2008 IT STRATEGIC PLAN FOR UW–WHITEWATER

JANUARY 20, 2009

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 2008 Information Technology Strategic Plan (ITSP) enables strategic alignment of information technology resources with the needs of the UW-Whitewater campus. The plan emerged from direct, personal input from academic and administrative departments across campus, and was informed by the overall university strategic plan. The resulting 2008 ITSP establishes key commitments and guiding principles that provide overall direction for information technology on campus. Based on these commitments and principles, the plan identifies specific 1-5 year implementation goals in three broad categories: campus initiatives, ongoing support and service, and major projects.

INTRODUCTION

UW–Whitewater is proud to be a technology leader among the UW System campuses. Maintaining this distinction requires effective alignment of IT direction with the goals and needs of the university. To ensure this alignment, the UW-Whitewater Division of Instructional, Communication and Information Technology (iCIT) engages in an ongoing conversation with the campus community about strategy and direction and develops strategic plans for IT based on the aspirations and trends revealed during this conversation.

The 2008 Information Technology Strategic Plan (ITSP) for UW–Whitewater is the third generation of a plan first developed in 2001 by key members of the UW-Whitewater faculty and administration. The ITSP is intended to provide guidance for major information technology efforts in the next three to five years.

The 2008 ITSP consists of three parts: Key Commitments, Guiding Principles for Information Technology Solutions, and Implementation Goals.

- **Key Commitments** are the overarching objectives for information technology to which the university will commit with the approval of this plan. These commitments are separated into five sections: Technology Services for Academic, Operational, and Student audiences; Technology Infrastructure, which supports the technology service areas; and Development of Technical Literacy, which is essential to expanding the effective use of information technology.
- **Guiding Principles for Information Technology Solutions** are a set of criteria that should be used as part of the evaluation of any IT solution. These criteria will help to identify solutions that are in line with the strategic objectives for IT and for campus.
- **Implementation Goals** are important initiatives and projects that will be undertaken in the coming years to realize the university's commitments to information technology. These goals are separated into Campus Initiatives, which will have a substantial impact on a large audience, and Major Projects, which are more limited in either impact or audience. A third section, Ongoing Support and Services, lists the key support and service roles that will be continued in the coming years.

METHODOLOGY

The goal of the IT strategic planning process is the development of a plan that will ensure strategic alignment of information technology resources with the needs of campus. Previous versions of the ITSP have been developed using a committee process in which representatives from the faculty and the administrative staff were asked to contribute directly to the development of a plan that would address the needs of the entire campus community. The resulting plans enabled the construction of a solid technology foundation and the accomplishment of key instructional and administrative objectives. However, even though the previous plans were vetted with the campus community at large, those plans did not take into consideration the strategic goals and objectives of individual campus units. Many needs articulated to iCIT in the last two years were outside of the strategic plan goals, and therefore the required technology and support infrastructure was lacking.

To avoid these difficulties in the future, a different approach was taken for the 2008 IT strategic planning process. The ambitious goal laid out at the beginning of the process was to gather direct, personal input from as many academic and administrative departments as possible.

The first step was to identify and deliver questionnaires to each administrative department head and academic department chair on campus. More than fifty potential contact points were identified, most of these received questionnaires, and most of the recipients returned the questionnaire.

Individual meetings were then scheduled with each contact that returned a questionnaire. Each meeting was attended by the contributor; Elena Pokot, CIO; and Barry Henrichs, IT Planner. In many cases, additional representatives of the area or iCIT were also present. Notes from these meetings were gathered and reviewed, themes were identified, and trends were isolated (see a full list of ITSP Contributors in Appendix 1).

These themes and trends formed the basis for the revised content and structure of the 2008 IT Strategic Plan. Holdover projects from the 2004 ITSP were then reviewed, updated, and incorporated into the new plan, as were projects and initiatives suggested by the iCIT leadership.

REVIEW, APPROVAL, AND PUBLICATION

The 2008 IT Strategic Plan was presented to the UW–Whitewater IT Governance groups for review during late 2008 (see Review Timeline in Appendix 2). These governance groups include: the University Technology Committee (UTC), the Middle Tier Group, and the Executive Tier Group. (For more information, see http://www.uww.edu/icit/governance/)

These groups confirmed the five Key Commitments stated in the plan. Confirmation of the Implementation Goals stated in this plan establishes an assumption of priority for these goals over new projects and initiatives introduced in the next year. These goals will be reviewed and updated on an annual basis to ensure continued alignment with the needs and objectives of campus.

