



UNIVERSITY
AT ALBANY
State University of New York

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SERVICES

Strategic Goals 2013-16

Mid-term Report



University at Albany
Office of the Chief Information Officer
Strategic Goals for Information Technology
July 1, 2013 - June 30, 2016
Mid-term Report

Introduction

Information Technology Services (ITS) undergoes a strategic planning initiative every three years. This process includes establishing a set of goals to guide the development of annual operating plans, setting an overall direction for ITS, and ensuring overall consistency with the mission and goals of the University. Planning efforts are often influenced by additional inputs, such as University and SUNY System Administration initiatives and/or documents, as well as various forms of feedback from campus constituencies.

The current plan and strategic goals drive ITS operations for the period of July 1, 2013-June 30, 2016. It was originally informed by the UAlbany NYSUNY 2020 Plan, the University's Strategic Plan (2010) and SUNY System-level projects for Shared Services and Open SUNY. It was revised a few months later to include President Jones' expanded vision for the campus, including his Four Stakes and Operational Excellence initiatives. The importance of IT services – from infrastructure to every aspect of University operations – was acknowledged or implied by each of these sources. Strong alignment with the institution is associated with better priority-setting and resource allocation, as well as greater transparency and accountability¹. The plan and goals are further rooted in ITS's organizational vision: campus IT services are a critical success factor in enabling every student and employee to be productive and successful, and to participate fully as a member of the UAlbany Community. The strategic goals for this planning period are as follows:

1. Implement services necessary for the success of the University's Four Stakes, Strategic Plan (2010), 2020 Plan and related initiatives
2. Expand capabilities in support of anytime/anywhere teaching, learning and research
3. Provide an integrated, secure IT infrastructure to the University
4. Develop IT governance and funding practices in support of campus priorities

¹ <http://www.educause.edu/ECAR/InformationTechnologyAlignment/158571>

Campus Direction and Priorities

The University is in a very different position than it was during ITS's last strategic planning cycle in 2009-12. The campus welcomed President Robert J. Jones in January 2013; with his arrival came new leadership; the initiation, continuation and completion of numerous construction projects; and a host of new engagements across the Capital Region. Fortunately, the fiscal climate has also changed. In 2011, Governor Cuomo, the New York State Legislature and SUNY agreed on a 5-year SUNY 2020 plan to raise tuition, maintain state assistance and otherwise stabilize the damaging reductions of the prior four years. In September 2012, UAlbany presented its NYSUNY2020 Challenge Grant proposal; by early 2013, the period of significant operating budget reductions had passed. The University began hiring new faculty, growing research and increasing enrollment. It appeared IT funding would be stable for the 2013-16 period, which has been the case through December 2014.

While funding is stable for the University overall, the ITS budget continues to face challenges in meeting campus needs. There is pent-up demand for new and improved IT services. The greatest impact of the budget reductions was the loss of discretionary OTPS funding and thus an acute level of aging infrastructure is in need of replacement. The expectations and pressure for IT services remain as strong as ever.

In his [Fall 2013 Report to the Faculty](#), President Jones announced the "four stakes," which he articulated as priorities for the University. These are as follows:

1. A concerted effort to expand our portfolio of degree-granting programs with a focus on high need areas;
2. Focus on recruiting more out-of-state and international students;
3. Broaden our role as a University engaged in the community;
4. Find ways to grow our resources to fulfill our ambition. We must find new ways to finance the mission.

As IT professionals it is incumbent on us to anticipate the technology needs embedded in each of these areas. The introduction of new programs, such as the concentration in Forensic Accounting and the promise of a Computer Engineering degree have significant academic and administrative computing implications. Broader recruitment efforts, deeper engagement with the community, and the prospect of new funding models will all require the development and support of additional IT resources.

