IT Governance Action Team
Report & Recommendations

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Action Team Members:
Vivek Choudhury – Associate Dean, College of Business
William Fant – Interim Dean, College of Pharmacy
Mark Faulkner (Co-chair) – UCIT AVP Network & Telecom
Frank Gerner – Senior Associate Dean, CEAS
Anton Harffmann – Associate Dean, DAAP
Brett Harnett – Associate Director, Center for Health Informatics
Ryan Hays – Vice Provost Faculty Development
Victoria Montavon (Co-chair) – Dean and University Librarian
Troy Travis – UCIT AVP Systems and Operations
Nelson Vincent – Associate Dean, CECH
Stephen Young – Assistant Dean, UC Clermont
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INTRODUCTION

The Blue Ribbon Task Force on Academic Information Technology completed its report and strategic recommendations in Fall 2011. The Task Force agreed on a set of short-term strategic priorities essential to the achievement of the overarching vision the Task Force had proposed for the University:

“The University of Cincinnati will support a dynamic information technology infrastructure through appropriate funding and leveraging of resources in alignment with the goals and objectives of UC2019 and the Academic Master Plan.”

One of the four strategic priorities for Year 1 was the following:

“Enhance IT governance structure and process to better facilitate collaboration, coordination, decision-making, and implementation of technology solutions and services to ensure that needs of end-users are reflected.”

The accompanying “Action Step” for this strategic priority was: “Establish and charge an action team to identify several governance models and make recommendations based on the pros and cons of those models. The recommended model becomes part of the institution’s integrated decision-making process, functioning like the Academic Coordinating Committee and the Fiscal Coordinating Committee.”

To that end, the Blue Ribbon Coordinating Committee co-chairs, Margaret Buttermore and B. J. Zirger convened the IT Governance Action Team on November 16, 2011, and encouraged the group to complete its work by the end of February 2012.

PROCESS

The IT Governance Action Team began its work by reviewing the current UCIT Governance structure (See Appendix A). It was generally agreed that although it was in accord with higher education trends in IT leadership at the time of its development in 1998, it does not reflect the present-day centrality of IT at the University or the pressing need for an integrated and inclusive approach to IT in the 21st century. With this in mind, the Team agreed it would be instructive to review IT Governance models at aspirational institutions identified by UC for benchmarking purposes. Team members pursued information for that set of institutions (Buffalo, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, North Carolina, Ohio State, Pittsburgh, Stony Brook, Virginia, and Washington) as well as for Duke and Florida, which also provided valuable insights.
Following its review of IT Governance models, the Action Team developed the following list of attributes and strategic goals for any new IT Governance models they would recommend:

- Coordination
- Collaboration
- Responsiveness
- Trust
- Communication
- Transparency
- Accountability
- Innovation
- Agility
- Optimization of resources

The process was informed by the timely attendance of a Team member, Vivek Choudhury, at an international conference that included a presentation by Peter Weill, an expert on IT Governance, particularly for corporations. Weill proposed five strategic goals for effective IT Governance: Coordination, Innovation, Responsiveness, Optimization, and Scale.

Having developed consensus about the attributes of new models of IT Governance, the Action Team divided into two groups to draft models for consideration. Presentation of the two subsequent draft models to the entire Team resulted in discussions of the advantages and disadvantages of each (Models A and B: See Appendix B and C). The Team then sought the input of the Council of Deans on both models at a meeting on February 3.

While the Deans recognized the desire for inclusiveness and University-wide participation offered by Model A, they were skeptical about the likely effectiveness of such a large group. They were more positive about Model B, but also questioned the size of the IT Coordinating Committee. The Deans made the following suggestions for Model B: add a Steering Committee as a subset of the Coordinating Committee; create fewer topical committees, but with clearly defined functions; and, prominently position the IT Managers Group within any new IT Governance model. The Deans also indicated their willingness to trust in “representation” of their individual college’s needs in IT Governance rather than requiring each college to have its own representative on a council or committee.

