THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY ADVISORY COMMITTEE
2009-2010
SCHOOL/COLLEGE/ADMINISTRATIVE UNIT VISION PLAN

Best Practices *(identify any "best practices" that have significantly improved IT programs, infrastructure, operations, cost efficiencies, etc. since the last Vision Plan)*

School of Architecture

Best Practices

The Boutique Model

We are a small School with specialized needs in many areas. Our IT strategy for adapting to this condition is to find ways to leverage the generalizable IT resources and services provided by ITS and others for our 'vanilla' computational support and service needs, while focusing the energy of our IT organization on the specialized and unique 'boutique' needs of our user community.

Working Groups Model for Community Participation

Our prior practice of having a standing IT committee was not working well and the committee was disbanded last year. We have replaced this with a multiplicity of working groups who are convened on the basis of interest in particular topics or areas. We are finding these working groups more focused and engaged and believe that they will have a positive influence on the effectiveness of our IT strategic and vision planning.

Graduate Student Support and Learning

By hiring qualified graduate students from our own programs we create a win-win situation. First, we are able to increase our overall funding offered to graduate students, including the use of these position to recruit highly sought applicants. Second, we are able to directly educate these graduate students with real-world knowledge and skills related both to information technology and to their fields of study. Finally, we are able to provide our student users with a high level of direct, knowledgeable hands-on service, training, and support for their academic computing needs.

School of Business

Best Practices

Outsourcing: The pace with which new services are being introduced over the internet, and the breadth and quality of those services, is staggering. Software-as-a-service (SaaS) offers consumers (our faculty, students, and staff) both simple and sophisticated services that are suitable for their needs, reliable, and scalable – all at little to no cost. This trend presents a tremendous opportunity for consumers of IT services, who are now able to do things they've never been able to do before. Whatever it is they want, they can do it easily, generally reliably, and probably safely - without having to rely on their local IT providers. It also presents an opportunity for service providers which can find creative ways to leverage these services to replace or augment our own infrastructure or services. This can be done either by adopting hosted services ourselves, or by identifying compatible, or perhaps best-of-breed, services for our customers and helping them take advantage of them. The recent subscription to Digital Measures by the Provost's Office offers a case in point. At McCombs we have had success with Salesforce.com for CRM and Symplicity for our vital career services programs.

A challenge for this campus may be overcoming our long-standing tradition of building vs. buying, and a culture in IT that is hostile to the idea of using the work of others. This is paired with a risk-management paradigm which seems biased towards having all aspects of a service which may be used in the conduct of University business kept within its own borders. This is a challenge to institutional IT providers, both large and small, which cannot possibly keep up with the rising tide of services being offered in the cloud. We are in no position to "out-Google" Google, but that is increasingly the service expectation by which we will be compared.

College of Communication

Best Practices

The College has invested heavily in support of technology. Investments include help request tracking software, desktop and security management systems, server and storage virtualization infrastructure, resource management and scheduling software and advanced video recording and playback systems. We also maintain classroom media control systems common with much of the campus. We are leveraging the University's purchase of the Web Content Management system to improve our overall web capabilities. At every opportunity, we seek a balance between innovation and the benefits obtained through standardized solutions and practices.

We use the Web Help Desk (http://www.webhelpdesk.com/) request tracking system to keep track of patron requests for support, and to provide a two-way communication link to keep all parties abreast of any activity related to their request. Similarly, we use an online system (http://www.onshored.com/) to keep track of equipment checkout and media library requests. Our Help Desk is located in the CMA building, improving our providing fast and easy patron access. These practices improve efficiency and improve patron experiences.

We deploy a suite of software solutions to help protect University computing resources. Among these are antivirus suites, firewall management systems and Virtual Private Network (VPN) solutions provided through University site licenses (http://www.utexas.edu/its/sds/products/antivirus.html). We also utilize systems to improve the deployment of new, repaired or repurposed computers (Ghost, NetInstall, etc.). We have also led the charge to deploy the LANDesk desktop management solution (http://landesk.com/Products/LDMS/), which provides us with the ability to remotely deploy complete operating systems, individual software packages and security patches. It also provides excellent asset reporting capabilities, so we can determine just exactly what is out there and target the oldest or least capable systems for replacement. Finally, it provides remote control capabilities that let us provide over-the-phone support for our users, saving valuable time and effort. As an example, we can now deploy a lab of twenty computers in under fifteen minutes, down from 3 hours using the previous method.