Given the campus's changing needs and multiple dependencies on IT, we have made the following conjectures with respect to the University's overall direction:

- The University is a complex, vibrant, diverse and interdependent community with significant information needs
- Students, faculty and staff will make greater use of existing IT services, identify new services needed to fulfill their responsibilities, aspire to their goals and fully participate in the UAlbany community

- IT services are a critical success factor supporting the University’s overall mission
- The University’s commitment to sustainability and environmental stewardship will continue in importance
- Although the University faces significant resource constraints in the near term, it desires to grow, focusing on areas of strength and a commitment to excellence
- As “The World Within Reach” signifies, the University operates in an increasingly state, national and global context

The Information Technology Context

A number of the trends that were identified in the [Strategic Plan for IT 2009-12 Final Report](#) continue to be present: the growth of consumer IT services, mobile devices, and social media. In the last few years, cloud computing and big data have increased their presence on the IT landscape. Our last Strategic Plan accurately predicted some of ITS’s high priorities for this 2013-16 period: the opening of the new IT Building and Data Center, the launch of Business Analytics, a campus-wide video camera recording service and improvements to wireless services. Additionally, all divisions across the campus will have new priorities of their own which depend on technology, thereby requiring the time, knowledge and expertise of ITS staff.

In addition to managing the overall campus IT portfolio, ITS initiates projects that play a significant role in the provisioning of new and improved services. A state-of-the-art data center was completed midway through 2014; the new facility has already generated partnerships across the campus, the SUNY system, and has tremendous potential to bring in external partners. Several new and expanded services have been introduced, many offering new IT solutions to meet evolving teaching, research and business needs.

Additionally, ITS made some organizational changes during this planning period. In 2014, we merged our Systems Management & Operations and Telecommunications groups into a single Enterprise Infrastructure Services team. The new group better reflects the internal dependencies across ITS to provide infrastructure services, and will increase efficiencies in delivery.

Finally, the 2013-16 plan includes an internal initiative designed to renew the “service” aspect of Information Technology Services. Known as “One ITS,” this effort is designed to streamline internal operations, build greater unity across the organization, and better position ITS to serve the evolving needs of the campus community. This project was conceptualized in 2013, initiated in 2014, and is expected to further inform organizational growth over the second half of the planning period.

Operationalizing ITS Strategic Goals in 2013-16

The following section provides highlights of the activities ITS has engaged in across each of the four goals during this planning period. These represent a small portion of ITS’s overall project portfolio. Many of these initiatives will continue through June 2016.

Goal 1: Implement services necessary for the success of the University’s Four Stakes, Strategic Plan (2010), NY2020 Plan and related initiatives

This goal, tied directly to a major campus initiative, has tremendous implications for ITS.

2013-16 Priority Areas	Midpoint Status 12/31/14	Expected Status for 6/30/2016
Completion of new IT Building/Data Center	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Houses equipment for ITS, CAS, Libraries. • Additional departments moving equipment in , office space design in progress 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full occupancy for ITS and campus partners • Continued growth with SUNY and outside partners
Development of new academic programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ITS serving consulting role for aspects of Computer Engineering • Joint planning with Albany Law School, Downstate Medical Center 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting approved programs, assisting with new developments as needed
Improve students’ ability to plan academic pathway and degree completion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DegreeWorks transition initiated 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full implementation expected by October 2016
Develop enrollment and program analytics for decision makers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business Analytics launched 2013 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional analytics implemented; new areas for development identified
Implement campus-wide room scheduling capability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Event Management System Phase I and 2 complete 6/14; Phase 3 underway 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full implementation complete
ETEC Facility planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ITS designing infrastructure, communications and A/V capabilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construction underway
CNSE Transition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IT infrastructure and all administrative services transitioned 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All student information and IT services transitioned by Fall 2015
Adopt SUNY HR program for increased efficiency and cost-savings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation 80% complete 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full implementation complete

Goal 2: Expand capabilities in support of anytime/anywhere learning, and research

From outfitting classrooms with appropriate technologies to ensuring the accessibility of online materials to supporting research needs, ITS plays a significant role in supporting teaching and learning.

