



June 27, 2013

MEMORANDUM

TO: Jim Murdaugh, President

FROM: Bret Ingerman, Vice President for Information Technology

SUBJECT: Information Technology Plan for FY 2013-14

As we begin a new fiscal year, I wanted to outline for you the Information Technology Plan for the upcoming year.

1. Replace the College's ERP system

This is, in fact, our primary project for the next few years. Our present ERP system, Integrow, has been showing its age for many years and it simply is not capable of meeting our present needs, let alone any future needs. This is such a cornerstone project for the entire College that the Board of Trustees has included replacing our ERP in the College's Strategic Plan. The Strategic Plan states that we should:

"Replace the College's existing Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) software with a robust solution that meets the present and future administrative, reporting and data-driven decision-making needs of the institution."

To that end, TCC will identify and procure a new ERP solution that will empower us to move into the future. Specifically, we will look for ERP software that takes advantage of modern technologies, such as multi-tenant Software as a Service (which affords significant economies of scale while at the same time reducing our need to provide and maintain servers), web services (which greatly facilitates the ease of sharing data between and among multiple systems), and in-memory databases with embedded analytics (so that data-driven decision making can happen in the moment it is needed, without the need to use one system to enter data and another to view resulting analytics). These are such emerging technological game-changers that we may not be able to find a complete ERP solution that embraces all of them. In addition, we also need to ensure that our new ERP is able to meet our growing demand for non-term based courses, an area in which virtually all current ERP solutions struggle. To that end we will pursue partnering with a company who is growing in this area and who has an interest in developing modern solutions to our needs using these technologies.

The College will explore options this summer with a goal of having the Board of Trustees support a purchase recommendation in August 2013. This will enable us to reduce the risk associated with staying on Integrow (and that risk includes both financial and staffing vulnerabilities). We will then begin to implement the system during the Fall, 2013 term. Note that this will be a multi-year project and will involve all areas of the College in both the technology and in the business process analysis and re-engineering that will occur.

2. Migrate email and calendar for faculty and staff to the cloud.

Two years ago, TCC migrated all student email from on-premises to the cloud. The time is now right to migrate faculty and staff email and calendars to the cloud. As with the ERP, moving to the cloud offers economies of scale while at the same time reducing IT support for on-premises systems. We will begin the process of migrating faculty and staff email and calendars to the cloud in July 2013, with a goal of completing the migration by the start of the Fall, 2013 term.

3. Replace aging networking equipment and servers.

We have built up a good deal of deferred maintenance on our networking equipment and servers. I have prioritized spending our equipment funds on replacing antiquated equipment so that we can continue to provide essential services in the most cost-effective ways. The work will begin in July 2013 and continue throughout the 2013-14 academic year.

4. Implement a secure wireless network, using modern encryption.

Once we replace our aging network equipment we will be able to reconfigure the wireless network so that all communications are encrypted using modern encryption technologies. We plan to have encrypted wireless access available by September 2013.

5. Design a new registration process for non-credit courses.

Our present ERP system requires that all students enter a plethora of information in order to register for a course. While this is necessary for credit-based courses, the amount of information required is overkill for non-credit courses. In fact, a majority of calls to the IT Help Desk are due to students having difficulty registering for non-credit courses. While a new ERP system will address this need, full implementation may be a few years away. In the meantime, we will create a new registration system for non-credit courses so that we can provide a better experience for our students while also reducing our support costs: a win-win solution. Implementation of the new system will begin in October 2013 with a projected completion date of January 2014.

6. Replace the Accutrack system in the Learning Commons.

Accutrack is the primary tool by which the Learning Commons collects data about why students come to the Learning Commons, and what they do once they are there. Yet the software is antiquated, buggy, and lacks robust support. So we will create our own software solution for this critical task. The system will be installed prior to the start of the fall, 2013 term.

7. Implement new tools at the Help Desk.

We will be implementing new tools to allow us to better support the campus community. These include a new Help Desk call ticket system, and new software to allow technicians to remotely support those with computer problems (which will be especially useful in supporting our colleagues at FPSI and Ghazvini). The systems will be operational by the middle of July 2013.

8. Continue to merge that various units of Information Technology organizationally as well as physically.

Now that we have completed our reorganization plan, we now need to focus our efforts in ensuring the new structure and leadership are well equipped to meet the needs of the campus as well as the needs of the department. To this end I will work with the new IT leadership this summer to craft individual and departmental goals for the upcoming year. I will also continue to work with Facilities to determine the feasibility of physically co-locating as much of the staff as possible. Ideally, this would include the entire department but, barring that, to try to at least bring departmental workgroups together, such as all of User Services (which now includes the former CIT area, now called Instructional Technologies).

While the above list is not exhaustive, it does present a clear plan for IT for the upcoming year. I look forward to discussing this in more detail with you.