

Office of Information Management – Update

February 5, 2007

This is an update on activities underway in the Office of Information Management (OIM) through January 31, 2007. The update includes progress on OIM's three-phase initial work plan:

1. **Discovery/assessment:** Identify challenges and opportunities (Winter 2006-07)
2. **Organizational design and transition:** Build the future of how we work together (Spring 2007)
3. **Strategic direction road map:** Choose where to invest people, money, and time
 - o Short-term priorities (Spring/Summer 2007)
 - o Long-term priorities (Fall/Winter 2007-08)

1. Discovery/Assessment (Winter 2006/07)

We are continuing to meet with deans, administrators, and computing directors to identify challenges and opportunities for UW information systems (IS) and information management (IM). The initial goal is to define the most critical needs in order to shape the future strategic roadmap for UW IS/IM. We are also moving into the next phase of meetings, which will include vice provosts and vice presidents.

We have met with the following schools/colleges/campuses and other groups:

- December 13: Dentistry, Health Sciences Administration, Nursing, Pharmacy, Public Health, Social Work
- December 20: Architecture, Business, Forest Resources, Information School, Law
- January 17: UW Libraries
- January 19: Arts and Sciences (including divisional deans)
- January 22: Architecture, Engineering, Public Affairs
- January 22: Data Management Users Group, Executive Vice President Management Team
- January 23: Medical Affairs, School of Medicine, Ocean and Fishery Sciences
- February 1: UW Bothell
- February 2: UW Tacoma
- February 5: College of Education

Meetings with vice provosts, vice presidents and other key stakeholder groups:

- February 6: Computer Science and Engineering (Ed Lazowska, Erik Lundberg)
- February 13: Development and Alumni Relations
- February 16: Undergraduate Affairs, Student Life, Minority Affairs
- March 2: Graduate School
- March 8: Academic HR, Global Affairs, Retirement Center, Equal Opportunity
- March 19: Research, Technology Transfer
- April 5: Shared Systems Group
- April 12: Educational Assessment
- TBA: External Affairs
- TBA: Faculty Senate Chair
- TBA: Research Advisory Board

Broad Themes

The following is a summary of broad themes emerging from these meetings. The themes are organized into four categories:

- **Strategy and Policy** (including strategic approaches, policy, and other institutional issues)
- **Information Management** (including data access, data definitions, etc.);
- **Information Systems** (including business transactions and processes)
- **Information Architecture** (the technology infrastructure needed to enable decentralized approaches)

Strategy and Policy

- *We need to get the compliance and utility pieces funded* and “out of the picture” so we can focus on the new and innovative, and on future strategic directions.
 - Base funding needs to include continuous improvements.
- *We need to pursue strategic partnerships, both corporate and higher education,* to identify completely new and creative approaches to information systems and information management.
- *Moving forward will take strong leadership.* There is a sense of immediacy that calls for decisive action.
- *The 80/20 Rule* – There is agreement that most colleges/schools have 80 percent of business processes in common and recognition that there also are local, specialized needs.
 - Currently, there is a great deal of redundant effort in each school that is not an efficient use of resources.
 - If there is significant input into the process and clear benefits, colleges and schools would be OK with a more centralized approach.
 - Any approach must also enable local solutions for specialized needs. The goal is both to enable local solutions for specialized needs and to provide central solutions for shared needs to reduce redundancy.
- *We need to build a culture of trust and transparency* that enables information sharing across the university.
- *There is agreement that the UW will not be distinguished by having premier, top-of-the-line information systems.* We need to invest only in systems that are good enough to support institutional needs.
- *We need to make the right choices and investments.* We need to do enough due diligence to get it right without becoming mired in process and analysis.
- *If we focus on the biggest challenges faced by those closest to the work,* we will identify most of the major IS/IM issues that need to be addressed.
- *We need to address our governance structure as part of this process.* We need more clearly defined roles and responsibilities among the various committees advising on information technology issues.
- *Any approach needs to recognize the unique needs of the Bothell and Tacoma campuses.* UW Bothell and UW Tacoma have needs that are different from the Seattle campus and from each other.

- *We need to leverage best practices* from other higher education institutions, corporations, and internal efforts.
- *Success will come through business process improvements and partnerships!*
 - Leveraging existing staff toward common solutions will lead to greater efficiencies and greater innovation. New resources will likely also be needed.
 - There is a great interest in working together towards common goals and contributing to common solutions.
 - Through collaboration we can effectively leverage resources for innovation!

