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B. Finance and Asset Management Committee

**Efficiency Report: Leadership Development for Information Technology Leaders Across the UW**

This item is for information only.

In 2012, UW-IT launched the Leadership Development Program in order to fill a pressing need for IT leadership development at the University. The following provides an overview of the program’s genesis and structure.

**BACKGROUND**

**IT leadership is necessary to increase our capacity for change**

Many of the University of Washington’s most important strategic efforts, both current and future, require information technology (IT) in order to be successful. It is therefore crucial that we sustain and grow our IT leadership capabilities and capacity.

Historically, the UW has been supported by IT professionals with a broad and diverse set of skills, within both central and academic departments. In addition to this diverse, discipline-specific expertise, the University needs IT leadership that can effectively collaborate and lead change initiatives across organizational boundaries. Unfortunately, due to budget constraints, UW Information Technology (UW-IT) ceased participating in a leadership development program for higher education IT professionals in 2008. Since then, no formal IT leadership development opportunities were offered until the Leadership Development Program was launched in 2012.

**IT staffing is a challenge in the Puget Sound Region**

The Seattle area is one of the most competitive job markets for IT professionals in the country. According to the 2014-2015 Dice Tech Salary Survey, Seattle has the second highest salaries for technical workers at a national level.
Salaries are high in the Puget Sound Region largely due to strong competition for IT professionals from companies such as Accenture, Amazon, Boeing, Facebook, Deloitte, Microsoft, and Nordstrom. As of February 26, 2015, Amazon had over 5,100 openings in Seattle, and there were more than 5,200 openings for Business Analysts in the city, according to Glassdoor (www.glassdoor.com). Seattle saw the third largest salary growth in the country during Q4 of 2014, Glassdoor reported.

The UW has additional IT staffing challenges

Not only is it difficult to retain IT staff in such a competitive market, UW-IT faces additional challenges. Most notably, over 50 percent of UW-IT employees are eligible to retire within ten years, including the majority of our leadership positions. Compared with the U.S. labor force as a whole, UW-IT has a much higher percent of baby boomers who can retire soon, taking their knowledge and leadership expertise with them.
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Key UW-IT divisions are especially vulnerable to the potential loss of older, experienced IT staff and leaders, as shown on the chart below.

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<th>Division</th>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Number of FTE by Age Range for Four UW-IT Divisions
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In 2011, UW-IT staff responding to an Employee Satisfaction Survey indicated a desire for more development opportunities, a valid concern given cutbacks made to various development programs in 2008.

To summarize, there is a significant need for IT leadership development at the University of Washington for the following reasons:

- Lack of formal leadership development opportunities in UW-IT since 2008
- The need to grow IT leadership capabilities across the UW since many of the UW’s current key strategies require information technology
- The Seattle area is one of the most competitive job markets for IT staff in the country
- Over 50 percent of UW-IT staff are eligible to retire within 10 years, including most leadership positions
- The 2011 UW-IT Employee Satisfaction Survey indicated a desire for more development opportunities

UW-IT’s LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

In response to these challenges, UW-IT launched a Leadership Development Program (LDP) in June 2012.

Program Goals

The LDP program has four key goals:

- Strengthen IT leadership capabilities at all levels
- Improve job satisfaction and staff retention
- Build a pipeline of future leaders
- Expand University-wide professional networks and collaborations

An additional goal was to develop a cost effective and sustainable program, even in times of limited resources.

Program Results

The UW-IT Leadership Development Program has been well-received and successful in meeting its goals. Specific outcomes include:

- 120 IT leaders from 25 different departments at the UW have attended LDP since launch of the program in June 2012
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- All 120 participants are still at the University (a 100% retention rate)
- 23 percent of graduates have been promoted to higher level positions
- 100 percent of participants say that they were satisfied or very satisfied with the program
- 2.5 percent (three people) have chosen to focus on a technical career path instead of a leadership emphasis, after participating in the program (a successful outcome in our opinion)
- The number of UW-IT staff who feel they have opportunities for leadership development has increased by 16 percent since the start of LDP

The LDP program has attracted broad participation from across the University. Aspiring IT leaders from the following UW departments have attended:

Academic Personnel
Atmospheric Sciences
College of Arts & Sciences, Dean’s Office
Computer Science & Engineering
Educational Outreach
Environmental and Forest Sciences
Environmental Health & Safety
Foster School of Business
Graduate School
Office of Research Information Services
Office of Sponsored Programs
Pathology
Psychiatry and Behavior Sciences
Registrar’s Office
Research Finance & Operations
School of Dentistry
School of Law
School of Medicine – Academic Affairs
School of Medicine – IT
School of Nursing
School of Social Work
Surgery
University Advancement
UW Bothell
UW Information Technologies

The LDP program has been successful at growing IT leadership capabilities and capacity across the UW and improving staff morale and retention. All of this has been accomplished for out-of-pocket costs of about $550 per person. This $550 per person cost does not take into account human capital, but does include meeting rooms, food, supplies (e.g. notebooks and handouts given to the participants), UW Professional & Organizational Development (POD) speakers, training for coaches, and licenses for copyrighted materials. The estimated contribution of existing UW-IT staff to run the program is approximately 0.5 FTE.