We continue to use our always-ready video recording and streaming systems in classrooms. We have eight rooms with a video camera trained on the instructor or student presenter, microphones covering the entire room and audio and video connections to the media presentation system in the room. With this, we can record both the interactions of presenters and audiences and whatever they are presenting via the projector and audio system in the room. This is meant to facilitate both the regular and ad hoc capture of classroom activities, from lectures to guest presentations to student presentations. An innovative extension of this project is the increasing use of digital video capturing for the Speech and Hearing Clinic. Hundreds of hours of clinical sessions are recorded, while new ideas for using the system in our research labs are being explored.

We use the University's Web Content Management System (https://webcms.utexas.edu/cms/). This system allows us to implement modern web design and development practices, but keep content providers in control of their content. The WebCMS allows those who care most about what is found on our web sites to contribute, edit and update content, without the need for technical staff involvement. This vastly improves the time-to-publish, which results in more timely and professional updates to web content.

We have incorporated touch-screen control systems in every College and General Purpose classroom, as well as a number of departmental and College conference

rooms (http://communication.utexas.edu/technology/facilities/classrooms/consoles/). This brings them into very close alignment with the standard classroom consoles found throughout the campus, as they were co-developed with the College of Liberal Arts staff and their contract designers. Several rooms also have furniture with built-in network and power connections, to further improve the mobile computing experience.

We continue our collaborative effort with the College of Fine Arts (COFA) to share information system infrastructure. Over the last two years, we have deployed a VMware server virtualization and storage system in order to rationalize our increasing server deployments. While we used to maintain over thirty physical servers, we now maintain fewer than ten, but these provide many dozen distinct "virtual" servers, deployed to meet the various needs of the College. COFA needed to build a similar subset of capabilities, but rather than building their own solution, they partnered with us to increase the combined capacity. Our system administrator provides support for the infrastructure, while COFA staff manage their own virtual resources. By collaborating, we save the considerable initial expense of deploying multiple base infrastructures. COFA's needs are met by merely adding to the existing system, at a much reduced capital and maintenance cost.

This virtual server and storage solution supports classroom activities primarily. However, this system allows us to use excess capacity to provide secure, highly available storage to College instructors, researchers and administrators. This is largely an effort to meet the increasing demands to secure data and meet University and System's information security policies (http://www.utexas.edu/its/policies/). We encourage patrons to store sensitive data on our system, rather than on their own desktop or laptop computers. This allows us to keep a closer watch on such data, as well as provide data replication capability for disaster recovery purposes. We collaborated with the College of Engineering by sharing space within our respective datacenters in order to locate redundant storage and server systems. Data is therefore redundant across facilities. In this way, any loss of utility within either facility can be recovered quickly and reliably.

Finally, we have a regular system for maintaining the state of IT infrastructure within the College. This includes the funding model described above, as well as a disciplined approach to targeting those areas in greatest need of refresh. For example, we license standard software packages that support activities across our departments at a cost substantially less than if the departments were to purchase them separately. Working with the departments, we are able to appropriately fund IT while maintaining a largely static budget.

DIIA

Best Practices

DIIA's services and resources support best practices by modeling the following:

- streamline existing processes,
- facilitate better communication and collaboration between faculty and students,
- train faculty in the effective use of technologies for their classrooms,
- engage faculty to utilize more media and resources in their teaching to better impact student learning,
- research, evaluate, and implement emerging technologies,
- disseminate research findings,
- provide ongoing assessments for instruction and programs,
- utilize centrally supported resources to ensure scalability, security, and support for services, and
- collaborate and work with other colleges, schools, and units to best support the University.

College of Education

Best Practices

The College has implemented several "best practices" in recent years. Those with the greatest impact are listed below, with fuller descriptions in Appendix 2.

