Office of Technology Services

Information Technology Strategic Plan

2016-2021

Table of Contents

Introduction

The mission of Concord University is to provide quality, liberal arts based education, to foster scholarly and creative activities, and to serve the regional community.

Concord University provides rigorous programs, primarily at the baccalaureate level, which prepare students to pursue various graduate study and career options and to assume leadership and professional roles in a multicultural society. In keeping with its tradition of service to the region, the University will offer a limited number of carefully selected graduate degrees. While we incorporate a variety of educational methodologies/technologies, our size and the caring dedication of our faculty, staff and administration are the principal assurances of a quality educational opportunity at Concord University.

As a learning community, Concord University is committed to furthering knowledge through professional development activities and programs, through research, and through the application, publication, and appreciation of scholarly efforts.

The primary purpose of Concord's mission is academic; however, the service the University provides to its state and region goes beyond the classroom. Concord University contributes to the quality of cultural and economic life in southern West Virginia through collaboration with both public and private organizations and agencies and through extension of its support and assistance into the region it serves.

Information Technology at Concord

The Office of Technology Services is responsible for the acquisition, implementation, and maintenance of all information technology (IT) at Concord University.

Mission of Technology Services

Our mission is to deliver the highest level of service possible in the most cost-effective manner to demonstrate technology leadership that furthers the University's mission.

Vision

The Office of Technology Services will be recognized as a high performance team providing technology excellence that advances learning, teaching, and student success in alignment with Concord University's mission and goals.

Guiding Principles

- We view information technologies, including Internet accessible interactive multimedia technologies, as tools for enriching learning by tailoring instruction and research to societal, organizational, and individual needs.
- We will continue to support the educational demands of our knowledge workers. This includes restructuring resources, administrative systems, networks, policies, etc. to meet the needs of our current and future populations.
- We will select the most appropriate IT service delivery strategy for each need.
- We will continue developing increasingly effective leadership, governance and advisory strategies.
- We will develop sustainable funding strategies for all IT services.
- We will foster technical and leadership growth for IT service staff members.
- We will work toward green computing strategies.

Trends and Issues in Higher Education IT

It is important to acknowledge the trends in higher education regarding IT. These trends establish important context for planning. Concord University is a member of EDUCAUSE, a nonprofit association whose mission is to advance higher education through the use of information technology. EDUCAUSE Review is a peer-reviewed publication widely read by IT professionals in higher education. Recent trends and issues that are affecting higher education in general, and Concord University specifically, are described below.

In 2016, higher education IT organizations are *divesting* themselves of technologies that can be sourced elsewhere and of practices that have become inefficient and are *reinvesting* to develop the necessary capabilities and resources to use information technology to achieve competitive

institutional *differentiation* in student success, affordability, and teaching and research excellence. [January, 2016 EDUCAUSE Review]

The EDUCAUSE Top 10

As published in the January, 2016 EDUCAUSE Review, the Top 10 IT Issues for 2016 include the following

1. *Information Security:* Developing a holistic, agile approach to information security to create a secure network, develop security policies, and reduce institutional exposure to information security threats

2. *Optimizing Educational Technology:* Collaborating with faculty and academic leadership to understand and support innovations and changes in education and to optimize the use of technology in teaching and learning, including understanding the appropriate level of technology to use

3. *Student Success Technologies:* Improving student outcomes through an institutional approach that strategically leverages technology

4. *IT Workforce Hiring and Retention:* Ensuring adequate staffing capacity and staff retention as budgets shrink or remain flat and as external competition grows

5. *Institutional Data Management:* Improving the management of institutional data through data standards, integration, protection, and governance

6. *IT Funding Models:* Developing IT funding models that sustain core services, support innovation, and facilitate growth

7. *BI and Analytics:* Developing effective methods for business intelligence, reporting, and analytics to ensure they are relevant to institutional priorities and decision making and can be easily accessed and used by administrators, faculty, and students

8. *Enterprise Application Integrations:* Integrating enterprise applications and services to deliver systems, services, processes, and analytics that are scalable and constituent centered

9. *IT Organizational Development:* Creating IT organizational structures, staff roles, and staff development strategies that are flexible enough to support innovation and

accommodate ongoing changes in higher education, IT service delivery, technology, and analytics

10. *E-Learning and Online Education:* Providing scalable and well-resourced e-learning services, facilities, and staff to support increased access to and expansion of online education

Other Trends and Issues

- Academic Analytics will need to have a very prominent and powerful role. The MyCU portal will need to be more detailed on pushing information to the individual based on his or her needs.

- We will see an increased number of students who attend totally online as well as those who need hybrid courses.

- Learning Spaces will need to support multiple pedagogical approaches, functionality and flexibility, access to technology, and the human needs of the room.

- Digital textbooks will be common and viewable in a multitude of devices.

- Students will be wearing or carrying their mobile network devices. The demand on wireless and mobile resources will be exponential. Students and faculty will have a new level of interactivity with the institution.

- Cyberinfrastructure will be a major player in both academic and research grants.

- Green and efficient operations will become even more important and will need to be marketed. Students and parents will see this as a civic responsibility, and it will become a factor in their institution selection process.

- Administrative processes will need to be streamlined both from a cost effective and customer service perspective.

- Cyber-security will continue to be elevated and scrutinized.

- Quality Customer Service will play an even more important role in our interactions with all members of the university community.

- Traditional times and dates for instruction will change. This will take the pressure off the campus-based classrooms, but will increase the need for more flexible operating hours for all campus facilities. IT Help Desk services will be increasingly needed after 4pm by

faculty teaching evening and (if applicable) Saturday classes; and 24/7 students taking online courses, especially those that work M-F 9:00 to 5:00 and are typically unable to call the IT Help Desk during those hours.