Information Management

- *We need broader and timelier access to data* to enable both operational and strategic decision making and to serve a range of users.
 - Data: Find it, store it, access it.
 - Ability to track money, students, and people.
 - Ability to explore, manipulate and analyze data at the local level. Units need access to their own data. Access to accurate, real-time data is critical.
- *We need integration across systems and data that spans the entire lifecycle of information on*, for example:
 - Students: Applicants through alumni.
 - Faculty and staff: First hired through their entire UW career, including promotion and professional development.
 - Grants: Pre-award through post-award, with the ability to track proposals by different categories including when submitted, when and how funded – *the ability to track funding is critical!*
- *We need to integrate the multiple ways users interact with our systems and data* so that people can access systems and data through a common interface.

Information Systems

- *Core, central systems (financial, HR/payroll, student, etc.) are not meeting institutional needs.* As a result, a great deal of redundant effort and money is being spent on shadow systems and workarounds.
- *We need to rethink our business processes and look for opportunities to streamline them and make them more efficient.* This includes creating more consistency across business processes and reducing the number of steps and people involved.
 - We need to understand how work is organized and how business processes should change to support future needs.
 - This will take compromises!
- *We need to offer IS/IM expertise and consulting help to units that need it* so that they can make good choices and investments when selecting systems and approaches for their specialized needs.

Information Architecture

- *We need to develop a distributed development environment* to enable access to common, central services while also providing local development capabilities for specialized needs.
 - Build a developer community across the university to include:

- Common services, interfaces, and data definitions
- Best practices and standards for development environments (tools, programming languages, etc.)
- Good architecture

Next Steps

The feedback being gathered from the discovery/assessment phase will be compiled and analyzed in order to inform the Strategic Direction Roadmap. The feedback will also be used to help identify short-term priorities for the next six-to-eighteen months. (See below).

2. Organizational Design and Transition (Spring 2007)

The organizational design phase focuses on developing a structure that will facilitate communication, coordination, and collaboration across the broad community of OIM stakeholders and ensure that work is getting done efficiently and effectively.

The organizational design phase kicked off on January 18 with an all-day retreat to discuss an organizational vision, goals, and structure for the Office of Information Management. Attendees represented a broad spectrum of the IS/IM community, including central computing, the Strategic Initiatives Office, many vice president and vice provost units, and college/school computing directors. A summary of key take-aways is provided below. The retreat group will continue to be used as a sounding board for OIM efforts.

In early February, a working group was formed from a subset of retreat participants. This smaller group is developing more detailed recommendations for an organizational structure and design for OIM.

Retreat Take-Aways

- There is a sense of true community and a desire to work towards common goals. There is tremendous energy, enthusiasm, and commitment to collaborating to build a stronger future.
- There is a strong consensus that business needs should drive information systems and information management (IS/IM).
- The group identified strategic threads that will help inform the strategic roadmap.
- The group agreed we need an organization and architecture that support distributed computing, connect local resources to central systems, and meet local needs in a timely way.
- The group agreed that if we are to move forward effectively, it is critical that we have leadership support from the deans, provost, vice provosts, and vice presidents.

A more detailed list of retreat take-aways can be viewed on the OIM Web site:

http://www.washington.edu/provost/oim/OIM_Retreat.pdf

3. Strategic Direction Roadmap

Short-term Priorities (Spring/Summer 2007)

Feedback from the discovery/assessment meetings is being used to develop a list of short-term priorities that can be acted upon in the next six-to-eighteen months. Other data informing this

process includes information gathered from previous efforts, most notably the IS Futures Task Force, and from the results of the Information Management Advisory Committee (I-MAC) proposal ranking process. An initial cut at a short-term priorities list will be evaluated at the next I-MAC meeting on March 5. I-MAC will then make a budget recommendation to the provost for the FY 07-08 budget cycle.

The newly formed Data Management Committee is gathering input to identify short-term information management priorities. The group, led by Michael Eisenberg, dean emeritus and professor of the Information School, is charged with addressing emerging themes relating to information management. These themes include the need for university-wide standards for data administration, data definitions, broader access to existing data, and tools and structures to support data analysis, data sharing, and data security. Committee charge and membership can be found at: <http://www.washington.edu/provost/oim/committee.pdf>

Long-term Priorities (Fall/Winter 2007)

Feedback from the deans meetings will also be used to inform a long-term strategic roadmap that will define a future direction for UW IS/IM. This roadmap will also serve as a framework the I-MAC can use to prioritize future proposals. Preliminary work on the roadmap has begun and will accelerate in the spring, once the discovery/assessment phase has been completed.