IDEA Studio

The IDEA Studio in the Learning Technology Center provides technology integration support to College of Education faculty.

Vision Awards

The Vision Awards program supports faculty proposals for technology-based projects that enhance their teaching and have the potential to improve instruction throughout the College.

Trend Toward Laptop and Wireless Use

The move toward the use of laptops and wireless networking provides greater access to technology, promotes collaboration, and lowers costs.

Content Management System for College Web Sites

The College Web sites are programmed with a Content Management System that provides a structured format and allows easier maintenance.

College of Engineering

Best Practices

- Virtual Desktop deployment has come of age

    - A student can login to the Virtual Learning Resource Center with their EID via a web-browser and have a CPU custom provisioned with the software they need within 90-seconds.
        - This environment is cost-effective and easily scalable to meet a broad-spectrum of campus needs.

- Streaming Operating Systems and Applications to conventional computer classrooms
    - Technologies have offered us the opportunity to reinvent our student lab implementations providing cost-savings and flexibility for rapid CPU imaging and software deployment.

- Interactive classroom annotation and Tablet PCs
    - Leveraging DIIA insights, this initiative continues to gain gradual traction as it brings interactive annotation into the classroom between faculty and students, leveraging the increasing, yet gradual, popularity of Tablet PCs.

- Generation 5 Classroom Multimedia Teaching Podiums with OnTouch intercom
    - Our "Robo-Podiums" are height adjustable, movable and reduce barriers between students and faculty. If any problems do arise, the OnTouch intercom systems beckons help with the touch of a button – Service Desk personnel can then assist with remote controls for the room or field operatives can be rapidly dispatched as needed.

College of Fine Arts

Best Practices

Help Desk partnership w/ITS

Given the relatively small size of Fine Arts, we are always interested in collaborating with other colleges and units on campus to extend our resources and play to our core strengths. Our "Help Desk" operation is a case in point. Several years ago, we explored the possibility of combining our effort with that of the ITS Help Desk. Because of the apparent complimentary strengths, and the fact that a combination effort would provide much better service to College faculty and staff, the arrangement made sense.

With 2.5 "Full Time Equivalents" for desktop support, it was difficult to both answer a trouble line and visit users to install, configure and support desktop computers and software. Conversely, the ITS Help Desk had no capacity to visit users, but had an extensive and effective phone effort. We set the Fine Arts Help Desk up as an "expert group" and redirected all Fine Arts support calls to the ITS operation. Fine Arts faculty and staff were instructed to call the "new reserved Fine Arts Help Desk".

The special number presented calls to the same body of ITS consultants used by the rest of campus, while facilitating the tracking of Fine Arts calls. If the problem persisted after the normal "triage" with the ITS consultant, the "trouble ticket" was forwarded through a custom website to the Fine Arts "expert group" for an on-site follow up.

Over the last 6-7 years the system has worked well. Although statistics are not yet complete to confirm this, we suspect that the volume of direct calls to our local staff has dropped by about 70% (most problems can be solved over the phone) and our consultants can spend more time with the problems that require on-site assistance. With the ongoing implementation of "Remedy" (a customizable software package often used for Help Desk trouble ticket routing), the system promises to be even more effective.

DASE partnership w/Liberal Arts

Similar to the Help Desk collaboration, five years ago we engaged in a project that has become known as the Liberal Arts Digital Archive Services (DASE). A joint effort of Liberal Arts, Fine Arts, and General Libraries, this project consists of building a set of applications for the collection, cataloging, and serving of digital media collections from all over The University. The project gives faculty and students the ability to search diverse collections of hundreds of thousands of images, videos, audio files, and other media. Users are able to download files or organize them into online collections accessible from within DASE. A special feature gives faculty the ability to quickly create online slide shows and share them with students either online or projected in class. A two-screen option in the slideshow feature allows faculty teaching in dual screen auditoriums to organize and format dual screen shows and present different slides on each screen.