- Alumni and donors will be more willing to give if they can feel their financial impact is based on what they perceive as "making a difference." That will not be always in the form of bricks and mortar naming opportunities, but more in line with changing the lives of students or of the community.

SWOT: Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats

With an understanding of our strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) we can develop strategic goals and objectives that will positively impact the mission of Concord University and the Office of Technology Services.

Five focus groups were hosted in the spring of 2016 to collaborate on development of a SWOT Analysis. The results have been categorized and distilled into the following:

Strengths

1. Talented employees who are creative problem-solvers, patient in teaching solutions to students, faculty, staff, and administrators, with positive attitudes and a focus on continuous improvement.
2. Quality of systems and data availability, system configurations, report writing, and availability of computer labs.
3. The President, Cabinet, University Technology Committee, and administrative leaders are technology advocates.
4. The rate of advancement and adoption of new technology is both realistic and challenging despite limited resources and aged equipment.

Weaknesses

1. Need to increase funding for life-cycle replacements, e.g., Wi-Fi, computer labs, network switches, storage, etc.

2. Need process improvement in the areas of work order handling, communications, customer service.

3. Need for improved and more frequent training to campus community in the areas of information security, web page authoring, learning management system usage, Office 365 and Adobe apps, and computing basics.

4. Lack of a CRM system to replace CollegeNet.

5. Reliance on older software and plug-ins for enterprise systems such as Banner, Argos, OASIS.

6. Staffing shortages create a sense of constant over-tasking. Need to increase staffing level and/or cross-training in key positions.

Opportunities

1. Seek Increase in external grant funding, cost sharing, and collaborative opportunities.

2. Reduce reliance on legacy systems and resources by more aggressively implementing new and emerging technologies

3. Partnering with other institutions and state agencies to share and/or avoid costs

4. Improving infrastructure will create new opportunities, e.g., hosting summer camps

5. Make better use of what we have by providing more training to the community

6. Improve the student experience

7. Centralize IT funding (excluding laboratory equipment) to provide better accountability and promote standards

Threats

1. Employee retention is negatively impacted as staff are being lured away within the state, causing gaps in staffing.

2. Declining financial resources are making it difficult to regularly replace aging equipment and take advantage of new and emerging technologies.

3. Cyber security needs call for additional training and resources

4. Broadband access in the region needs improvement for citizens to be able to take advantage of opportunities available via the internet.

Goals & Objectives

1. The Office of Technology Services will partner with Academic Affairs to advance teaching and learning

   a. Assess and improve instructional support tools such as our learning management systems (LMS), mobile software, and video solutions for real-time and recorded learning support.

   b. Assist the Library with solutions that facilitate teaching and learning.

   c. Prioritize support for faculty development using technology.

   d. Support the information technology needed for the university's online quality assurance training and certification programs.

   e. Develop a sustainable model for sizing, financing, and supporting the university's investment in computer labs, teaching stations, mobile devices, and learning management systems.

   f. Support new revenue opportunities made possible by grants, certification programs, and continuing education classes.

2. Develop a more contemporary and reliable network infrastructure and support framework to support traditional, online and distance education courses and degree programs that will serve to increase enrollment, retention, and satisfaction.

   a. Seek grant funding opportunities that will facilitate improving the educational technology and network infrastructure.

   b. Purchase and install a storage area network (SAN) by end of FY16.

   c. Replace obsolete IVN rooms A320 and RH103 in FY 2017.

   d. Change LMS backup procedures to mirror those of Banner data, i.e. real-time backups (as much as practical).

   e. Update the ShoreTel VoIP system software.

   f. Acquire an automated backup and recovery system.

   g. Acquire a secondary/backup Internet Service Provider (ISP).

   h. Extend the campus network to the university-owned properties across Vermillion Street

   i. Transition to electronic storage of documents by deploying the Electronic Document Management System (EDMS) in FY 2017.

     j.   Leverage web services as a core part of business with the use of a web steering committee, student web assistants, and designating departmental web contributors.

3. Improve technology services to students (campus residents, commuter, and online students)

    a. Install an optimum, fit for use, Wi-Fi network.

    b. Provide increased bandwidth to all Athens campus users.

    c. Upgrade computing labs in residence halls and academic buildings.

    d. Provide a mobile app for mobile course registration and management.

    e. Test and deploy the LMS mobile app.

4. Establish greater breadth and depth in the information security arena to better protect the confidentiality, integrity, and availability of individual and institutional data.

    a. Improve maintenance and complexity of passwords.

    b. Acquire security training modules and make it mandatory on a recurring basis.

    c. Fund, recruit, and hire a full-time information security manager.

5. Improve IT employee retention and development.

    a. Improve salaries to national averages.

    b. Improve training and professional development.

    c. Provide cross-training that creates bench-depth for key positions.

6. Provide training that will facilitate increased use and application of technology by faculty and staff.

    a. Banner

        i. Intro Navigation and Security Training.

        ii. Matching and elimination of duplicate records.

        iii. Other training as appropriate.

    b. LMS

        i. Course development.

        ii. Gradebook development.

        iii. Work with Academic Affairs to establish a Quality Matters review committee.

        iv. Other training as appropriate.

    c. Web authoring. Provide web authoring and editing training to faculty and staff.

    d. Computing Fundamentals

       i. Microsoft Office 2016.

      ii. Windows 10.

     iii. Safety and best practices for business use of internet.

     iv. Other training as appropriate.

7. Develop, refine, and administer a survey for faculty and students which measures the level of instructional technology integration and use and attitudes towards technology enhanced courses/programs.