

Top Three IT Accomplishments in 2011-2012

1. First, we have almost completed a full academic and fiscal year on the new Banner system. We do still have to complete the all-important end-of-year processing in the next few weeks, but this is a major milestone for the College, to have successfully run all College business on the new system for a full year. We also spent \$225K less than what was budgeted for Banner in the current fiscal year.

In April, two of the service and process improvements we implemented as part of Banner were nationally-recognized by University Business magazine as Models of Efficiency. They were impressed by our ability to keep good academic advising a priority as we moved our class registration process online. This was an enhancement Catawba IT made to standard Banner at the suggestion of the faculty committee on academic policy.

University Business magazine was also impressed by our new work-study tracking system. Work time is entered and approved online. This standard feature of Banner integrates directly into the Payroll and Financial Aid modules, eliminating a lot of extra work that our old system required in order to get students paid and the work-study award updated. Students can see the status of their award online, eliminating a lot of extra calls to the Financial Aid office.

2. We began deploying new laptops to employees in late April to a collective sigh of relief that could be heard across the campus, especially from faculty. It will take the summer to get all of these deployed, but our faculty and staff will start the new school year in August with top-notch ThinkPad laptops outfitted with Windows 7 and the latest version of Microsoft Office and other software.

3. Last but not least, we did outfit 5 classrooms with the audio/video equipment needed for faculty to use technology in those classrooms. We will doing a sixth classroom this summer.

Top Four IT Priorities in 2012-2013

1. Our first priority is updating the desktop computers that students use in lab and classroom settings. We'll be doing a hardware upgrade to boost performance but will not completely replacing the desktop; they'll be updated to run Windows 7 and the latest versions of software like Office and Adobe. Most of this will be done in the summer so it will be available to students in August. We are using restricted technology gift money accumulated over at least 5 years to complete this project.
2. Our second priority. By August, we expect to increase the internet bandwidth on campus by eight-fold, going from 50MB to 400MB. This will increase our annual internet spend over last year by \$13K. If we need to for budget reasons, we can scale this back to 300MB to keep our annual internet spend flat.
3. Our third priority is Banner work. By October, we need to have the Banner Relationship Management software implemented so that Admissions can use it to communicate with prospective students and manage the relationship with the students on one system, with less effort than what is currently involved. We'll be opening up a new web-based communication channel to these prospective students in the college web portal known as CatLink. We'll be reengineering the online Admissions application so that the data entered on the application feeds into Banner directly without having to be manually re-keyed. We've currently budgeted \$350K for this and other Banner-related work in the new fiscal year, but we can readily defer at least \$50K of this work to the next fiscal year if we need to for budget reasons.
4. Last but not least, our fourth priority is to upgrade the College's aging network infrastructure. My full May 2012 report includes the details on what we need to do and what it is going to cost. The cost figures are still preliminary as we are still researching options and negotiating with vendors, but we will clearly need more than the \$500,000 that we currently have in restricted gift money. We will want to do as much work as we can on this project this summer to minimize disruption to campus operations during the main part of the school year. The College may

want to consider a 5-year operating lease to get the total project done more quickly but to distribute the cost of the project over 5 years.

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