DASE is now in production and heavily used. "Media Browser", the search, browse and display portion of DASE, allows users to search, organize personal collections, and create slideshows. "Collection Builder", the collection maintenance tool, allows collection managers to upload images, organize catalog records, and input metadata. These applications have constantly expanding sets of functionality and work primarily with digital images at present, although some video and sound files are contained within the system. In order to address intellectual property issues, access is gained by using an EID login.

Virtual Server and Storage Project with College of Communication

Recent concerns regarding data security and the prospect of more restrictive regulation make additional efforts to protect data advisable. Complicating factors like the increasing size of storage devices in desktop systems, the more frequent use of large media, and the impracticality of backing up data for hundreds of machines to large, network mounted tape drives suggest that new strategies are

required. With the recent purchase of a large Storage Area Network (SAN) by the College of Communication, one such new strategy has become available.

Earlier, Fine Arts staff investigated various network attached storage options for our users, but the modest funding available precluded all but a few, sort-term solutions. Conversations in the Tech Deans group revealed a collaboration opportunity with the College of Communication in their project, with the additional possibility of reducing the number of physical servers we manage. To initiate the collaboration, Fine Arts contributed the funding necessary for additional virtual server licenses and hardware capacity needed to support our users. IT staff then developed scripts that leverage the campus ID management and Active Directory systems (provided by ITS) and the College of Communication Storage Area Network. Taken together, we anticipate better desktop management and a substantial amount of secure, convenient storage for each faculty and staff member.

We continue to deploy a system where each Fine Arts faculty and staff member can have up to 2 Gigabytes of managed storage, available both on and off campus and accessible through the user's EID. Additionally, current physical servers (many running instances of Filemaker Server) are being converted to virtual machines, leveraging the same installation to provide more reliable service while reducing the amount of staff time needed to manage those servers. This project could ultimately be scaled up to meet the needs of a larger part of campus.

Jackson School of Geosciences

Best Practices

We have implemented the use of Citrix Provisioning Server infrastructure which allows: 1) use of the same computers to run both PC and Linux operating systems; 2) our teaching classrooms and student labs to have the same images so that students can do assignments and projects in the lab at all hours rather than have to schedule around classes in the lecture room; 3) more efficient use of IT staff time in that to update software, etc., they only need to change one computer and it is propagated to all; which in turn provides a better end-user experience because all of the computers are uniform with up to date software.

We have changed to using a print quota server hosted on a virtual server from ITS for all student printing which allows us to regulate the amount of color and black-and-white prints per student and eliminates significant waste.

We have moved all our students over to file storage through ITS which has many advantages. Students (and faculty) can connect through Web and see their data anywhere, not just in the building. Not only can they can get to data easier, when they log on, they can use it as a terminal server and have access to communal ITS software including Microsoft office software, Mat Lab, etc. All the data is backed up externally, and we need fewer servers overall so that we use less space and require less staff maintenance.

We are in the process of migrating to the Austin domain. This allows a single logon for users and should help make us more efficient. We have moved administrative and committee files and data to a SharePoint site so that all sensitive data is protected but easily accessible by appropriate staff and faculty.

Graduate School

Best Practices

With SIS in charge of programming and development, the Electronic Access to Student Information "EASI" graduate student services system brought all related systems and information together. The impact across campus and the amount of time saved by Graduate School, Admissions staff, graduate coordinators, advisers, and students have been phenomenal. Improving communication between advisers and students and allowing for customized degree plans, a record of all communication and status checks to be available to both parties at any time is just one example of what is being accomplished under the EASI umbrella. The most recent additions to EASI are the program of work submission system and the initial phase of the recruiting portal.

The EASI application framework was intended to be re-usable and table-driven to allow for faster development time for new applications related to student information and services, using consistent interface, navigation and security implementation. Many processes relied on the same student information, so EASI was developed with the concept of reusable TABS. Future enhancements will result in less duplication of code and the result is that new services will combine the piece of functionality unique to them with existing security and a familiar look and feel. EASI now consists of over 35 services.

