

WESLEYAN UNIVERSITY

Information Technology Services
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To: The Board of Trustees

From: Dave Baird
Vice President for Information Technology & Chief Information Officer

Date: September 8, 2015

Subject: Information Technology Services Goals for 2015-2016

Wesleyan 2020 Goals:

1. Energize Wesleyan's distinctive educational experience
2. Enhance recognition of Wesleyan as an extraordinary institution
3. Work within a sustainable economic model while retaining core values

Major goals (one per team) for the coming year are outlined below, together with their relationship to the three overarching goals detailed in the "Wesleyan 2020" framework for strategic planning. These are followed by a partial listing of other significant projects, both new and continuing, within Information Technology Services.

Major Goals and Initiatives (listed alphabetically by team)

1) Academic Computing: GIS Across the Campus

(Ties to goal 1)

In recent years, Wesleyan faculty, staff, and students have increased their use of Geographic Information Systems (GIS) in coursework and research (see www.wesleyan.edu/gis), and administrative applications (e.g. Facilities (building plans), Admission (mobile campus tours), and Communications (dynamic campus maps)). In an effort to facilitate collaboration and data sharing across campus, ITS will implement a GIS portal and server architecture to support interdisciplinary teaching, research, and scholarship.

2) Administrative Systems: Blackboard Analytics

(Ties to goals 1,3)

Academic Affairs, Admission, Financial Aid, Institutional Research, and the Registrar will work with ITS to verify/refine data, create dashboards and move reports to the Student Data Warehouse. The goal is to make Wesleyan's institutional data available, understandable and secure for appropriate faculty and staff, thus enabling data-driven decision making across the institution. Successful deployment of dashboards for student data will be followed by implementation of Blackboard's Human Resources and Finance modules.

3) Auxiliary Services: Unified Communications

(Ties to goal 3)

As we look to replace our 21-yr old Octel voicemail system, we have an opportunity to improve our overall communications infrastructure for Wesleyan faculty and staff, and the buildings in which they work. Modern "Voice Over Internet Protocol" (VOIP) systems provide phone, voicemail, instant messaging, and even document sharing, all integrated with our existing Microsoft Office suite of software. We will prepare and submit a Request for Proposal to several vendors with the intention to bring our campus communications systems up to modern-day capabilities. Preliminary evaluation of solutions indicates that we can expect to do this within existing operating budgets. The result will be improved functionality, redundancy, and reduced risk of hardware failure and lost productivity.

4) User and Technical Services: Office 365 Evaluation

(Ties to goals 1,3)

Wesleyan currently provides Microsoft Office to all faculty, staff, and students. To support anytime/anywhere access to technology, Microsoft is joining other companies (e.g. Adobe, Oracle) in making cloud-based versions (i.e. Office 365) their default product. For us, this has implications for how we provide email, document sharing, and other services. At present, we have three different solutions for email; Google Mail (Gmail) for students, Gmail or Cyrus for alumni, Microsoft Exchange/Outlook for faculty, and staff. Each solution was selected and implemented given the needs and constraints of the day, and ITS periodically reviews such systems in light of the changing needs of our user community. Evaluation criteria include features, integration with existing systems, security, storage capability and cost (hosted in house vs. cloud-based), and support required. ITS staff, in consultation with a diverse group of faculty, staff, and students, will evaluate how best to meet the complex email, calendaring, productivity, and document storage and sharing needs of the campus. Recommendations and timelines for implementation will be made to our ITS Advisory Committees for final approval.

5) Web and Video Services: Wesleyan Media Project

(Ties to goals 1,2,3)

According to their website (see <http://mediaproject.wesleyan.edu>), the Wesleyan Media Project "... tracks and analyzes all broadcast ads aired by federal and state election candidates in every media market in the country ...". The project's success and growth requires a comprehensive redesign of the supporting technology infrastructure, to permit public access to over 16,000 video files. ITS staff from the Web and Video Services team (formerly New Media Lab) will leverage our Brightcove Video Cloud Account to enable video hosting and streaming through the 2016 election cycle. The project will entail architecting storage and delivery systems in collaboration with Technical Services staff for both private research access and public consumption.

Additional significant ITS projects for 2015-2016

- Support new Center for Pedagogical Innovation, including new Coursera courses
- Upgrade remaining classrooms and identify 3-5 candidates for renovation to support new pedagogies
- eXplorance Blue Course Evaluations
- New ePortfolio Pilot and Rollout
- PeopleSoft Upgrades - Wesleyan Financial System (01/16) and Student System (04/16)
- Responsive Web Site for Admission
- Prepare and submit Request for Proposal for campus key-card lock solution
- Establish Disaster Recovery satellite data center location in Freeman