2013-16 Priority Areas	Midpoint Status 12/31/14	Expected Status for 6/30/2016
Increase state-of-the-art classrooms and related technologies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opened 28 classrooms/10 group study rooms in Business Building (BB) • Replacements/upgrades in 68 classrooms • Lecture-capture system installed in BB 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement Ensemble video management system • Continue classroom replacements, update 5-7 additional classrooms
Expand breadth, depth and support of UAlbany’s online course offerings and support of faculty use of IT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provost/OCIO established Online T&L Task Force, August 2012 • Two rounds of funding for new programs in 2013-15 • Teach 22 proposal funded an online design coach • Working with ITLAL to build online faculty community and coordinate OTL resources • Identified need for additional support in FTR • Initiating course refresh program for experienced OTL faculty 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued participation on T&L task force and working groups • Ongoing support for OTL initiatives • At least one new FTR position filled • Continued evaluation/support of faculty IT needs • New website for OTL to encourage more faculty participation • Ongoing development of faculty community
Participate in Open SUNY initiative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Currently offer MPH in Public Health Practice, MS in Curriculum Development & Instructional Technology, MS in Childhood Education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add undergraduate concentration in Informatics • Continued development and support of Open SUNY initiative • 24x7 HelpDesk for Open SUNY students • Select Open SUNY benefits extended to all faculty

Goal 2: Expand capabilities in support of anytime/anywhere learning, and research (cont.)

2013-16 Priority Areas	Midpoint Status 12/31/14	Expected Status for 6/30/2016
Provide the campus with additional collaboration tools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OneDrive for Business (a cloud storage solution) and Lync/Skype for Business (video conferencing) services launched in 2014 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued support and evaluation
Support for 2020 Clusters: Climate/Atmos. Science, Forensics, Life Sciences, Advanced Data Analytics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation/support for Research in all areas • Mesonet housed in new Data Center • CIO serves on Advanced Data Analytics steering committee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued support and evaluation

Goal 3: Provide an integrated, secure IT infrastructure to the University

A solid technical foundation is critical for the successful delivery of campus IT services.

2013-16 Priority Areas	Midpoint Status 12/31/14	Expected Status for 6/30/2016
Expansion of UAlbany Cloud for servers and storage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CAS and Library on UAlbany Cloud; DAES migration in progress 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DAES migration complete; expect to identify and move new cloud partners
Identify new location for secondary data center	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partnered with HVCC in 2013 Received SUNY Award for Systemness Innovation Backup equipment moved to HVCC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> HVCC equipment in UAlbany Data Center
Replace enterprise Storage capacity to meet demand	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Replaced NetApp storage with 120 Tb system, 2014 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued development of multi-tiered storage system
Enhance asset management and security of desktop computers, campus-wide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementation of System Center Configuration Manager (SCCM), a program which streamlines the management for large groups of desktop machines 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued security enhancements
Replace oldest wireless points (WAPs) and install new equipment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ~250 WAPs replaced 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 100 WAPS to be replaced; additional points to be identified
Fiber Upgrades/Improvements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Installed new fiber loop across East Campus 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relocate ASRC from CNSE to UAlbany network (from CNSE)
Tighten security and controls around accounts and access for all members of campus community; increase automation and self-services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Worked with HR to develop account lifecycles Increased security and deleted outdated accounts Implemented InCommon and Group Access Manager 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Achieve InCommon Bronze status, providing additional protection to University assets

Goal 4: Develop IT governance and funding practices in support of campus priorities

Permanent funding streams and established governance processes recognize the relationship between the institution’s mission, goals, and the critical role of technology.