Harry Ransom Center

Best Practices

In 2008 the Ransom Center upgraded its primary IT staff position engaged in classroom IT support from a half-time Computer Programmer/Services Assistant to a full-time Computer Programmer, with expanded responsibility for providing all aspects of classroom support and digitization of materials for classroom instruction and student research, and for supervising student staff in these services.

The Ransom Center's IT group continues to apply and refine a variety of practices to ensure quality service with insufficient staffing, including:

- Cross training of all technical activities to ensure constant coverage of all areas
- Standardization of hardware, software, and networking to make technical support less cumbersome
- Established workflows to provide continuity of activity and production
- Use of student workers in non-professional activities saves significantly in funding

School of Information

Best Practices

Since the last Vision Plan, the School of Information has implemented the following practices that may be of interest to other academic IT programs. IT Services staff (including full-time and student support staff) have:

- Set up open source server / service monitoring software that allows for near real-time notification of outages, availability statistics, and other perfomance tracking
- Rebudgeted IT employee wages so that a greater percentage of salary comes from non-ITAC accounts
- Implemented VMWare Fusion on desktop Macs to provide dual-platform (Mac and Windows) workstations in our lab and computer classroom settings

School of Law

Best Practices

- Innovative implementation of SharePoint for Journals and Organizations radically improved workflow and collaboration for our students. Saves time, enhances the student experience and improves accessibility. Also saves significant funds by reducing number of supported computers.
- Apple and Dell Laptop initiatives extend significant cost savings to student laptop users.
- Permanent technology installations in classrooms using less expensive and less complicated equipment that better fit Law School instructional technology needs.
- Continuing use of faculty-staff directory to improve on-line systems and serves as a centralized authorization system.
- Centralized student communication system students to send out emails to fellow interested students, post announcements on a weekly email update sent to all students, and list announcements on a web portal and new digital signage system. Announcements must be approved by Student Affairs Office.
- Use of video-conferencing facilities and mobile unit to allow long-distance collaborative learning, such as the class taught simultaneously in Mexico and Austin.
- Peer security and code evaluation on all current systems invaluable.
- Enhancements/upgrades for systems 5+ years or older to bring them up to current standards and OWASP standards
- Documentation on all desktop and administrative databases to meet the current BPM requirements.

College of Liberal Arts

Best Practices

Planning New Building Technology

Over the past few years, LAITS technical staff have been involved in every stage of capital project planning, design, and construction. This includes reviewing design documents, attending weekly project meetings, and acting as the A/V subcontractor. This effort has saved the University hundreds of thousands of dollars in external management on a number of projects. On campus level renovation projects, LAITS has also served as the A/V consultant, providing designs, drawings, and specifications to the architects and contractors. LAITS staff will now provide this additional service to capital projects as well. Our designers will serve as the A/V consultants for the planned 200,000 sq. ft. Liberal Arts Building to be built on the East Mall. Formally providing the service will save this $100 million project several tens of thousands of dollars up front and several hundred thousand dollars by opening day. It also ensures that we will receive standardized systems that we can use and support.

Student Design Teams

Our Student Technology Assistant (STA) program has achieved a new level of productivity with the formation of student design teams. Graphic design and art production is the most labor-intensive part of most large Liberal Arts web projects. We have addressed this by forming teams of 6 to 8 art and design students to work on large projects. Students work under a staff art director who ensures that the students' work has consistency and a common aesthetic feel. The system has been very successful and students have reported that the discipline of working in directed teams has made a positive contribution to their art and design skills. In 2008, we put this system to the test when we set out to completely redesign the College website and all 70 Liberal Arts department and center administrative websites. A single professional staff designer was asked to use 40% of her work time over 12 months to design 70 websites, each with original art — a seemingly impossible task. Using a large student design team, our designer was able to focus on meeting with client departments, developing concepts, and directing progress, while students created all of the art and most of the design. The results have been spectacular, most designs are complete, and all will be ready for the first release in August 2009.

UT Libraries

Best Practices

Commercial Web-based Resources

Our licensed electronic information includes approximately 490 online databases and 30,000 electronic journals. We subscribe to these resources remotely and our students access them over the web on the computers in our libraries and on their own computers

through wired and wireless networks. Users off-campus use our proxy servers so that they can access these information resources in their apartments and homes—in truth, wherever they can connect to the web with their laptops—just as if they were in a library.