Even prior to the session with the Council of Deans, the Action Team was moving in the direction of the suggestions put forward by the Deans. The Team created a “hybrid” of Models A and B, which they named Model C (See Appendix D). This new model embodied feedback from the Deans as well as the advantages gleaned from Models A and B.
On February 8, the Action Team co-chairs presented Models A, B, and C to the Blue Ribbon Coordinating Committee for guidance and feedback prior to submitting the Action Team’s report to that group. The Blue Ribbon Coordinating Committee responded to Models A and B with many of the same critiques as the Deans. They asked the Action Team co-chairs to focus on fleshing out Model C as the recommended IT Governance model. The two diagrams of Model C that follow—Option 1 and Option 2—are the culmination of that work.
MODEL C (option 1)

IT COUNCIL
12 members including CIO

Sr VP Provost Rep ● Faculty Senate Rep ●
Sr VP A&F Rep ● Undergrad Rep ●
VP Health Rep ● Grad Rep ●
VP Commun. Rep ●

Topical Committee Chairs

IT MANAGERS (meet monthly with CIO)

TEACHING & LEARNING

RESEARCH

CORE SERVICES/SHARED INFRASTRUCTURE

TOPICAL COMMITTEES
10-12 members each consisting of:

Students (Undergraduate, Graduate)
Faculty (Clinical, Regional, Research, etc.)
Administrative (A&F, Academic, etc.)
Technical (UE, Academic, etc.)

User Community
MODEL C (option 2)

SENIOR VP
Admin & Finance

SENIOR VP
Provost

CIO

IT COUNCIL
13 members including CIO
- Sr. VP Provost Rep
- Sr. VP AS&F Rep
- VP Health Rep
- VP Commun. Rep
- Faculty Senate Rep
- P+O+C Rep
- VP Research Rep
- COD Rep

Topical Committee Chairs

IT MANAGERS (meet monthly with CIO)

TEACHING & LEARNING

RESEARCH

CORE SERVICES/SHARED INFRASTRUCTURE

TOPICAL COMMITTEES
10-12 members each consisting of:
- Students (Undergraduate, Graduate)
- Faculty (Clinical, Regional, Research, etc.)
- Administrative (AS&F, Academic, etc.)
- Technical (UCI, Academic, etc.)

User Community
DESCRIPTION OF MODEL C

In recommending Model C as the new IT Governance structure for the University, the Action Team endeavored to create a model that:

• Provides an institutional framework for effective and informed decision-making regarding significant IT initiatives, policies, and practices;
• Affirms that IT is a shared and collaborative responsibility across the university that encompasses computing, telecommunications, enterprise and academic software and systems, and other information technologies;
• Requires CIO leadership that is highly consultative and communicative; shares ideas widely; reaches out to all constituencies; and effectively builds support for high-performance and progressive IT infrastructure that advances the university’s mission.

IT COUNCIL

Scope of Responsibilities:

• Central, high-level body that is chaired by the CIO and is advisory to the CIO
• Meets monthly, year-round
• Considers all significant IT initiatives, issues, and policies that impact the University
• Works with the CIO to prepare recommendations to the Senior VP for Administration and Finance and Senior VP for Academic Affairs and Provost
• Participates in University’s integrated decision-making process
• Creates University-wide Strategic Plan for IT in alignment with UC2019, Academic Master Plan, and Blue Ribbon Task Force on Academic Information Technology Report
• Develops appropriate IT policies, standards, guidelines, practices, and compliance expectations
• Ensures outreach to constituencies and their inclusion in decision making
• Appoints chairs of IT Managers Group and three Topical IT Committees
• Provides coordination and oversight of the IT Managers Group and three Topical IT Committees (Teaching & Learning, Research, and Core Services/Shared Infrastructure) through the chairs of those groups
• Creates, coordinates, and provides oversight of ad hoc committees as needed
Qualifications of IT Council Members:
• Enthusiasm for a new, inclusive IT Governance Model
• Ability to bring a university-wide IT perspective to deliberations and decision-making
• Broad knowledge about IT and its value to our missions
• Energetic and dedicated participation
• Knowledge of university governance and stakeholders
• Previous participation in other university governance committee(s)