2013-16 Priority Areas	Midpoint Status 12/31/14	Expected Status for 6/30/2016
Create an IT capital budget to upgrade/improve campus infrastructure, and address lifecycle replacement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Capital” budget proposal submitted for 14-15 FY • New base funding received for classrooms and Information Commons • Presentation to Executive Committee on network funding needed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most critical/aged network equipment replaced • Sustained annual infrastructure funding plan in place, especially for network
Develop/identify alternative funding model for Phone service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incomplete – under development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New funding model for phone services
Establish governance and SLAs for Data Center-as-a-Service and Infrastructure-as-a-Service activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft Partnership and Service Level Agreements completed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnership agreements signed; SLAs in place.
Identify a representative governance body charged with balancing and prioritizing divisional IT requests	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awaiting recommendations from One ITS Portfolio and Project Management Team 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governance body in place; ensure alignment with campus strategic plan

What to Expect in 2015-16

A variety of new service needs, and initiatives, have emerged since the 2013-16 plan was adopted, and some are listed below. Most of these are in their early stages: some may be completed by June of 2016 while others may extend into the next planning cycle. Again, the projects identified here are a small subset of the full ITS project portfolio.

<i>2015-16 Priority Areas</i>	<i>Expected Status for 6/30/2016</i>
<i>Support the College of Emergency Preparedness, Homeland Security and Cybersecurity</i>	<i>Assist the campus as needed in preparation for this new offering</i>
<i>Refresh the Information Commons</i>	<i>Create a digital environment with University Libraries focused on media production and related technologies</i>
<i>Develop a digital strategy for the University</i>	<i>Implement comprehensive media solutions, including a content management system for the University website, additional mobile-friendly platforms, and a digital signage application.</i>
<i>Ensure University network is capable of meeting campus needs</i>	<i>Replace aged equipment and expand capacity</i>
<i>Improve Student Recruitment process and achievement of enrollment targets</i>	<i>Implement a customer relationship management solution for Admissions</i>
<i>Support for new campus budget process</i>	<i>Implement an online process for budget requests</i>
<i>All-Funds, Admissions and Enrollment/Financial projections for decision makers</i>	<i>Priority developments for Business Analytics service</i>
<i>Leverage capability of new Data Center</i>	<i>Attract SUNY and external partners as occupants</i>
<i>Assess major enterprise applications for capability, lifecycle status, and cost</i>	<i>Analysis complete; improvements and/or changes recommended</i>

Closing

The purpose of this document has been to articulate the goals that are guiding the development and delivery of IT services at the University at Albany for the period of 2013-16, and to provide a status report on our progress midway through the planning period. Comments from the campus community are always welcome at cio@albany.edu.

Appendix 1

University at Albany Office of the Chief Information Officer Information Technology Services

Vision

IT services are a critical success factor in enabling every student and employee to be productive and successful, and to participate fully as a member of the UAlbany community.

Planning Principles (adopted July 2002, reaffirmed July 2009 and July 2013)

ITS has developed on seven core principles to assist in our planning efforts for establishing the direction for campus technology. These principles provide a broad-brush view of how ITS can best support the overall University. They are not intended to address specific aspects of technology.

Mission-Focused	IT planning should reflect the campus strategic goals and address issues such as infrastructure, IT policies, standards and inter-operability of systems.
Measurable Goals & Objectives	Clearly stated, realistic goals and objectives should guide action and support assessment. This secures the information necessary to make future investment decisions and communicates the impact of the investments being made.
Entrepreneurial	Promote innovative and creative ways to advance the IT environment. Outreach to internal or external partners should be part of the underlying approach to planning.
Action-oriented	The process of identifying specific actions to achieve objectives provides a framework for investment planning, resource allocation and workforce deployment.
Broad, informed participation	The planning process is most successful when it includes mechanisms for broad, informed participation by a variety of stakeholders and constituents of the University and its external partners.
Open communication	The process must be transparent and accessible in order to gain the necessary support and involvement of participants and decision-makers.
Evolutionary	The planning process must account for rapid growth of technology and the varying rates of change that exist within programs and departments across the University. The process must be iterative and allow for reflection and redirection based on new knowledge, insights and technologies.

Additionally, ITS relies on 4 strategic goals to assist in planning and prioritizing among initiatives. Like the principles, these goals are not directed to specific technologies. Rather, they provide a framework for prioritizing and selective decision-making.