In addition, we serve, host, or link to many other electronic resources including electronic books, electronic theses and dissertations, music, art, data sets and several other resources. Indeed, one of our goals is to purchase information in electronic format in preference to paper and other traditional formats. It is necessary to have usable web pages, servers, networks, and other pieces of infrastructure so that students can best avail themselves of these resources. Spending millions of dollars on electronic resources but not providing adequate infrastructure to the UT community to use those resources would be a vast waste of resources. ITAC funds help support this effort for students.

Desktop Computer Hardware/Software
The UT Libraries provides over 1,000 networked devices in support of student research and instruction through its thirteen branches including several hundred which are directly used by students in the Electronic Classrooms and Reference areas in the Perry-Castañeda Library, the scince libraries, and the Art, Architecture and Classics Libraries. These computers allow students to access the library owned and licensed electronic resources from within the library where they have access to the print collection and the reference staff. This is very valuable to the students since the librarians can help students evaluate the quality of information from an increasingly disparate set of materials.

Laptop Checkout
With a valid UT ID students may check out laptops from Perry-Castañeda Library and the Fine Arts Library. Although we non longer have funds for purchasing new computers in our laptop checkout program, we have temporarily been using older laptops which would otherwise be surplussed

Ethernet Connections
Ethernet laptop connections are available in the Perry-Castañeda Library and the Engineering Library.

Wireless Access
UTNet wireless access is available to students, faculty, and staff throughout the Chemistry Library, Classics Library, Engineering Library, Fine Arts Library, Physics Mathematics Astronomy Library, Public Affairs Library and the Tarlton Law Library; and in selected areas of the Architecture and Planning Library, Collections Deposit Library, Fine Arts Library, Geology Library, Life Science Library, Perry-Castañeda Library, and the Harry Ransom Center.

Ask a Librarian
Online help is provided through the Libraries website and provides a virtual help desk for students doing research. “Ask a Librarian” not only provides a way for students to connect with librarians through email, chat, or telephone, but also offers an FAQ and a way to make an appointment with a subject specialist for more advanced, face-to-face research assistance.

Electronic Reserves
Our electronic reserves program provides students with materials faculty members place on reserve for their classes. Again, providing reserves electronically enables students to use the materials when and where they wish without having to wait in line, without having to check them out, and without having to return them in two hours or face fines. And, unlike traditional reserves, multiple students can use one resource simultaneously. The program handles rights management issues, interacts with Blackboard, and enables faculty to basically make their course materials available online over the web with its attendant benefits for students.

Training and Instruction
The Libraries provides 149 computers in seven training rooms for hands-on instruction in the use of online resources. Classes taught are most often offered in conjunction with students' assignments in their academic classes. Online tutorials are available as well so that students can take advantage of instruction sessions at the time and place of need. And UT Libraries works with faculty and TAs to integrate learning modules and information resources (including electronic reserves) into Blackboard portals for classes, securely password protected for members of the class.

College of Natural Sciences

Best Practices

In addition to maintaining its existing facilities, the College of Natural Sciences uses ITAC funds to support innovative uses of information technology in its instructional programs. The college has leapfrogged traditional Podcasting and provided its students with recorded lectures that include multiple video windows in addition to audio. Students can now watch a recording of their instructor working a math or science problem on a document camera while listening to the explanation. Web resource: Lectures on Demand

Technology is enriching the experience of students in science labs. Cameras attached to microscopes allow the instructor to project the image from any microscope onto the projection screen for viewing and discussion by the entire class. Scientific equipment now interfaces directly with computers, so students in labs can focus on learning instead of transcribing and graphing data.

Natural Sciences leads the university in the use of student response systems, which allow faculty to ask students questions during class to identify misunderstandings or miscommunications. Every general purpose classroom is equipped with a radio frequency student response system from eInstruction.

Information technology provided with ITAC funds plays an important part in several innovative programs in our college, including the Freshman Research Initiative, UTeach, and the Division of Statistics and Scientific Computation.

