

Date: January 5, 2018

To: Thomas Sudkamp, Ph.D.
Provost

From: IT/Web Efficiencies Committee¹

Re: Committee Recommendations

After receiving your charge to review Information Technology/Web activities across campus and provide recommendations focused on improving efficiencies, the committee gathered data on all university personnel engaged in IT/Web activities and then over a series of six meetings, reviewed various activities and provide you with four recommendations.

Recommendation 1: Efficiencies will not be obtained through additional personnel reductions

In compiling the IT/Web personnel it is apparent that all units have undergone reduction of workforce either through layoffs, VRIP or attrition. In some activities, personnel are down to one or two individuals overseeing major IT/Web systems. In other cases, loss of personnel has led to ineffective use of current software and increased likelihood of errors/failures.

Recommendation 2: Efficiencies through administering centrally while delivering locally.

Following models previously employed in human resources, advancement and most recently, advising we recommend that in certain IT/Web activities having the activity administered centrally while continuing to allow personnel to work locally, where appropriate, would lead to several advantages listed below.

1. Consistent training of personnel tasked with similar activities across the university.
2. The ability for provide coverage when individuals need time off.
3. Improved communication among the IT/Web personnel.

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4. Increased coordination and collaboration
5. The ability to create “go” teams to tackle unexpected projects or provide increased service to areas during peak times.
6. Improved professional development and the increased options for promotion.

In discussing models for centralization, we came up with two possible reorganization models. The first model the local personnel would be directly supervised by the appropriate central group and have their budget transferred centrally. They would continue to have a “dotted” line of oversight with the local supervisor. It would be the central unit’s responsibility to maintain the services rendered by the embedded personnel. In this model, personnel would initially remain local but could be moved centrally so long as services are maintained. In the second model, the primary reporting would be retained by the local unit/college/school with a dotted line of reporting with the central unit. In this model, there would be no transfer of budget to the central unit and the local unit would retain all responsibilities for services rendered. We felt this second model would work well in situations where the local unit maintains a separate budget (e.g. BSOM, Lake campus).

From our discussions, we provide the following examples for possible reorganization in one of the two models.

1. CECS, RSCOB and Library: Desktop/Workstation Engineering and Support
2. CECS: Server/Network/Storage Administration
3. Web Development
4. CTL: Application Administration
5. BSOM: Business Analysis/Application Support and Database Administration
6. Student Union: Video Technology Services

We also noted several possible areas of reorganization that would require additional investigation.

1. Registrar and Human Resources: Business Analysis/Application Development
2. BSOM: Web Development, Leadership and Video Services
3. Library: Application Administration, Web Development, Database Administration and Business Analysis/Application Development

Recommendation 3: Software centralization

We believe the university will achieve increased savings on software² and better alignment with software support if it implemented a system to inform software purchasers of supported products and put into place a system that engaged CATs software specialists earlier in decision process, prior to when software purchases are placed which is where the limited engagement now occurs. Our discussions did not lead to a consensus on how best to achieve this goal but we are confident that CATs could be tasked to work with key stakeholders to develop a plan.

² Software is defined as system wide programs (e.g. FileMaker Pro) in contrast to desktop or research software purchased for office or research computers.

Recommendation 4: Engage Human Resources

Lastly, we recommend that before any plans to reorganize personnel are considered that Human Resources be consulted so that both proposed models (recommendation #2) are fully vetted. The committee felt strongly that individual affected by any reorganization need to see this as a positive opportunity.