

IRT Steering Committee
Open Forum
Wednesday, February 11, 2009

➤ Larry Gilbert:	{ Larry provided an overview of the IRT Strategic Planning process, introduced the members of the Steering Committee and then opened the floor to questions from the group }
Mary Shepherd:	When working on getting or designing new software systems, will I be told what system to select, or will I have a say in the final selection?
➤ Larry Gilbert	Well, first let me explain that all the VPs develop an annual priority list that they send to me. This [steering] committee just completed a conversation on what their role might be in setting priorities. They may weigh in on priorities as well. However, we want to take the user needs into consideration and we don't want to dictate which software or solution users may have to select. So, yes, you would have options.
➤ Mike Lee	It is important to have a continuous feedback loop so that we can continue to review priorities and factor in when things change.
Josh Collins:	I'm not a technical person and I am well known in my area for messing up my computer from time to time. Right now, I just walk down the hall and someone helps me right away. Are there plans to change that? In the future, will I have to put in a call ticket and then wait two weeks for someone to come help me?
➤ Larry Gilbert	In an organization a large as this one, there is no way a central group can provide service as fast as a local group. I recognize that. But we don't have any intention in this plan to centralize services. We don't want to centralize or decentralize but instead look for how we can combine the advantages of both approaches by gaining the economies of scale of an institutional approach without losing the opportunity to apply local resources to meet local needs.
Mary Shepherd:	I wanted to ask a follow-up question re: on-going support for projects that build our software products. For instance, if we decide to build the Orientation system, what is the support obligation for IRT?
➤ Larry Gilbert	Support is one of the things that needs to be negotiated up front when working on this type of project. We need to work as a team to make sure we don't commit to a project that everyone can't support in the long run.

Paul Edwards:	I want to ask about who / how we will know if the projects and systems are working. Who oversees accountability for this plan and the work of IRT?
➤ Bob	This document is really a Strategic Plan, it is a framework for guiding the work. An important question is what role does campus-wide feedback have in assessment and evaluation?
➤ Larry	Principles related to the establishment of metrics and incorporation of feedback loops for assessment are found throughout the strategic plan. We need to work together to build clear metrics into each project, so that we all know whether or not we've met our intended goals.
Steve Daley/Faculty:	Our local support ATC's in exemplary. However, this plan appears to be speaking to the need to use more technology in teaching/learning, but where are the resources we need to let us grow (distance learning)? To have more studios. We used to be recognized as having the best technology in this area. No one says that anymore.
➤ JP	I hear what you are saying, but we need to balance local needs vs./University needs. IT is always changing. Sometimes we have to refocus our resources. In this specific instance, we feel cable TV resources has a cap so we had to make adjustments [in studio classroom space].
Steven Daley:	How does this group see the need for more institutional resource in specific areas?
➤ Larry	The need to provide options for students to take courses is especially critical given the large percentage of our student body who have to work. But the CSU is shifting toward an increased focus on on-line asynchronous learning rather than studio learning. That's a CSU reality we need to understand. However, we do need more focus on distance learning/e-learning in the current strategic plan and we will address that. We need to especially recognize the planned CSU-expansion of on-line and hybrid courses.
Mary Reddick	I wanted to follow up on Steve's remark. Library works with lots of part time faculty. They have great needs, but there is not much support for them. I believe the role of faculty is being dismissed by a top down approach that needs more emphasis on users. I believe faculty are being penalized unfairly by being left out of the decision-making loop.
➤ Larry	I don't want you to misinterpret the emphasis on top-down decision-making from the opening presentation. I was simply saying that all of our planning needed to be informed by our strategic goals, which are prioritized and defined at the executive