During December 2008 and early January 2009, following the preliminary review by the IT Governance groups, the plan was published to the campus community for comments. The feedback received during the open comment period was incorporated into a final draft of the plan, which was presented to the IT Governance groups for final review.

SUMMARY OF CAMPUS FEEDBACK & RESULTING CHANGES

The campus community reviewed a final draft of the ITSP and offered many helpful comments and suggestions via an online survey and in-person meetings. iCIT received specific feedback from 45 individuals, including faculty, academic staff, administrative staff and students (see Survey Summary in Appendix 3). While the input was wide-ranging, a few themes emerged:

- 84% of respondents found the strategic direction of campus IT to be closely or completely aligned with the mission and direction of the University at large. 56% thought the direction of IT was closely or completely aligned with the direction of their department or division.
- A majority of respondents thought the ITSP addressed their ideas and concerns about technology and would help them individually in their role on campus.
- The greatest number of responses related to specific implementation goals, either expressing agreement with the goals or asking for further clarification.
- The themes of expanding self-service functionality and advancing technology competency were commended by many respondents.
- Several respondents asked for clarification about how the progress of the ITSP would be reported.

Several specific changes, including adding new implementation goals, resulted from the feedback and review process. These changes include:

- Clarifying issues related to supporting the advancement of IT literacy skills for both administrative and academic faculty and staff, including assessing needs of faculty and developing core technology competency standards for administrative staff.
- Adding a goal related to enhancing the online scholarship application system.
- Specific feedback from University Library and Center for Students with Disabilities led to additional follow-up meetings to clarify the direction and business needs of these areas. Additional goals were added as necessary.
- Clarifying goals related to retrieving and consuming institutional data, including data warehousing and reporting tools.
- Clarifying methods of reporting on the progress of the ITSP.

FINAL PUBLICATION

The final IT Strategic Plan was published on the iCIT website in January 2009.

REPORTING AND ASSESSMENT

ANNUAL REPORTING

Progress toward the completion of the Implementation Goals identified in this document will be tracked by iCIT and evaluated by project sponsors. An annual report will be published identifying completed and amended goals and providing updated timeframes for remaining goals. This report will be published on the ITSP website (uww.edu/icit/itsp).

OUTCOME ASSESSMENT

The primary objective of the ITSP is to ensure the effective alignment of IT direction with the goals and needs of the university. Thus, the success of this plan is directly related to both the achievement of this alignment and the relevance of this plan to accomplishing that achievement. IT/university alignment will be reassessed during the development of the next ITSP, expected in 2013. If survey results at that time continue to show a high degree of satisfaction with the status of IT/university alignment and if no substantial, high-level changes in IT focus and strategy are required, it will be reasonable to conclude that alignment was successfully achieved. If this is not the case, then further examination will be required to determine if misalignment is the source of the issues.

The relevance of this plan to the achievement of alignment will be assessed in the following ways: If IT decision-makers report that the Key Commitments provided useful guidance and if the realized IT plans and priorities support these commitments, then this section of the plan will have accomplished its goals. The Guiding Principles are associated with issues where advancement is being sought; thus, the success of this component will be evaluated by identifying achievements related to each principle. The accuracy and value of the Implementation Goals will be evaluated by identifying the correspondence between the projects identified in this plan and the projects actually completed. Thus, uncompleted projects in the plan will be identified, as will major projects and initiatives completed outside of the plan.

FIVE KEY COMMITMENTS

In the support of the mission of the university and the Campus Strategic Plan (CSP), the University of Wisconsin – Whitewater is committed to providing academic, operational, and student technology services, to maintaining the technology infrastructure necessary to support these services, and to developing the technical literacy of all university personnel.

A. ACADEMIC TECHNOLOGY SERVICES

We will support and advance the use of information technology for instruction, both in the classroom and on-line, as a tool for providing *dynamic and accessible educational programs*. (CSP-I) Furthermore, we will provide and support information technology to enable scholarship and research activities for the purpose of *creation of knowledge and its effective integration with teaching, research, learning and problem solving*. (CSP-II) Finally, we will continue to develop communication and collaboration technologies to facilitate exposure to and engagement in regional, nation and global communities (CSP-III & IV).