Composition of IT Council:
• CIO (Chair)
• Senior VP for Administration and Finance representative
• Senior VP for Academic Affairs and Provost representative
• Vice President for Health Affairs representative
• Vice President for Communications representative
• Chairs of the following committees:
  o IT Managers
  o Teaching and Learning
  o Research
  o Core Services/Shared Infrastructure

Option #1:
• Faculty Senate representative
• Undergraduate student representative
• Graduate student representative
• Total: 12 members

Option #2:
• Faculty Senate representative
• Vice President for Research representative
• Council of Deans representative
• Planning-Design-Construction representative
• Total: 13 members

Appointments and Terms of IT Council Members:
• Appointments are made jointly by Senior VP for Administration and Finance and Senior VP for Academic Affairs and Provost
• Standard terms are three years, but 50% of initial appointments will be for two years with the option for one renewal, so that the entire Council is not replaced simultaneously.

**IT MANAGERS GROUP AND TOPICAL COMMITTEES**

Supporting the IT Council are the IT Managers Group and three topical committees ranging in size and representation. The IT Managers Group maintains its current mix of centralized and de-centralized IT membership.

Teaching and Learning, Research, and Core Services & Shared Infrastructure formulate the other three committees. In general, membership on these committees should consist of 10-12 appointed individuals.

The CIO, in collaboration with the IT Council, will appoint the chairs of the IT Managers Group and topical committees. Once identified, the chairs will consult with the IT Council to determine the makeup of the rest of each committee. Committee membership varies based on scope of responsibilities and may include faculty, IT personnel, researchers, business practitioners, regional representation, and students. The CIO’s office is responsible for keeping track of the required committee demographics and term limits of the committee members. The CIO’s support staff is responsible for record keeping, scheduling, research, and communication.

The IT Managers Group and the other topical committees will operate within, and leverage the framework of the campus IT Governance process. They will report to the IT Council, which will include the Chairs of the IT Managers Group and topical committees.

**Qualifications of IT Managers Group and Topical Committees:**

Identifying the right individuals to serve within the IT governance structure is critical to its success. The following qualifications outline the skills needed to serve:

• Broad understanding of IT
• Institutional perspective
• Adaptive communicator
• Horizontal and vertical collaborator
• Consensus builder
• Energetic and dedicated participation
• Specific knowledge in IT discipline
IT Managers Group:

The IT Managers Group will develop processes, systems or structures that improve IT communications, collaboration, integration and knowledge sharing across units and central offices. The committee will draft an IT Service catalog and service level agreements (SLAs) at unit and central levels based on Information Technology Infrastructure Library (ITIL). The group will meet monthly with the CIO to make recommendations for identifying process efficiencies such as the maturity of IT service management (ITSM) for the institution or cost efficacies such as consolidated purchases and virtualization.

Scope of Responsibilities:
- Supports the development of the University-wide Strategic Plan for IT in alignment with UC2019, Academic Master Plan, and Blue Ribbon Task Force on Academic Information Technology Report
- Technical support
- Emerging technology and operational issues
- Efficiency of disparate services
- Resource sharing
- Training
- Policies and Procedures
- Annual report of activities to IT Council

Composition: The group is approximately 25 members in size and includes representatives from the Blue Ribbon Task Force, central Help Desk, Systems and Operations, Information Security, Network and Telecommunication Services, Instructional Research and Computing, and academic units, including representation from regional campuses. There are no term limits for the members of this group as they serve as a result of their position within central or college IT.

