



PACIFIC LUTHERAN UNIVERSITY

INFORMATION & TECHNOLOGY SERVICES

Date: July 2005
To: President's Council
From: Chris Ferguson
Subject: Information & Technology Services Update, Summer 2005

Summer should include an ample measure of reflection, a stepping back to gain deeper understanding of the larger issues and forces that swirl about us. In this spirit I offer for this quarterly report an overview of PLU's responses to the leading information technology and access challenges of our day.

The points of departure for this reflection are current lists of leading challenges within the information technology and academic library communities, best represented by Leslie Maltz et al, "Top 10 IT Issues, 2005," *Educause Review*, May/June 2005; and the websites of the American Library Association (<http://www.ala.org>) and Association of College & Research Libraries (<http://www.ala.org/ala/acrl/>). For each of the issues drawn from these lists, I offer some descriptive background and two or three bullets that indicate the chief ways in which we are responding to the challenge. I've tried to structure this presentation so you can glance at what interests you and perhaps tuck the document away for future reference when a related question arises.

Strategic planning for technology and information services ". . . must be driven from the goals of the institution in order . . . to be seen as a vital strategic asset and not as a deployment commodity." (Maltz)

- I&TS is creating a rolling, three-year technology strategic plan that aligns I&TS priorities with those of *PLU 2010*, President's Council, and others
- We're working hard to communicate and to align I&TS with campus-wide interests through, e.g., quarterly reports to President's Council, Deans' Council, and Instructional Resources Committee; annual initiatives for President's Council; and regular communication with Instructional Resources Committee, FiOps directors, and others

Governance, organization, and leadership for IT "The effective governance, organization, and leadership for IT [and information services] facilitate the application of technology [and services] for strategic success . . . the CIO needs to build coalitions, span silo boundaries, and show how technology can advance divisional and institutional missions." (Maltz)

- The Dean for I&TS is an active member of Deans' Council, works extensively with the faculty Instructional Resources Committee, and meets frequently with a variety of constituencies (FiOps directors, ASPLU, Student Life Council, etc.)
- I&TS recently instituted annual service quality surveys of students and employees
- The I&TS organization structure has been realigned in strategic ways, most notably integration of audio, video, and classroom technologies within Multimedia Services and creation of the Digital Media Center

Intellectual freedom, privacy, and intellectual property Intellectual freedom is the right to seek and to receive information from all points of view without restriction. Privacy is the right for personal information and effects to remain secure. The Patriot Act is redefining the boundary around privacy of personal information, a frontier long defended by academic librarians.

- PLU has long resisted censorship and upheld the basic tenets of intellectual freedom, even to the extent of not engaging in the filtering of Web content some find objectionable

- Two years ago we adjusted our online library system to no longer retain circulation or interlibrary borrowing data that could be associated with individuals

Funding IT “Budget reductions, increasing demands for services, unbudgeted mandates, and escalating costs make the funding of IT the most pressing issue facing higher education officials.” (Maltz)

- Two stable fiscal years have enabled us to refocus on such long-standing issues as network infrastructure, physical security of the central computing room, instructional technology, and enhancement of learning spaces
- A framework has been drafted for discussion of IT funding priorities prior to any major new information technology investments

Security and identity management “The increased utilization of networks . . . increases the risks associated with information storage, transmission, and access.” (Maltz) The increasing onslaught of malware (viruses, worms, spam) and hackers, plus increasing regulation of personal data (e.g., FERPA, HIPAA, Patriot Act) and intellectual property (e.g., illegal audio and video file sharing) has substantially increased network management costs.

- To make network ID management both more secure and more convenient for the user, we will soon integrate Microsoft’s Active Directory with the existing LDAP-based authentication system; we are currently adding an open source system (UW’s pub-cookie) to reduce number of logins per browser session
- We are drawing increasingly on our regional technology consortium, Northwest Academic Computing Consortium, for such collaborative programs as workshops (ID management and wireless security this past year) and a forthcoming major project for training personnel and testing network security on individual campuses

Administrative/ERP/information systems “Projects of this scope demand large investments and strong commitment by institutional and IT leadership, both before and after implementation.” (Maltz)

- PLU was among the very first in the nation to move to Banner 7; the Advancement module is installed, the data converted, and is running well
- Among best technical installations of baseline Banner; now looking to the future of imaging, paperless processes, data warehousing, and enhanced services for Admissions and others

Control and preservation of digital resources What should we digitize, how should we make it available through the Internet, and how shall we preserve our digital assets in an era of rapid technological change?

- PLU has produced considerable digital content, and the rate of production is increasing: special collections (e.g., Scandinavian Immigrant Collection), video archives of events streamed live (e.g., Wang Symposium 2005), collections from Photo Services, and student digital portfolios are just a few examples
- We are actively developing and supporting a learning management system (eCourse), web-based digital portfolios that are archived, a digital asset management system for long-term preservation of digital objects, and a content management tool (uEdit) for creation, revision, and personal management of digital resources

Infrastructure management for IT “Institutions face the enormous challenge of creating a workable information architecture and framework to facilitate the organization of, storage for, access to, and maintenance of strategic data. At the same time, the enterprise continues to press its demands for higher availability, bandwidth, storage, integration, and mobility.” (Maltz)

- The network was re-engineered Winter 2004 to implement V-LAN architecture for increased security and more efficient and effective network management
- Our capacity for managing data was significantly increased and performance of network systems substantially improved (e.g., email and automatic system backups) with deployment of a storage area network in FY05

Faculty development, support, and training “. . . rapidly emerging trends and the general move toward learning management systems underscore the need to rethink faculty-support systems and faculty training.” (Maltz)

- Digital Media Center has emerged as a major resource in support of faculty & student use of instructional technologies, e.g., digital portfolios, digital design & publishing, web development & redesign projects
- Multimedia Services continues to expand its support of classroom technologies and audio & video production, instruction, and support
- A new small grants program out of the DMC encourages faculty integration of technology into existing courses

Web systems and services “. . . are modular, self-contained applications that interoperate over the Internet in order to publish, locate, and initiate specified functions . . .” (Maltz)

- We have made major progress in this realm since DMC was created -- a major redesign of PLUweb (in collaboration with University Communications), creation of an easy-to-use web content manager (uEdit) and a digital asset management system, development of a new PLU Calendar, transformation of the PLU catalog into a workable web format, and more
- Students can now create their ePass accounts through the Web and they can manage directly a growing number of online services and resources related to their PLU network connection.