B. OPERATIONAL TECHNOLOGY SERVICES

We will employ information technology to enable and improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the university's administrative and business operations and communications, in support of the university's *focus on continuous improvement of programs and services.* (CSP-I) In support of the increasing prevalence of distance learning and the goals of our Growth Agenda proposal, we will endeavor to provide online equivalents to in person campus services. When indicated by the results of an *evaluation of effectiveness* (CSP-I), we will implement technology-based improvements to university services based on needs determined through business and systems analysis. When appropriate, we will work to reengineer corresponding business processes.

C. STUDENT TECHNOLOGY SERVICES

We will provide all students with access to the information technology tools and services required to complete their academic work. Additionally, we will strive to provide students with access to technologies that will help prepare them to become skilled and productive employees and members of society. Finally, we will endeavor to be competitive with other universities in the provision of technology services for personal communication and entertainment purposes. These services will contribute to the creation of *effective, safe … and secure learning environments that promote … student engagement and success.* (CSP-I)

D. TECHNOLOGY INFRASTRUCTURE

We will provide and support the technology underlying all of our academic, operational, and student technology services, and the corresponding university programs and learning environments. (CSP-I) We will maintain and upgrade our network and communication infrastructure, data center facilities, and enterprise hardware and software to provide reliable local and global connectivity, to ensure high performance, and to support our technology services. We will establish and enforce policies and practices to ensure the confidentiality, integrity and availability of our information resources, while striving to maintain an open architecture and the free flow of information among our local and global constituents. We will endeavor to maximize the efficiency and effectiveness of our technology services by providing skilled user support services and unified desktop technology management.

E. DEVELOPMENT OF TECHNOLOGY LITERACY

We recognize that effective use of technology requires ongoing learning, research and experimentation by both end-users and technology professionals. We will encourage and promote these activities by providing faculty and staff with the information, training, support, and opportunities necessary for them to stay current with available and emerging technologies. We will expand our technology awareness and training services to offer more convenient and targeted training and consultation. We will leverage the knowledge within our campus community by creating new forums for students, faculty, and staff to share technology related information, ideas, and needs. We will develop and share our expertise in the greater community through active participation in professional associations, initiatives, and conferences, both within the UW System and with external organizations. (CSP-IV) Through the development of these areas, we will *promote a culture that … supports professional improvement of all university personnel.* (CSP-V)

GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SOLUTIONS

Self Service – Information technologies that provide fully automated, near real-time processing of user requests are preferred over technologies that require human interaction or substantially delayed processing.

Security – Information technologies must be compliant with all policies and practices relating to information security, confidentiality, integrity and availability as specified by UW-Whitewater and by external legal and regulatory agencies.

Access – All members of the target audience of a technology service should be provided a means to access that service, regardless of disability or other limitation.

Integration – Information technologies that can be readily integrated with other campus information systems are preferred over isolated systems.

Adaptability – Probable and potential future requirements of a solution, including expansion of scale and functionality and support of emerging technologies, should be evaluated prior to acquiring or developing new solutions; solutions that can be readily adapted to meet these requirements are strongly preferred.

Single Source of Data – Information technologies that directly utilize information from primary data stores are preferred over technologies that require creation and maintenance of redundant data stores.

Resource Conservation – Technologies and solutions that minimize energy consumption and waste production are strongly preferred.

System-level Solutions – Solutions available through UW–Common Systems and opportunities for system-level negotiations must be identified and evaluated prior to a decision to implement a stand-alone campus solution.

FUNDING

Whenever possible, the projects and initiatives outlined in the ITSP will be funded through existing funding sources, including:

- Operational budget of iCIT
- Institutional investment in Technology Infrastructure
- Departmental budgets allocated to support technology

When Campus Initiatives or Major Projects would require additional resources, or if Campus would deem it appropriate to shift priorities to accelerate implementation of technology solutions, proposals for additional funding will be developed. These proposals will include project alternatives and potential sources of additional funding, such as Student Technology Fee, Institutional/Departmental funding, extramural funding and various partnership opportunities, as appropriate.