Teaching and Learning Committee:

The Teaching and Learning Committee will review and make recommendations on the information technology services needed for educational activities on the campus, above and beyond the base level of shared campus infrastructure. This committee recommends how the University should implement academic technology strategy, policies, processes, and services to support excellence and innovation across all teaching and learning activities.
Scope of Responsibilities:

- Supports the development of the University-wide Strategic Plan for IT in alignment with UC2019, Academic Master Plan, and Blue Ribbon Task Force on Academic Information Technology Report
- Technical support issues
- Classroom technologies
- Distance/On-line learning
- Learning Management Systems (Blackboard)
- ITIE fees
- Annual report of activities to IT Council

Appointments (made by IT Council):

- Eight academic (colleges and academic units)
- Two students (undergraduate and graduate)
- Two IT personnel

Research Committee:

The Research Committee will review and make recommendations on how the University should implement strategy, policies, processes, and services to support research computing. This committee will review and make recommendations on the IT services needed for research, above and beyond the base level of common technology infrastructure.

Scope of Responsibilities:

- Supports the development of the University-wide Strategic Plan for IT in alignment with UC2019, Academic Master Plan, and Blue Ribbon Task Force on Academic Information Technology Report
- Technical support issues
- Grants management
- High performance networking and computing
- Research data management (NIH and NSF requirements)
- Collaboration with domain partners, for example UC Health, Children’s and VA
- Industry partnerships
- Commercialization
- Annual report of activities to IT Council

Appointments (made by IT Council):

- Seven researchers
- One graduate student
- Two IT personnel
- Two business practitioners
Core Services and Shared Infrastructure Committee:

The Core Services and Shared Infrastructure Committee will review and make recommendations on how the university should implement strategy, policies, processes, security and services for shared IT infrastructure. It will also have the responsibility to review and make recommendations concerning infrastructure and software for administrative information systems used by or proposed for the university.

Scope of Responsibilities:
- Supports the development of the University-wide Strategic Plan for IT in alignment with UC2019, Academic Master Plan, and Blue Ribbon Task Force on Academic Information Technology Report
- Technical support issues
- Architecture/Cloud
- Network
- Security
- Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP, i.e. HR, Finance, Student Information System and other core systems)
- Messaging (Email)
- Web/Mobile
- Interoperability
- Wireless
- Annual report of activities to IT Council

Appointments (made by IT Council):
- Three IT personnel
- Two students (undergraduate and graduate)
- Four academic (colleges and academic units)
- Three business practitioners

Terms for Topical Committees:

Standard terms for appointed members are three years, but 50% of initial appointments will be for two years to ensure continuity with the option for one renewal. Therefore, any appointed member of the topical committees should serve no more than five or six consecutive years on that committee. Membership of the topical committees should not overlap. After the initial three years, the only exceptions to term limits would be for the individuals who serve as a result of their position or operational expertise.
USE CASES

The IT Governance Action Team developed two use cases to show the recommended model in action. The first case represents a request to replace the Student Information System or something that has an institution-wide impact. The second case highlights a unit level request to utilize an emerging communication technology for telemedicine purposes.

Use Case 1:
- Step 1 – Client (Enrollment Management) initiates official request via IT Governance submission process for replacement of Student Information System
- Step 2 – CIO’s office receives request via IT Governance routing protocol
- Step 3 – CIO discusses request with Senior VP’s for approval to study feasibility
- Step 4 – CIO delegates topic to Core Services/Shared Infrastructure topical committee; topical committee performs due diligence with university community engaging consultants as appropriate in the process
- Step 5 – Topical committee brings recommendation to IT Council; Council vets recommendation university-wide with other topical committees and integrated decision-making bodies

Use Case 2:
- Step 1 – College of Medicine unit initiates official request via IT Governance submission process for endorsement to utilize Skype technology for telemedicine communication
- Step 2 – CIO’s office receives request via IT Governance routing protocol
- Step 3 – Routing protocol determines IT Managers Group is best suited to advise on topic; IT Managers Group discusses and determines Skype does meet HIPAA compliance requirements; IT Managers Group informs College of Medicine unit of findings and recommends alternative HIPAA compliant web conferencing solution currently available via university offerings to meet their needs
- Step 4 – IT Managers Group chair reports the findings and recommendation at next IT Council meeting

IT GOVERNANCE WEB SITE AND USER COMMUNITY SUBMISSION PROCESS

The IT Governance Action Team also recommends that the CIO’s office, in collaboration with the IT Council, develop and maintain a new IT Governance web presence to include a user community submission process. The process will allow the IT Council and
committees to review and coordinate information technology requests and concepts collectively, rather than on a case-by-case basis.

