Information Technology Strategic Plan

Fitchburg State University

4-6-2023

Overview

Fitchburg State University has a history of utilizing technology to improve teaching, learning, and research. Here are some notable projects that the university has undertaken:

- Fitchburg State University was the first university in the world to map indoor space using Google technology.
- Fitchburg State University was one of the first IT organizations in the United States to deploy enterprise virtual desktops using zero clients.
- Fitchburg State partnered with Checkpoint to design, test, and deploy its Intrusion Prevention System and was one of only two sites in the world to do so.
- Fitchburg State was the first public institution in Massachusetts to utilize Web Application Firewalls to secure all websites against cyber attacks.
- Fitchburg State was the first public or private educational institution in Massachusetts to connect to OSHEAN I2 internet service provider for I2 connectivity.
- The university led the integration of its networking system with HBO to become one of the first five institutions in the nation to offer HBO and Showtime to resident students.

Fitchburg State University is dedicated to providing its students with the best possible technological environment to prepare them for the future. To ensure that the University can keep up with the rapid pace of change and to make the most of the increasing sophistication of integrated systems, it is essential to develop a comprehensive plan. This plan will ensure that Fitchburg State University can maintain its competitive edge and provide the highest quality education for its graduates.

How this plan was developed

To develop this plan, we utilized several sources. Firstly, we examined other University Strategic Plans to gain insights into their content and structure. Secondly, we heavily relied on the 2022 Horizon Report to inform our thinking about the future of higher education. Thirdly, we referenced the original IT Strategic Plan. Additionally, we incorporated input and feedback from the Technology Advisory Committee on campus and other senior stakeholders.

Updates

This plan will be updated on an annual basis. For legibility reasons, parts of it may be summarized or removed so that it can continue being a useful working document.

Vision Statement

The following vision represents the goals of the department's work and provides the framework and inspiration for the future. It answers the question, "Where do we want to go?"

The Technology department serves as a hub of excellence, driving progress in education, learning, and innovation across the University.

Mission Statement

The mission statement briefly describes our fundamental purpose. It answers the question, "Why do we exist?"

The Information Technology department will provide innovative, progressive technology to enable faculty, staff, and students to have the best learning and working experience. As a versatile organization, Information Technology meets goals through continued exploration, implementation, and refinement of technology while providing first-class customer service and support.

Information Technology Guiding Principles

These principles form our core tenets regarding information technology's role at Fitchburg State University.

1. Information Technology is a vital part of Fitchburg State University's academic and support mission by providing an effective environment for teaching, learning, research, and achieving business goals.
2. Information Technology enhances the creation and promotion of areas of excellence within Fitchburg State University. These areas of excellence often become a competitive advantage and can be leveraged to attract and retain the best faculty, staff, and students.
3. Information Technology must investigate, test, and evaluate new technologies and leverage them to further advance its academic and support mission.
4. Information Technology must appropriately balance:
    a. Providing infrastructure and services that are useful, reliable, scalable, and secure.
    b. Academic and administrative support.
    c. Individual needs with University-wide needs.
    d. Access to information versus the security risk of the information.
    e. Cutting-edge products and services with reliability and ability to implement.
    f. Requests and desires with being a good steward of costs and ability to support technology.
    g. Equipment usage versus environmental impact and costs.
5. Information Technology must provide great customer service and communicate effectively.

6. Information Technology must offer technologies that appeal to all our students, faculty, and staff regardless of their location and be mindful of their preferred method of working and learning.

Goals

1. Security and Privacy:
    1.1. Develop and manage security infrastructure that meets the Center for Internet Security (CIS) standards to ensure the security of the university's operations.
    1.2. Design and implement an ongoing data security awareness and training program for all university employees to improve security education and awareness.
    1.3. Continue to enhance the security of applications, systems, and data with multifactor authentication methods to prevent password vulnerabilities in an easy-to-use way.
    1.4. Implement device management systems to secure data on endpoint devices containing university data and safeguard IT assets.
2. Student Success:
    2.1. Develop a common and simple system of digital signage for the campus to replace the antiquated cable TV display system.
    2.2. Work with admissions to implement a chatbot for potential students and explore its use for current students.
    2.3. Explore new methods for enhancing group and remote work to enhance collaboration and remote work.
    2.4. Upgrade residence hall network wiring to support newer Wifi 6 standards.
3. Application Optimization:
    3.1. Work with GCE to implement the new Ultra navigation design on Blackboard and test upgrades to Ultra for classes, or replace it with something with a modern user interface.
    3.2. Determine if Modolabs is still a good fit for Fitchburg State and how it can be fully utilized.
    3.3. Work with departments to further their use of Ellucian Banner features to improve operations.
4. Faculty Success:
    4.1. Create a pathway for faculty researchers to utilize the systems at the Massachusetts Green High-Performance Computing Center to enhance research and grant opportunities.
    4.2. Explore different classroom layouts and technologies to enable enhanced group work and learning for active learning and collaboration spaces.
    4.3. Develop or acquire a database that will assist the grant department in monitoring and communicating information related to grants and research activities to enhance grant and research tracking.

5. Operational Success:
    5.1. Restart and use metrics for LEAN IT to improve operational success.
    5.2. Reinstitute vendor scorecards for major vendors to enhance vendor communication and success.
    5.3. Develop Banner Communication Manager for students and explore its use for employees to enhance constituent communication.
    5.4. Clean up the IT website to simplify service offerings and information to customers.