

Information Technology Council Meeting Minutes

October 23, 1998, 10:00 a. m. - 2:00 p. m.
System Administration Building, Reno

Present: Chancellor Richard Jarvis; Vice Chancellor Tom Anderes; ITC Chair Davan Weddle, SCS; Stan Aiazzi, GBC; Bob Barry, WNCC; John Case, DRI; Juanita Fain, UNLV; David Keebler, TMCC; Katrina Meyer, Dir. Distance Learning; Al Ruter, CCSN; George Scaduto, UNLV; Becky Seibert, SCS; Larry Tuteur, ATSC; Steve Zink, UNR; and Martin Ringle.

1. Biennial Budget Request Update

Vice Chancellor Tom Anderes reported that the budget requests have gone to the Budget Offices for the Governor and Legislature. Priority five includes a \$16,000,000 technology request for support personnel, workstations, and webmasters for campuses. System-wide requests include the SIS upgrade, enhancements to the telecommunications backbone for research traffic and distance education needs. Another \$15,000,000 to \$20,000,000 for technology is included in various campus requests. All technology requests over one million dollars required the submission of business plans. Part of the current UCCSN task is to explain how we used the current allocations and how that ties to the new requests.

Tom reported that the budget officers look first at the base budget request and do not review the enhancement requests until the revenue projections have been completed. Revenue projections will be officially reported to the Governor by December 1. The Governor-elect will begin to take an active role. Revenue projections and associated budget allocations are not expected to be as high as in the current biennium.

Tom sees the Estate Tax revenues as a primary source for technology funding. These revenues are expected to increase by 18% to 20% since the beginning of the current biennium. The System has requested \$43.5 million from these funds. It could be a problem for the System if the Governor and Legislature assume that some of funds requested from the state should be taken from the Estate Tax instead. Of the \$43,500,000 requested, \$26,000,000 is designated to continue the Estate Tax funds allocated for the current biennium. Eight million of that is for financial aid. \$17,000,000 is requested for the expansion of existing projects and for new projects.

2. Council Role in Strategic Planning

Chancellor Jarvis asked the Council to play a major role in strategic planning for technology and explained why it is important at this time. The Board of Regents is anxious to have long range plans in place. Kenny Guinn (not yet Governor-elect at the time of this meeting) has expressed his strong interest in implementing strategic planning at the state level. The Chancellor told the Council he believed we could either be a leader in the planning effort or run the risk of having our future planned by other groups, such as K-12 or the Department of Information Technology. Steve Zink pointed out that Nevada is 50th in the nation in technology spending and hoped the Governor would be willing to spend some money on technology.

Chancellor Jarvis would like to see the technology plan fit well with the Board of Regents *Strategic Directions for the UCCSN* and would like to have a plan in place by the end of this fiscal year. He urged the Council to take a long view and plan for five-year goals.

3. Strategic Planning for Technology Round Table Discussion

Martin Ringle presented some planning advice and led the accompanying discussion. Dr. Ringle is the Director of Computing and Information Services at Reed College in Portland, Oregon; an active participant in EDUCOM, CAUSE and the NorthWest Academic Computing Consortium; and an information technology consultant to many universities, corporations, government agencies and foundations.

Martin approached the planning process with a discussion of the ten biggest planning mistakes as reported to him in a study of 150 institutions.

1. Failure to tie technology to organizational mission and priorities. Keep the audience and their agenda in mind. Link priorities to the audience. Who will read the document? Who will provide the funding? What are their agendas?

2. Let technology rather than user needs drive the agenda. Be wary of a technology focus and reliance on fads. Plans for five years cannot include technology specifics. Separate strategic plan from operational plan. Use goals that relate to performance objectives rather than to technological tools, for example, use "abilities of learners to do certain tasks and ability to reach populations" rather than "computers in every classroom and a statewide network." Someone regarded as technology-neutral should lead the planning.

3. Seeking "one size fits all" solutions. Uniformity is appropriate at some levels but not at others. Plan solutions appropriate to individual campuses. Recognize and preserve differences between campuses.

4. Paying either too much or too little attention to peers. Find useful models and look to others for ideas.

5. Substituting politics for cost/benefit prioritization. Bring in both internal and external power players as allies. Involve key players in prioritization. Sometimes outside consultants can help in this process.

6. Elevating accounting practices over outcomes. Focus on outcomes. Build in flexibility for mid-course corrections. For example, refer to what data warehousing will accomplish with the funds rather than what an Oracle license costs. Re-conceptualize "slush fund" as "rapid reaction fund."

7. Focus excessively on "due diligence" Articulate vision of where you want to go and how that relates to where the audience wants to go. Explain why this path is good. Make sure the audience can understand the document. Do not let the document be too rigid or too long. Explain how success will be defined and how you will know when you are done. Concentrate on persuasive power not size of argument.

8. Lack of implementation agility. Allow for review and flexibility during implementation, perhaps every six months.

9. Inadequate resource commitment. Be honest about real costs and put it on the record. Do not commit to unfunded projects. If you do not receive funding for the whole program break it into affordable phases.

10. Acts of God. Build in cushions and safety nets.

Martin distributed and discussed a blueprint for strategic planning for technology entitled *Garden Path: Strategic Planning for Technology* with the comment that one can stray from garden paths when appropriate.

- Describe process.
- Establish Strategic Planning Task Force.
- Review institutional objectives.
- Survey constituencies. Include students. What needs changing? Future goals?
- Review trends and peer initiatives.
- Establish "long list" of technology goals.
- Perform feasibility and budget analysis. (matrix: returns and costs, high and low)
- Prioritize technology goals.
- Conduct key group review of priority list. Very important.
- Conduct ITC arbitration.
- Prepare master strategic plan.

- Secure resource commitments.
- Disseminate strategic plan. Use web for broad audience.
- Begin implementation.

4. Year 2000 Preparations

Tom Anderes has asked campus budget officers to provide him with reports on campus Y2K efforts. SCS has set up a web site to connect all campus information: <http://www.scsr.nevada.edu/y2k>.

5. Reminder About Campus Updates on Estate Tax Funding

Tom Anderes needs updates to ITC reports submitted last spring for part of his presentation to state budget officers. Please get them to Van as soon as possible.

6. NevadaNet Proposal for K-12 Networking

Van distributed a draft statement to the Nevada Commission on Educational Technology proposing continuing K-12 use of the NevadaNet backbone with links to every school districts.