The bottom line is that this quality leadership program has been offered to IT leaders on campus for a reasonable capital outlay by leveraging the UW CIO’s network of well-respected IT leaders in the Puget Sound region, the expertise in
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UW-IT and on campus, and the affordable, professional knowledge of UW’s POD organization.

Additional Benefits

Since graduating from the UW-IT Leadership Development Program, many participants have contributed their leadership skills and knowledge to significant UW efforts. Examples include: UW Profiles project to develop web-based dashboards of institutional data, service management implementation for IT, server consolidation and cloud deployment, HP/Payroll Modernization project, Enterprise Data Warehouse initiatives, the campus network deployment, and the classroom technology refresh project.

In addition to these contributions by LDP graduates and the other positive outcomes described above, there have been valuable intangible benefits from LDP – collaboration has increased across the organization, relationships between campus IT departments have improved, and there is better cross-organizational cooperation and shared understanding of issues and approaches. The University is retaining high-performing leaders, and potential leaders, and is increasing our capacity for change.

To provide further insight into the benefits of LDP, here are sample comments from a comprehensive, anonymous survey sent to all graduates:

- “LDP had a great impact on me. It profoundly prepared me for developing myself as a good leader. After participating in this program, I strongly feel that I am ready to support and lead my team though changes to best serve the University.”
- “In my 13 years here it was the best (most useful) program I have been a part of. I hope it lives many, many years.”
- “This program allowed me to change perspectives and get immersed in a new learning experience. It helped me build my capabilities and leadership skills.”

Program Design

In order to ensure success in building leadership capabilities and capacity, the Leadership Development Program:

- Takes place over five months so participants have a chance to practice what they learn
- Uses an experiential, interactive approach
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- Includes three parallel tracks: 1) workshops, 2) Community of Practice (CoP) meetings, where smaller groups engage in discussing key leadership challenges, and 3) individual development plans with goals and coaching
- Provides alumni ongoing opportunities to learn and collaborate

Each cohort has 24 participants. After a successful pilot of two cohorts for UW-IT leaders only, the program expanded to include IT leaders from across the University. Since then, half of the participants have been from UW-IT and half from other administrative and academic units. One of the benefits of scaling the program across the UW is that it brings together IT leaders working on cross-campus projects, improving their working relationships and providing a common language and set of approaches for use in collaborative projects. Examples of IT leaders from LDP cohorts working together include: Enterprise Document Management and Grant and Contract Account Automation; Student Information Services and Student Financial Aid; Enterprise Data Warehouse and Research Data; and MyPlan and the Graduate School.

Leadership Development Program Tracks

The first of three tracks in LDP is a classroom-based series of three two-day workshops spread over approximately five months. One of the most engaging parts of these sessions is a series of 30 minute “leadership lessons” presentations.
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by local technology leaders and UW executives. Each of these speakers spends 15 minutes presenting their top three leadership lessons, followed by 15 minutes answering questions. This is the top-rated part of LDP, and it has broad participation from local organizations and University leaders. Speakers have included CIOs and Vice Presidents from Alaska Airlines, BECU, Big Fish Games, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, F5 Networks Inc., Fred Hutchison Cancer Research Center, IBM, Premera Blue Cross, REI, the State of Washington, and Zumiez. University speakers have included Interim Provost Jerry Baldasty, Dean Joel Berg, Interim President Ana Mari Cauce, Vice Provost Mary Lidstrom, Dean Kellye Testy, and Vice Provost and Dean Ed Taylor.

In addition to these invited speakers, the workshops include presentations and activities on topics such as strategic thinking and planning, delivering results, alliance and relationship building, time management for leaders, leadership presence, crucial conversations, effective communications, financial acumen, business acumen, influencing up and across, systems thinking, and leading change.

The second track of LDP involves a series of four Community of Practice (CoP) meetings between workshops. The CoP groups are made up of six LDP participants and one facilitator, which allows for more in-depth discussion and interaction on specific leadership-related topics. They also allow participants to form closer working relationships with a smaller cohort within the larger 24-person group.

In the third track, each participant works one-on-one with a coach to create an individual development plan that includes two goals with action steps. One must be a “personal” goal that is focused on improving a leadership skill, and the second must be an “organizational” goal that practices leadership skills, while directly benefiting the organization. Each participant is supported by their one-on-one coach during the development and implementation of their goals.

Future Plans

The sixth UW-IT Leadership Development Program cohort will launch in October 2015, with half of the participants from UW-IT and half from other campus departments. As with earlier cohorts, applicants must agree to participate fully in all aspects of the program, demonstrate interest in leadership, and have the recommendation and support of their direct supervisor.
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Additionally, we will continue to keep LDP graduates connected with semiannual meetings and a weekly leadership blog, and will seek opportunities for graduates to take leadership positions in key initiatives and collaborations.

Since LDP is just one part of a larger IT organizational efficiency effort, we will also continue other UW-IT initiatives to improve IT staff recruiting, professional development, and performance management.
