



OFFICE OF THE PROVOST AND SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT –
ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
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Dear Colleagues:

Thank you for agreeing to serve with me on the University of California Information Technology Guidance Committee. Our main task will be to engage in a consultative, 12- to 18-month planning process to identify and recommend strategic directions to guide investments in information technology (IT) and the academic information environment.

The formation of this Committee recognizes the increasingly important role that information technology will play in sustaining and enhancing the University's academic quality and competitiveness and in ensuring essential business effectiveness and efficiencies. Despite our decentralized environment, the University of California has had great success at introducing innovative IT solutions and new business models for all campuses that maximize return on IT investment, for example:

- UC campus networks were consolidated with the creation of a non-profit organization (CENIC) created to deliver lower cost, reliable, state of the art network services to UC and other public and private higher education institutions in California.
- The UC libraries have sponsored extensive co-investment in a shared infrastructure to enable very significant economies and enhance service breadth and quality without sacrificing the distinctiveness of campus libraries or their responsiveness to local needs.

IT innovation has enabled other higher education institutions to break new ground:

- MIT has revolutionized online instruction, attracted continuing and substantial support from corporate and philanthropic donors, and achieved a commanding position in China and other countries that are experiencing the most rapid growth in demand for higher education.
- Public universities systems in Britain, Australia, and India maintain leading research infrastructures for a fraction of the costs required by universities in the US and in other G8 countries.

I believe that, with increasingly coordinated and collaborative planning, UC can better leverage the dynamic world of information technology to realize substantial business efficiencies and improved academic quality and competitiveness, thereby increasing UC's potential to become a catalyst for innovation and ability to prepare the knowledge workers required in an increasingly global economy.

Our committee will extend the outstanding work of the University's IT leadership by fostering a broader discussion among UC leaders of the future role that IT will play in support of the University's mission, academic programs, and strategic goals. The major focus will be the deployment of information technology to enhance academic quality and institutional competitiveness. We will consult broadly to identify and define key opportunities and challenges. This consultation will involve convening specialist working groups to engage appropriate knowledge and subject-matter experts directly and interacting routinely with appropriate Academic Senate, and administrative bodies at the systemwide and divisional level (including COC, COVC, ITLC, COVCA, COVCR, SLASIAC, University Librarians, ITTP, Planning and Budget Officers).

Our focus will be on areas of strategic significance for the University that require active, collaborative planning and promise maximum leverage measured in terms of economic efficiencies, improvement of essential information services, and enhancement of the university's attractiveness to leading faculty, researchers, and students. Specific issues for consideration are:

1. Systemwide investments in common IT systems and infrastructure that have the potential to relieve pressure on campus IT budgets without constraining quality and distinctiveness of local service;
2. Computing, network, and information infrastructure that supports and expands UC's research leadership by exploiting UC, regional, national, and international opportunities in all disciplines;
3. Cost effective mechanisms for persistently managing digital information assets (research data, online learning materials, faculty and staff publications, administrative, legislative and other corporate records) to mitigate risk of loss and to exploit opportunities to leverage information assets;
4. Optimization of UC's investment in distributed instructional technology to increase efficiencies, foster curricular and pedagogical innovation, and contribute affordable, quality instructional resources for use in all levels of education in California and beyond;

5. Identification of resource implications focusing both on catalytic investment as may be required as well as budget strategies for sustaining key infrastructural services and/or initiatives.

University Librarian Daniel Greenstein and UC Chief Information Officer Kristine Hafner will play an essential role in enabling our committee to pursue its charge. They will leverage the complementary resources at their disposal, while reflecting a cross-functional approach to planning that takes full account of the university's academic, administrative, and business needs. This will ensure that our planning process is effectively supported with dedicated leadership from the UCOP senior management team. They will also call upon key IT experts from the campuses to support our work.

Because the future success of UC's IT planning is tied closely to academic, business, and budget matters, Senior Vice President Joseph Mullinix, Vice President Larry Hershman and I will continue to support this enterprise collaboratively.

I hope that we can complete our report by June, 2007.

I look forward to working with you to achieve these important goals.

Sincerely,



Wyatt R. Hume
Acting Provost and Senior Vice President
Academic Affairs

cc: President Dynes
Chancellors
Senior Vice President Mullinix
Vice President Hershman
Academic Senate Chair Brunk
Academic Senate Vice Chair Oakley
Executive Vice Chancellors
IT Leadership Council
University Librarians