AN INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY PLAN
Dominican University
2013-2018
DEAR DOMINICAN COMMUNITY,

No matter what your role is at Dominican, you will have noticed that technology improvements are happening everywhere on campus. That’s exciting because we need these innovations to reach our strategic and academic goals.

As of July 2013, Dominican has its first-ever board-approved and -funded comprehensive technology plan. This plan uses technology to advance our shared priorities, from great teaching and learning to community building and student retention.

It is vital that faculty, staff and students see themselves in the plan and what their individual roles are in making the plan become reality. But even more important, we all must see how the technology plan will improve all areas of the university in the ways that matter most.

We can keep up with our own ambitions—and the competition—as long as we stay focused on our priorities. Our collective goals haven’t changed much since the university’s first IT plan was approved in 2008. But we have not had a corresponding resource plan, which has hindered our progress.

Have we thought of everything? No - but, I believe this plan balances our academic and operational needs. It builds a technology infrastructure that is stable and flexible enough to accommodate the evolving needs of our community, whatever they may prove to be. Implementing this plan will give us a solid technology environment that will allow Dominican University to remain competitive and relevant. The technology plan is real. The commitment is real. With all of us working together, the plan will become reality.

Jill Albin-Hill
VP for Information Technology and Chief Information Officer Dominican University
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

- Highlights: Catching Up, Moving Ahead  2
- Guiding Principles: FEED  3
- Goal 1: Technology for Teaching & Learning  4
  DUable Task Force: Two Key Initiatives  4
- Goal 2: Knowledge Connection  5
- Goal 3: Communication  6
- Goal 4: Solid Foundation  6
- IT Governance at Dominican: University-wide Representation  8
HIGHLIGHTS: CATCHING UP, MOVING AHEAD

The new technology plan allows us to catch up quickly and move forward strategically. Here are some highlights of what the technology plan will allow us to accomplish.

• Return classrooms to a four-year equipment replacement cycle. Establish a timely replacement cycle for faculty/staff equipment, and aggressively update their equipment during the first two years.

• Establish technology dollars for the Academic IT and Administrative IT advisory committees to facilitate extra requests, as a competitive grant process for faculty and staff.

• Target 90 percent enhanced classrooms within three years with planned updates every five years.

• Update our wireless network and strive for 100 percent coverage.

• Enhance the DU mobile application and promote it as the face of a tech-savvy university and the most effective way for our community to stay in touch.

• Update infrastructure, leveraging cloud resources and virtualization, immediately.

• Rework distance-education connectivity options, including video conferencing and webinar hosting capabilities.

• Upgrade the Pharos print management system, including additional release stations, the ability to make copies and color printing.

“Regardless of students’ academic discipline while they’re here and their eventual profession or occupation, they need to have access to real-world technology. Today’s technology is changing so rapidly, they need to be comfortable with the change process, and that’s an important skill in and of itself.”

Charles Stoops
Dean, Graduate School of Social Work
GUIDING PRINCIPLES
FLEXIBLE, EASY, ENHANCED LEARNING, DISTINCTLY DOMINICAN

• Flexible – We need to be ready and able to adapt to new, different or changing requirements as external forces around us change.

• Easy – We want access, usability, and interface to be easy, no matter the system. Easy technologies are used frequently and appropriately, and users are able to do their jobs skillfully and creatively.

• Enhanced Learning – We must stay true to our purpose of teaching and learning, by letting technology enrich each activity. Technology is a tool for learning, not a goal in and of itself.

• Distinctly Dominican – We must maintain the university’s character and culture in everything we do, from creating online courses, to analyzing recruitment data in order to increase student enrollment.

With so much riding on the technology plan, we decided that every improvement must meet all four of our guiding principles. No exceptions. We believe that this commitment will ultimately pay off by helping us retain all that’s good about Dominican while keeping us competitive throughout this decade and beyond.
GOAL 1
TECHNOLOGY FOR TEACHING & LEARNING

Create an active learning ecosystem to support and enable faculty and student activities—in and out of the classroom, face-to-face and online, on campus and globally.

Our largest investment will be in support of teaching and learning. To that end, we are moving to a new, single, Learning Management System, Canvas by Instructure. Canvas provides an array of easy-to-use tools for communication, productivity, student participation, course delivery and curriculum design that will make up the heart of our active learning ecosystem for years to come.

Every undergraduate will develop life skills by experiencing learning in an online format. Graduate programs will leverage the online environment to reach additional students and accelerate completion for others.

To encourage both group learning and a sense of community, all available spaces will be enhanced with collaboration equipment and furniture.

DUABLE TASK FORCE: TWO KEY INITIATIVES

The DUable (Dominican University Advancing Blended Learning Environments) task force has played a vital role in identifying ways Dominican can meet increasing student demand for online and blended learning opportunities without compromising our core teaching values. DUable has created two important initiatives so far.