This approach is intended to provide the following benefits:

- Align IT expenditures with UC2019, Academic Master Plan, and Blue Ribbon Task Force on Academic Information Technology Report to remain competitive
- Ensure UC’s limited resources are used to support the most important IT needs and the best ideas
- Provide a way to view funding needs over multiple years
- Foster more unit collaboration
- Provide next generation technology that addresses multiple unit needs
- Determine if the enterprise systems and the shared infrastructure can properly support a unit's solution
- Provide a sustainable way to prevent University dollars from paying for the same service(s) twice (or more)

Final details of the web site content, functionality and submission process will be determined by the IT Council and may include:

- An IT request process to help support the coordination of IT investments and minimize duplicate solutions when a unit has the funding or when they need to request funding for an IT solution
- A request process for any information technology investment greater than $1 million—total dollar amount includes all University costs
- New or enhanced IT shared service ideas (An “IT shared service” is defined as providing an IT service to more than one campus or administrative unit.)

IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE AND RESOURCE REQUIREMENTS

The IT Governance Action Team recommends that Model C implementation begin in late spring 2012 so that IT Council and Topical Committee appointments will be completed prior to the date the new CIO begins his or her appointment at the University. The new CIO would then be able to chair the first meeting of the IT Council with experienced advisors in place. Ideally an orientation meeting of the members of the IT Council would be scheduled prior to that first official meeting of the IT Council with the CIO.

The Action Team recommends that the Office of the CIO manage the administrative processes required to track appointments of IT Council members as well as the membership of the IT Managers Group and Topical Committees. It is expected that the CIO’s Office will communicate with the offices of the two Senior Vice Presidents and Vice Presidents for the appointments of their representatives to the IT Council.
Appendix A

Legacy IT Governance Structure – Established in 1998
Appendix C

MODEL B

EXECUTIVE IT COMMITTEE
Sr. VP A&F
Sr. VP Provost
VP Health Affairs
VP Research
Chair - Council of Deans
Chair - Faculty Senate
CIO

CIO

IT COORDINATING COMMITTEE
19 members total, including CIO

IT MANAGERS STANDING COMMITTEE
meet monthly with CIO

INTEGRATED DECISION MAKING

TOPICAL COMMITTEES
8-15 members each consisting of:
Students (Undergraduate, Graduate)
Faculty (Clinical, Regional, Research, etc.)
Administrative (A&F, Academic, etc.)
Technical (UCR, Academic, etc.)

ACADEMICS
RESEARCH
SHARED INFRASTRUCTURE
ADMIN & FINANCE
CLINICAL

User Community
Appendix D

MODEL C (option 2)  Use Case: New SIS

3 SENIOR VP
Admin & Finance

3 SENIOR VP
Provost

CIO
Router

IT COUNCIL
13 members including CIO
Sr VPProvost Rep
Sr VP A&F Rep
VP Health Rep
VP Comm. Rep
Faculty Senate Rep
P+D+C Rep
VP Research Rep
COC Rep

Topical Committee Chairs

4

INTEGRATED DECISION MAKING

CONSULTANTS

TOPICAL COMMITTEES
10-12 members each consisting of:
- Students (Undergraduate, Graduate)
- Faculty (Clinical, Regional, Research, etc.)
- Administrative (A&F, Academic, etc.)
- Technical (IT, Academic, etc.)

IT MANAGERS meets monthly with CIO

TEACHING & LEARNING

RESEARCH

CORE SERVICES/SHARED INFRASTRUCTURE

User Community

Enrollment Management
Appendix E

MODEL C (option 2)

Use Case: Skype