**UWM’s Digital Future**

**University Operations and Services Working Group Recommendations**

1. **Strategic Goal:**

Enhance services and sense of community for online students – provide comparable support services for online students - should benefit ALL students.

UW-Milwaukee should be current in our understanding and utilization of emerging technologies and their impact on students and community building. Our practices should reflect being cognizant of the expectations of quick response from the university and access to information and resources. Furthermore, parity should be assured between online and in person students in student services. Keeping mindful of our access mission, appropriate steps should be taken to assure access to technology is not an obstacle to student success.

**Actions:**

1.1. **Hold campus-wide conference for student services in order to set minimum standards of online presence, synchronous communication and social media presence and usage.**

1.2. **Examine and implement models of centralized support for technology innovation for student services.**

1.3. **Create a one-stop student services website.**

2. **Strategic Goal:**

Increase capacity to work remotely.

Since large portions of people's work are of a digital nature, including collaborations with others, it is often not necessary to be physically on campus to meet responsibilities any more than students need to be physically on campus to participate in the virtual portions of hybrid classes. Extraneous commuting to campus by employees increases highway congestion and the University’s carbon footprint and dependency on non-renewable fossil fuels. Remote work capabilities are necessary in the event of a weather emergency, pandemic illness or other situation that requires activation of the University’s Continuity of Operations plans.
Actions:

2.1. Identify scalable models and policies for working remotely that have proven successful at other institutions.

2.2. Develop and revise policies, procedures and guidelines to facilitate remote work by staff/faculty and set reasonable expectations for work-life balance.

2.3. Determine campus infrastructure needs to support opportunities for staff and faculty to work remotely and adopt technologies for collaboration and working remotely that can scale to widespread use by faculty and staff.

2.4. Provide training and support for effective work practices in remote and mobile environments.

3. Strategic Goal:

Create a paperless system that is adaptable to all constituents recognizing technology constraints across UW-System and the State of Wisconsin.

Paperless systems can greatly improve efficiencies because digital documents are easier to index, search, find and access from multiple locations and/or by multiple users of the system. Workflows can move documents around campus for reviews, approvals and other tasks while easily tracking where the document is in the workflow process. Digital signatures can be applied to documents allowing the copies to be stored digitally and remove the need to print, sign and scan the document.

Actions:

3.1. Identify and analyze existing paperless models, document business processes, and review/revise archival policies, procedures - determination of electronic storage space.

3.2. Investigate and determine hardware and software needed for a successful paperless implementation, scalable for the campus.

3.3. Implement a digital signature solution based on requirements and an assessment of existing solutions. The solution should consistent with the goal of standardization across the UW System and applicable entities in the state of Wisconsin.

3.4. Develop and/or revise workflows/processes to increase efficiency/effectiveness based on common best practices.
3.5. Implement paperless department pilot projects in academic, administrative and student paperless system implementations.

3.6. Conduct usability testing.

4. Strategic Goal:

Establish an accessible “landing zone” to aggregate related standards and practices similar to UW-Madison’s How-to pages from Business Services (http://www.bussvc.wisc.edu/howto/HowMain.html) or the University of Washington’s information management community forum. (http://www.washington.edu/uwit/im/forum/Nov172010.html)

Aggregating all this information into one place should make it easier for faculty/staff to find the information they need, ensure that the most current document is being used and eliminate wasted time hunting down information or using information that is out of date.

Actions:

4.1. Perform discovery process for existing documents in each category

4.2. Identify resources needed to maintain landing zone

4.3. Identify categories/topics to aggregate/group (e.g., HR policies; should be grouped by function, not unit; role-based pages) and determine if aggregation for categories can be automated

4.4. Define standard delivery/storage methods to use for landing zone

4.5. Identify gaps and develop documents/materials to address gaps

5. Strategic goal:

Adopt an institutional culture that focuses on the overall well-being of the University with an eye on the impact of how decisions can and will affect other campus units.

Campus leadership at every level should operate in a spirit of collaboration, focusing on the benefits to the University as a whole. To facilitate this culture, effective processes should be implemented in each unit, department, school, and college for the evaluation of decisions and actions for their contribution to the institution's overall initiatives and priorities.
Actions:

5.1. Professional development activities should be provided that help employees understand and appreciate the nature and importance of the work done by units other than their own.

5.2. University should adopt a culture of continuous process improvement that includes documenting business processes and making them available in an electronic repository.

5.3. Non-academic units should do digital future planning in parallel to that being done in academic units.

6. Strategic Goal:

Major investments in information systems need to be prioritized on a campus level via a transparent process that is open to members of the campus community.

Systems should not be purchased without sufficient understanding of the requirements that need to be met and the potential impacts on staff and resources in other departments. Funding spent on sub-optimal or duplicate information technology systems diminishes the investments that can be made in other critical systems. Having institutional governance, and not just central IT, engaged in prioritizing IT projects is a well-known, best practice for gaining more impact from IT investments.

Actions:

6.1. A campus-wide process should be implemented to prioritize the purchase and implementation of major IT systems.

6.2. The implementation of major IT systems should be communicated to the campus community.