	level. This in no way means that all IT decisions are made from the top down. We want to engage everyone and work on specific strategies to get faculty feedback. That intent is noted throughout the IT strategic plan.
➤ Bob	The issue here is that we really don't know what the people are doing who are using the technology. We haven't had a standard way to collect this feedback and use it for informed decision-making. This plan focuses on ways to fix that problem.
Craig Yamamoto:	I want to ask about Goal 3 in the plan. Specifically about regulatory updates and unscheduled maintenance. We used to be able to handle individual issues as they came up. Now when an issue comes up, it needs a whole team to address it. This is very time consuming. We have resource issues for every release and now it seems like every release is like an implementation. How will we handle this long term?
Cindy Martinez:	I'm worried about our next big upgrade to 9.1 and what IRT's doing re: <u>planning and resources</u> .
➤ Larry:	These issues are too tactical for the strategic plan and I would be happy to take them off-line. CMS is an enormously complex and convoluted system. The history of CMS was that it was supposed to be a common system across the CSU vs. a campus specific system. But instead, it has become highly decentralized due to individual operational needs of twenty-three campuses. The result is a system that is now outside the scope of control of CMS central and the Chancellor's Office. This is why you are now starting to see a reversion to common business practices under CMS, starting with the Finance system. In some ways we've been our own worst enemy with CMS by having each campus implement individual solutions rather than working together on common approaches. We have made progress, as evidenced by the greatly improved performance during spring start-up, compared to our horrible performance in the fall. CIOs throughout the CSU are very sensitive to the impact of changes in CMS on the workload in functional areas. We're working hard to get that message across to CMS central, with this issue being a clear focus of the current project to consolidate CMS Finance. But we have a long way to go and I still have lots of concern about whether CMS central staff are hearing and responding to our concerns. We all have to keep pressing on this issue.
Bruce (no last name mentioned):	What we want is a less complex/less convoluted system. It seems like we are taking away simple solutions. Portal 2.0 is very convoluted, very slow, takes more time/resources/computer

	upgrades.
➤ Larry:	<p>Again, this is too specific for the Strategic Plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First, you need to check the data. We have data that shows the new portal is much faster than the CMS portal, even though it handles far more traffic. • The old portal was limited to only handling a limited set of CMS-specific data for students, staff and administrators. However, the new portal is a true campus-wide portal, focused on a larger, wider strategy of providing comprehensive information on all aspects of student life. The new portal has its own Portal Steering Committee with representatives from across campus.
Charles Roberts OCCS-Library:	I want to talk again about localized needs. Our local IT value the inclusiveness in IT planning. How do we have a voice, have inclusiveness in this new IT plan?
➤ Larry:	That is hard to answer. We depend on you to determine the local needs in your division first and then send them up through your division process to us.
➤ Bob:	Example from AA-faculty IT committee units need a process in place first and submitted to VP and on to IRT-How does a group at the top make informed decisions with needs of those at bottom? Process not in place at the moment
➤ Otis:	<p>In response to concerns raised by faculty, it is an absolute necessity that department have methodologies put in place to inform decisions. Failing to do that will cause decisions to be made on weak or absent information. We will have to generate data for reasonable and defensible decisions. This needs to involve everyone.</p> <p>How do we disseminate the compelling data? People need to know why decisions are made. Top to bottom methodologies to defend and support decisions.</p>
➤ Larry:	<p>To that end, we are developing a project site that everyone will be able to go look at to see what projects have been submitted and what status they are in. The site is still under development, but it is located at www.csus.edu/irt/projects</p> <p>The site shows the top projects that have come up through divisions. It's important that local groups let their leaders know their needs so that their priorities can be reflected in the division lists. This is just one methodology for reviewing the ranked projects; we're still working on the process for prioritizing and</p>

	don't have all the answers yet.
Mike Doyle	One question, one philosophy we have to decide as a campus is - are we enrollment based or curriculum based? Right now, we are recruitment/retention/time to graduation based. The money and resources will always follow the philosophy.
➤ Larry:	Not to cut you off Mike, but that question really relates to the focus of the overall campus strategic plan. Within the IT Strategic Plan Section II talks about the overall role of IT being to provide the tools and data needed for decision-making to those in Academic Affairs and Student Affairs who make those decisions and to focus on development of data warehouse methodologies to get information out as widely as possible across campus.
Paul Edwards:	What will the Steering Committee be doing after the plan is out?
➤ Larry:	This is an on-going committee. The focus is now starting to shift from a focus on developing the strategic plan, with future directions currently under discussion by the committee. .
➤ JP:	One thing everyone should know about our committee is that we have very active meetings. Many strong views and arguments are expresses robustly.
➤ Bob:	Also, we should say that the issues regarding local vs. campus-wide projects are not yet resolved. This needs the right people in the room.
Paul Edwards	Bob, that's why I asked about the status of the Steering Committee, It seems a very good group of people were assembled. And for this document to be effective it will take this same approach of getting the right people in the right room and the right time to discuss how best to implement.
Nadia Mayard:	Since it is hard to reach consensus, how can we communicate and align everyone and keep them on board when we have so many conflicting goals?
➤ Larry:	We must engage in on-going feedback. I really didn't expect all these folks to be here. When you set something like this up, you are never sure who will come. This is a good turnout.
➤ JP:	Yes, we all have to communicate better.