School of Pharmacy

Best Practices

This year we installed Murantz digital recorders in two of the General Purpose classrooms (PHR 2.108 and 2.210) in order to streamline the process of capturing podcast data. These units utilize our current audio system and are accessible by IP. There is no offline processing of the captured files, and it requires minimal effort from the professor or LRC staff. The professor starts and stops the recording, and the staff upload the file to Blackboard. Next fall, we intend to train the class' TAs to upload the files for their instructors.

The College of Pharmacy faculty continues to expand their use of Turning Point (TP), a classroom response system, across multiple campuses. The LRC installed TP receivers in the remote site classrooms' computer (San Antonio, UTEP and UTPA) to allow full student participation. Using remote polling software that dials in over IP to the instructor's computer, all responses are collected as if the students were located in Austin. The remote polling software is currently available for the PC only.

LBJ School of Public Affairs

Best Practices

Because of the renovation, we are leaving our building for three months during AY2008/2009. We are using this opportunity to retire our locally housed and managed fileserver and will instead be moving shared file storage to an Austin disk bulk share. This reduces our management overhead and reduces our risk and improves our security with regard to category I data storage.

School of Nursing

Best Practices

All SON printers are now on a private network for increased security.

Work continues on bringing the SON into compliance with UTS 165. Work has been completed UT's on ISORA annual risk assessment survey. The School's security profile of actual reported security incidents remained at an "A" rating (i.e., many fewer incidents than UT average).

We continue to expand our program of restricting administrative permissions on workstation logon accounts and security awareness for all users.

Use of Spamcaster anti-spam software on the mail server has been reinstated. This is in addition to our ongoing use of the Barracuda anti-spam filter. We have upgraded

the Barracuda's memory to handle bulkier firmware and increased traffic. Performance is now satisfactory.

Virtually all SON PC workstations are running fully patched Windows XP and Microsoft office 2007. We have no plans to move to Windows Vista on a large scale, but are accepting Vista on some new purchases. We are currently acquiring RAM upgrades and evaluating new Apple computer purchases as needed to bring all SON Apple workstations up to MacOS X 10.5 (Leopard) and Microsoft Office 2008.

School of Social Work

Best Practices

The School has implemented several 'best practices" in recent years. Below are four with the greatest impact.

Service Contracts

We contract with LAITS to provide classroom support for consoles. They operate their help line for faculty and furnish personnel for daily pre-class checks of the console equipment. We pay them an annual fee for the service.

Wireless

The implementation of wireless has improved student access while reducing overall costs. We deliver full access throughout the building. In the future, as more students own laptops, we hope to reduce our need for new wiring, reduce support and maintenance of joint use workstations, and cut back on lifecycle replacement of workstations.

Support with GA's

The School is at a disadvantage by not being able to provide annual funding for increased staff support. Our ITAC allocation has not been sufficient to hire additional staff nor support the recurring cost of permanent positions. With increased use of technology in the classrooms, security issues, and demand for Web materials our staff resources are exhausted with day-to-day support and administration. The School has two full-time professional technical staff responsible for all network administration, Web resources, training, technical support , IT classrooms, the LRC computer lab, student support, and faculty IT projects related to curriculum development. The School strongly supports the use of GA's to fill gaps in staff support. GA's have been used to provide student support and coverage in the LRC. We offer these positions as a financial assistance incentives in recruiting new students. Students with GA positions benefit greatly from both the applied learning environment and the financial assistance.

Utilization of University Resources

As a small professional School we recognize the significant advantage we gain by working in partnership with other departments, schools, and programs on campus. For

example, we contract with LAITS for daily checks of our classroom consoles, ITS for print services in our student lab, and the Business School for consultation and setup for our computer classroom and student lab workstations. We use the ITS helpdesk for most first response faculty and staff support. Faculty have developed materials with DIIA consulting and Fast-Tex programs. These partnerships and University-wide support initiatives significantly reduce our operating costs and greatly enhance the pool of shared knowledge utilized by the entire University.