

Information Technology Budget and Tactics for 2006-2007

May 3, 2006

The office of Information Technology has numerous demands from the campus community to assist with efforts to help the University achieve its mission. We look to the University's strategic plan to help guide and inform the tactics we develop for each year.

The office of Information Technology has begun a process to develop an IT strategic plan in support of the larger University plan. Working with the various University technology advisory groups, we expect that strategic technology planning process to continue in the next fiscal year. One of those advisory groups, the Teaching, Learning, and Technology Roundtable (TLTR), has provided some input for a "draft IT strategic plan". We list below a number of tactics for fiscal 2006-2007 in support of the University Strategic plan and the draft IT strategic plan.

We propose the office of Information Technology budget for 2006-2007 with an eye toward funding ongoing operations as well as fulfilling strategic initiatives and tactics. However, as the University Strategic Plan notes, there are limits to funding and human resources. We follow this list of tactics with a discussion of limited financial resources and IT staffing concerns.

Tactics in support of the University Strategic Plan

Teaching and Learning

Assist with Academic Advising by upgrading our main administrative systems to Banner 7.

This upgrade should fix the problems we've encountered with the Curriculum Audit system. Strengthen support for faculty and instruction. This includes improved support for course tools within our my.iwu portal, as well as completing planned classroom technology upgrades.

Work with Ames library staff on digital media initiatives in support of teaching and research.

Student Development

Use new scheduling software to improve event planning and increase community involvement by improving the visibility of campus events on the University's web site.

Assist with implementing card access to buildings; initially for easier student access to counseling and wellness opportunities.

Help strengthen student-alumni relationships by continuing to expand alumni access to our my.iwu portal. Investigate integrating other on-line alumni services with the portal.

Human Resources

Implement a new payroll system to pay non-exempt staff on a bi-weekly basis and provide improved processing for non-exempt staff hours.

Improve faculty and staff services within the my.iwu portal; especially access to human resources information.

Use external expertise, as necessary, to help with systems implementations.

Diversity

Assist with the TLTR request to investigate requiring computers as a way to include cost of computer within a student's financial aid package.

Involve diverse constituencies in planning; establish the Alumni Technology Advisory Group.

Identity

Continue to develop systems and processes to improve the usability of the University web site.

Investigate ways to improve e-mail marketing, surveys and analysis.
Increase use of digital video streaming to promote our campus identity.

Financial Resources

Continue to improve software systems support for fund raising and analysis.
Allow budget managers to use web budget transfers for better tracking and reporting.
Investigate leasing for a University desktop computer replacement lifecycle.

Tactics in support of the draft IT Strategic Plan

Internet

Continue improving our use of our content management system for University web site.
Add campus network equipment to accommodate growth in campus network services.

Digital Media

Assist with University digital photo access and storage.
Investigate providing improved central storage solutions for various campus constituencies.

Mobile Computing

Expand wireless and wireless security.
Continue to improve support for mobile devices.
Investigate new telecommunications options including 3G wireless broadband access.

Protecting Information Assets

Continue to strengthen redundancy and contingency planning.
Continue to improve information security.
Outsource handling of on-line credit card processing systems.

Analyzing Information

Complete administrative systems upgrades for Banner and Advance.
Use external services to help analyze the effectiveness of our electronic communications.
Continue to assess campus technology services.
Improve systems support and processes for departmental databases.

Funding concerns

While we have attempted to provide for all of the above tactics within our IT operating budget, there are a number of important initiatives that still need to find funding. These include:

- **Payroll conversion to Banner** - While some savings will occur from stopping our use of ADP payroll services, Sungard Higher Ed estimates that this project could need nearly 350 consultant training hours to implement.
- **Event Scheduling** - IT has worked with the office of Student Affairs and the Registrar's office on an event scheduling solution that would integrate with the classroom scheduling done in Banner. While IT should be able to fund the ongoing annual costs of this system, we have no provision for funding the initial licensing costs.
- **CALEA compliance** - In 2005 Federal Communications Commission issued rules that make the University's electronic communication subject to the requirements of the Communications Assistance for Law Enforcement Act (CALEA). This rulemaking is currently being appealed by a number of Higher Education organizations.

Staffing concerns

The University's strategic plan places an emphasis on reviewing our use of human resources. The office of Information Technology welcomes this review. In the past 7 years, the office of Information Technology has added only one new position, while the requirements for campus technology support have increased dramatically. Teaching, learning and research now depend on the Internet. The campus portal and web site are now a primary means of communications. We have added significant new services including the campus portal and web content management system. There continues to be strong faculty demand for assistance with instructional technologies. We want to expand services to our alumni community, improve fundraising, and the many other initiatives noted above. While IT staff have done a commendable job with limited resources, their ability to provide additional services is limited.

Comparisons to other institutions show a disparity between staffing for technology at Illinois Wesleyan versus staffing at similar institutions. Illinois Wesleyan has an IT staff size of 16 with a student FTE population of 2140. The 2004 Educause Core Data survey¹ suggests that Illinois Wesleyan's IT staffing is considerably lower than institutions in the Consortium of Liberal Arts Colleges².

	25th Percentile	Median	Mean	75th Percentile
Central IT Staffing	25.8	31.0	32.0	38.5
Student FTE	1552	2045	2037	2398

Looking at other like comparison groups within the Educause data yields similar results. For a more detailed look at IT staffing at institutions the Carnegie Foundation says most closely resemble Illinois Wesleyan University please see the following spreadsheet.

The staff of the office of Information Technology believe the University's review of its staffing is overdue. We welcome the University's decision to examine its staffing allocations as part of the strategic goal for human resources.

Conclusion

The 2006-2007 academic year will present considerable challenges for the office of Information Technology. Not only will there be challenges for implementing and supporting technology, but also for finding the financial and human resources for all that the University wants to do in the next year. We look forward to working with the University to ensure that its technology services continue to fulfill the requirements of its mission and strategic plan.

¹ Educause Core Data survey <http://www.educause.edu/coredata>

² Consortium of Liberal Arts Colleges (CLAC). <http://www.liberalarts.org>. 41 of 58 CLAC institutions reported data to the Educause Coredata survey.