MESSAGE BOARD COMMENTS

Information Technology - Posted at 11:43 on 10/14/04
Last night in the last 2004 presidential debate, the president stated that full integration of information technology with health care will reduce costs by 20%. Are similar savings available within higher education? Probably not. Where on campus is there an environment for employee-recommended innovations, the MIS request? The CIO states that he doesn't have enough resources to handle the current level of requests. How can the university hope to: Establish processes for evaluating and integrating emerging technologies?

HINT: Catch a ride on the Cluetrain.

Focus 2010 mtg - Posted at 05:46 on 10/20/04
After attending the first session of Focus 2010 yesterday, it reaffirmed my belief in diversity of opinion in the university environment. I thought ideas were expressed honestly and outwardly. I thought the chancellor expressed his thoughts honestly and to the point. If an individual can't express their thoughts openly without fear of reprisal, then what's the point?

Focus 2010 mtg - Posted at 09:40 on 12/8/04
No "fear of reprisal" isn't universally felt on this campus. A fear of reprisal will exist as long as there are single year contracts for which no ancillary supportive structure is in place and actively employed by administration.

Stout Technology Advantage - Posted at 14:41 on 10/28/04
I found a definition over here:

Stout Technology Advantage

- All services available on-line
- New public relations and marketing effort
- Use technology as a change agent

Stout Technology Advantage - Posted at 05:49 on 11/1/04
Technology as a change agent is only a tool or medium, the real change agents are people with clear communication, shared values and goals, the ability to take risk, the knowledge to use the technology, and commitment, resolve, and energy for the long haul.

Stout Technology Advantage - Posted at 14:56 on 11/1/04
Yeah, most people agree that the technology is the easy part. The hard part about engineering change is getting the people to go along with it. And that's UW-Stout's real advantage: People are so open to change!

Here are some other priorities related to the Stout Technology Advantage:

1. Maintain and grow present technology programs, and establish new appropriately accredited programs and certificates in science, technology and engineering.
2. Leverage Stout Technology Advantage in economic development and marketing activities.
3. Create a customer-focused environment where a majority of university business functions are processed electronically, adding value, efficiency, and new markets where appropriate, while continuing to embrace the core mission as a learning community.

Stout Technology Advantage - Posted at 11:48 on 11/5/04
Today my office's network was down. Is the state-of-the-art (five year old) network in need of replacement or just upgrade?

Stout Technology Advantage - Posted at 06:04 on 11/9/04
Sorry for the inconvenience. The network is made up of individual components all working together to give the user access to the resources they need. Components will fail as in any product. We try to get people back on line as soon as possible. If you were in admin last Friday we had such an occurrence. There have been upgrades to the network. I'm sure there will be upgrades in the future. Replacing the existing campus network would be a very costly venture and in my opinion inappropriate. Again, sorry for you inconvenience.

Stout Technology Advantage - Posted at 12:06 on 11/12/04
I'll try to lower my expectations.

Stout Technology Advantage - Posted at 09:29 on 12/8/04
I hear a lot about this, but haven't seen evidence of a clearly written, universally accepted definition. The first message on this page indicates a definition exists somewhere but is it really clear? Universally understood and accepted? What does "all services available on-line" mean? That we provide all our courses on-line? Or that all of our processes are on-line? Does the statement apply to "customers" outside of the system? Or to those inside the system? How are we using technology to market programs and for public relations purposes? Right now, I think we're way behind in that arena. Technology is a tool and this campus should be a leader in applying it in both the instructional and administrative arenas. However, we need to know our limitations -- we'll never compete with University of Phoenix; we simply don't have the resources and we're already way behind the curve. We need to find our niche based on the history strengths of the institution. Technology is not a

panacea. Let's focus on what we can do REALLY well.

Stout Technology Advantage - Posted at 05:37 on 12/17/04
I read an article yesterday that 60% of the high schools in Wisconsin have declining enrollments. This not only causes problems at the K12 level but could be a problem for Higher Ed down the road. Stout is not only competing with Univ. of Phoenix type schools but their neighboring schools in the system. The niche that Stout could play in the future is the ability to offer quality programs/courses in a timely manner. I would strongly suggest not to underestimate the collaboration with the technical colleges. We could be the "goo" or glue that completes a program at the technical college level or even the private business level. We need to create a model or system internally that can react to the market needs. There will be a strong need for continuing education by people currently in the workforce. Technology will be a tool, but the strength will be our people working together at all levels.