The first, “learning environment academies,” are intensive, hands-on, and deeply collaborative faculty learning communities focused on redesigning courses and transforming teaching for online and blended environments.

“Integrating technology into the foreign language classroom has significantly impacted our pedagogy. With the node chairs, both students can move about the room, transitioning easily between small group activities and large group discussions. Using classroom laptops and accessing a variety of social media platforms, we are able to connect students with native speakers from around the globe.”

Alexis Howe
Assistant Professor of Spanish
The first academy focused on redesigning courses for blended learning. Ten faculty participants, chosen by application and drawn from GSLIS, RCAS, BSB and SOE, redesigned their courses from the ground up as they prepared to teach them this spring. The second academy, slated for May 2014, will focus on integrating technology for an “enhanced face-to-face” course environment.

The second initiative addresses the question of what technology we need to achieve an “active learning ecosystem.” Classrooms that support active learning require improvements in equipment, furniture and design choices. Collaborative, team-based learning requires flexible classroom space and online tools for groups to “meet” virtually. Technology can help bring the world into the classroom and digitally transport students out into the world.

The number of enhanced classrooms will grow annually until we have achieved at least 90% enhanced with technology.
GOAL 2

KNOWLEDGE CONNECTION

Build systems and structure to collect, store and analyze data effectively to support decision-making and institutional research.

Leverage the investments we’ve already made in systems such as Jenzabar, our student information system. This will allow us to take full advantage of capabilities to automate more operations and incorporate new features. In turn, this will greatly reduce the amount of information stored on paper in administrative offices, and replace many paper procedures with automated and web-based processes across campus.

Collecting information and cobbling it together via spreadsheets is cumbersome. The detailed information that decision-makers need can be hard to get or not even available. We will implement new business intelligence tools making it simpler to aggregate, see, and slice-and-dice the data.

We will improve reporting capability through the development of a data warehouse, paying special attention to making data available that provides a more comprehensive understanding of the professional and personal achievements of alumni.

GOAL 3

COMMUNICATION

Find new ways for people to reach us and stimulate collaboration.

The reality is that we live in an “anytime, anywhere” society. Therefore, we will address cell phone coverage limitations and continue to strengthen our social media presence since that is where our target audience resides online.
Engage dynamic modes of communication that support our ever-changing institutional demographics, including international and special-needs students.

Build the infrastructure to deliver and support information channeled in multiple venues, giving special consideration to the use of mobile devices. We will continue to make improvements to the DU mobile app.

Employ a system to support a new sophisticated recruitment strategy and further leverage retention modeling.

**GOAL 4**

**SOLID FOUNDATION**

Ensure a stable, flexible and secure infrastructure that supports a 24/7 learning ecosystem.

Adhere to all equipment replacement cycles and update software licenses for campus-wide use. This will ensure our ability to provide current versions to the academic community.

Upgrade the network and increase bandwidth so that it has at least 30 percent excess capacity. This is an important part of creating a “seamless” online course environment that delivers the high-quality student experience that marks a Dominican education.

Leverage cloud resources for the opportunity to grow and expand quickly, smoothly and with ease. With information immediately available wherever you are, the cloud offers the flexibility and scalability that in the past was an insurmountable obstacle with our limited on-site resources.

Examine the model for technology training and partner with the Borra Center for Teaching and Learning Excellence to provide ways for members of the Dominican community to continue to improve how they use technology. We will focus training on the optimal use of existing systems and offer opportunities to learn about emerging technologies.

Develop a campus technology accessibility plan that will include website changes to accommodate the needs of our diverse audience, including multiple languages, audio delivery and enlarged text sizes.
IT GOVERNANCE AT DOMINICAN: UNIVERSITY-WIDE REPRESENTATION

Everyone at Dominican has a voice in how campus-wide technology decisions are made. Faculty, staff and students are each represented by their own advisory committee within the information technology leadership structure.

Information technology governance was established at Dominican in 2005 and is the framework that defines how technology policies are established and systems and resources are managed. The University IT Committee is led by President Donna Carroll. It sets priorities, oversees policies and supports the use of information technologies throughout the university.

The University IT Committee relies on the faculty, staff and student advisory committees for guidance in prioritizing, approving and managing technology initiatives that have significant campus impact or require significant resources. The advisory committees welcome input from Dominican community members.

If you’re a faculty member, contact Academic IT:

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If you’re a staff member, contact Administrative IT:

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You may also contact:

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Who we are

The IT Department strives to create and maintain a technology environment that supports Dominican’s strategic direction. We will provide a high-quality infrastructure, along with superior support services to enable our user community to utilize technologies for enhanced teaching, learning and administration.

ONLINE HELP AND INFORMATION

24/7

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