and student administrative systems—especially as many key staff are nearing retirement age. The skill sets that support these systems are not skills that are easily found in the marketplace. Hiring additional staff today will allow us to develop depth in our support staff and be in a position to support the replacement projects even if the current resources retire. Based on lessons learned from our previous large system implementations, the cost of additional headcount is minimal compared to the cost of hiring highly paid consulting resources to support the replacement project effort and then losing the intellectual capital once those resources leave the University.

[Support for collaborative, multi-year planning approach to IT](#)

There has been a push for greater IT coordination and multi-year planning to allow for better architecture and more efficiency. Our recent collaborations highlighted in the video, show what can be done with this new approach to IT. The Medical Center has also experienced greater efficiency with increased collaboration.

[Cost allocations](#)

These are a concern of the Deans as they recognize the significant impact on their other priorities. The Budget Office is currently working on a model with the latest budget dollars submitted.

[Joint key stakeholder meeting](#)

In addition to the individual meetings with the Deans, there is interest in scheduling a joint Deans meeting with the Provost to discuss the IT priorities for the University together.

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Slide 2 – IT Financial Progress

The various IT initiatives proposed in the strategic analysis need prioritization.

At this point the IT budget for FY09 is a work in progress; the latest central allocation is coming in fairly high due to: increases in licensing for HRMS for additional UR headcount, increased facilities cost for the new data center, costs for a second primary data center to support the University growing needs, investments required for the data warehouse to allow for reporting to supplement aging systems, as well as normal operating increases such as the wage and salary program.


In recent years \$2M was allocated for infrastructure for the University (under the former IT plan). This year the IT capital request for FY09 is \$2.99 Million, which represents the Year 1 costs for the following strategic plan initiatives:

- Research Computing ([Supporting the Mission: Research](#))
- Fix Web i.e. Web re-architecture & SharePoint ([Developing Enabling Systems: Communications](#))
- University-Wide Email and Notifications ([Developing Enabling Systems: Communications](#))
- Identity Management ([Solidifying Infrastructure: Coherent Electronic Identities](#))
- Security Auditing, Policy, & Compliance ([Solidifying Infrastructure: Security & Compliance](#))

Dave commented that one of the challenges as we work through the budget process is that the University's current financial model does not facilitate collaboration. We will need to work collaboratively to solidify the business case to move the most important initiatives forward.

General Discussion

There was a question about whether the audience understands the risks of not implementing a strategic initiative outlined in the IT plan. Some of the risk is known and has been discussed. For example, at the President's Cabinet it was noted that we should further represent departmental "transaction costs". So the savings in moving from 30+ email systems in the College to far fewer systems would not just be the reduced cost of hardware and software maintenance but also the savings in time and cost when a UR Community member has to communicate with a peer from another department and go through three different email servers to do so.

IT Financial Progress
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 5 year analysis of IT Plan, disaggregated by:<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Capital and operating budgets– By yearNEARLY COMPLETED (needs reviews)• Draft cost allocation models IN PROGRESS• Baseline University IT Budgets<ul style="list-style-type: none">– FY09 central, operating, and capital DRAFTS– FY09-13 baseline DRAFT COMPLETED - reviews later this week
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We were asked to present a more conservative budget. After a review of the committee work, the total funding currently being requested for the information technology strategic plan is \$23 Million over the next five years. A portion of this investment includes support for activities such as the data warehouse, in order to strengthen reporting capabilities in lieu of the financial or student systems replacement projects. There is already a lot of reporting and research generated from the data warehouse; the only key student information missing is financial aid data.

A comment was made that the situation we face today with administrative systems is similar to that faced by the Medical Center with the Electronic Medical Record (EMR) initiative - although championed by the IT department for several years, the investment in EMR was made only when it had the backing and support of key user communities such as the physicians and the clinicians.

Based on the significant concerns raised by the ITGC about the need to move forward on top IT initiatives, questions arose about whether there is some way to put together a more complete business analysis. For example to flesh out the functional gap between what we provide today and what the new systems could provide if the top IT initiatives are implemented. It is uncertain at this point how we can best strengthen our position. We welcome your input on this.

From a student experience perspective, there are plans to increase the use of the portal. The Dean of the College is encouraging the faculty to use the portal more as a means of sharing information with students. Although good progress has been made, everyone recognized that there is much more that can be done.

Wrap-Up

The next ITGC meeting is scheduled for March 3rd.

Respectfully submitted by,
Samantha Singhal