Responsible persons - Posted at 18:05 on 11/3/04
All the university priorities include a column to list who is responsible for part of each action plan. Many of the priorities involve academic programs, which will entail labeling program directors as responsible. If the labeling ends there, the priorities will fall short. Program directors are charged with "coordinating" the program activities of faculty members, yet no faculty members report to program directors, nor is there a mechanism for program directors to evaluate the work and contributions of faculty members. Such a set-up leaves a gaping hole for the work of action plans to fall through. As the job descriptions for program directors and department chairs are being revised, the job description for faculty members needs to be revised in turn, so that it makes clear that faculty members are responsible for the action plans involving programs. Similarly, faculty members need to be listed in the "Responsible" column under each university priority. Direct reporting and evaluation lines need to run from faculty members to program directors. A recent year's university priority was recruiting faculty members to administrative positions. Such a priority arose because of the dismal response by the faculty to administrative openings. Recruiting program directors is an especially onerous task, because potential recruits among the faculty see how much responsibility program directors are given without corresponding faculty support and how many hours they thus work beyond the norm because of this same lack of faculty involvement. None of the action plans involving programs can be considered fully achievable if only the 32 undergraduate directors and 17 graduate directors are the ones actually doing the work of programs, while most of the 284 members of the faculty pull less than their share of the programs' weight.

Responsible persons - Posted at 05:05 on 11/5/04
Do you suggest a campus model within the colleges? Do you see a shared value in these action plans or do you suggest an alternative? What I hear is that

many faculty don't have the time for additional activity outside the classroom, one person stated that part of their job as faculty is research and time is a factor as you related to in the program director's function.

Responsible persons - Posted at 18:12 on 11/8/04
I'm not sure if I'm decoding some of the jargon phrases correctly. By "campus model within colleges," do you mean having all four colleges follow the same model? Or having each college experiment with new models? Also, I'm not sure what's meant by "a shared value in these actions plans." I'm suggesting that many of the action plans share a problem, and I'm suggesting a solution-- an alternative to what's often listed under the responsible column, not an alternative to the action plans. The solution is to list not only program directors as responsible but also the faculty members whom the program directors' job description says they are to coordinate. To guarantee that the program directors have the effort of faculty members to coordinate, there needs to be a reporting mechanism. One way to establish a reporting mechanism is for program directors to have a role in annual evaluations. They should write a narrative for each faculty member who contributes and say to what degree each contributes. They should also report the faculty members who DON'T contribute, and this report should be noted in the faculty members' evaluations. As for many faculty members' saying that their job is merely to teach and research, that's a fallacy that comes from graduate school. Too many newer faculty members are showing up at Stout believing that their jobs are simply more of what they did as graduate assistants: to teach and research. What separates the faculty from graduate assistants--and from the academic staff--is their governance and service role. It's for these duties that faculty members are on a different pay scale and can be granted tenure. I'm tired of this distinction not being pointed out during interviews and at the time of hiring and orientation and not being reiterated at annual evaluation.

Responsible persons - Posted at 05:42 on 11/9/04
Ah! I'm following you now. You are referring to accountability in an evaluation process based on an individual's performance or lack of performance. Would you have the backing of tenured faculty do you think?

Action Plans - Posted at 06:44 on 11/18/04
When do we see the blanks starting to be filled in in all these action plans? The IT plan has not been updated and I assume that technology will be an integral part of many of the plans. Are the implementation ideas just that, or is there info out there somewhere showing progress of each of the teams?

Nanotechnology Plan - Posted at 05:30 on 12/8/04
We would be competing with Milwaukee and Madison? Yes. Could we partner with WTCS-- yes. Focus more on the WTCS collaboration and less on being a leader in the field at the state

and national level. We already excel in other majors at the national level.

Nanotechnology Plan - Posted at 09:11 on 12/8/04
I agree. Milwaukee and Madison will have a lot more resources to devote to this; competition in that league would fierce. Let's allocate our resources and focus our attention on the piece of this emerging field that builds on what we are and allows us to come out on top.

Web Logging - Posted at 06:04 on 12/9/04
 Web logging or commonly called "Blogging" will surely reach this campus soon. It has been in the private sector for some years. This university should look at this technology for constructive means as a way of gathering information and input to the Focus 2010 planning. It is another way of getting info from a variety of sources. Usually, it starts the "juices" flowing.