

Education IT Review Process – (Final 07/28/06)

Initials and Acronyms Used in this Document:

CIO	Chief Information Officer
IMC	Information Management Council
IS	Information Systems
IT	Information Technology
ITC	Information Technology Coordinator
OCIO	Office of the Chief Information Officer
OCIO-IS	Central computing facility of the University
UEIC	University Education Infrastructure Committee
URC	University Research Council

Purpose:

This review process is established to assist departments, programs, groups and individuals identify, evaluate, select, and purchase information systems and technology (IS/IT) in support of existing and new education endeavors. The existing University Education Infrastructure Committee will review educational proposals.

Rationale for Review

Requests for computing hardware and software will be reviewed to insure that all financial and justifications of need are appropriately addressed. Such requests are for hardware exceeding the capitalization limit of \$5000, and software also exceeding the established capitalization limit. To insure that all hardware and software is consistent with the standards of the institution and fits within the institutions established IT framework.

Goals:

- To assist the requestor in determining the most cost-effective approach to meeting a stated education support need, balancing that need with the impact on institutional infrastructure, standards, and guidelines
- To monitor performance and results, sharing lessons learned throughout the enterprise.

Scope:

Consider the following points to determine whether the committee should formally review an IS/IT purchase:

1. Cost:
 - 1.1 If the purchase price is between \$5,000 and \$25,000, discuss with the OCIO Director of Academic and Research Computing to determine if broader information sharing/planning is appropriate or necessary.
 - 1.2 *If* you have questions regarding purchases below \$5,000, based on the criteria listed below, discuss them with the OCIO Director of Academic and Research Computing.
 - 1.3 For purchases of \$25,000 but less than the \$250,000 threshold that requires Board of Trustee approval, work with the OCIO Director of Academic and Research Computing for help developing the brief proposal and 5-year financial analysis (Appendix A) in preparation for review by the UEIC and the IMC.
 - 1.4 For purchases of \$250,000 or more, work with the OCIO Director of Academic and Research Computing to develop a detailed business plan. (Appendix B) in preparation for full review by UEIC and IMC

2. Non- cost factors

2.1 Hardware and software upgrades and enhancements to existing systems generally will not require committee review unless the cost is \$5,000 or over or the acquisitions triggers other criteria for review. *Examples of items that do not require review are:*

- Hardware purchases like desktop microcomputers, printers and other peripherals
- New versions of software
- Additional modules that enhance/expand system capabilities

2.2 Hardware and software acquisitions that meet at least one of the following criteria will be reviewed regardless of cost, except as listed above in item 2.1.

- Requires support by the campus computer center
- Application works with or uses data from existing or planned systems
- Introduces *novel* technology

2.3 Systems or applications that could have broad utilization across the educational mission will be reviewed. Examples:

- Calendaring systems (e.g., GroupWise, Now Up-to-Date)
- Course management systems (WebCT)
- Grants management systems
- Educational technologies (audience response systems; distance ed systems, etc.)
- Grading systems
- Data storage for academics (e.g., Homerom)
- Knowledge bases and information resource management systems (e.g., integrated library system)
- Statistical software (e.g., SPSS, SAS)
- Bibliographic software (e.g., EndNote)

Process:

1. Basic Considerations. When identifying and evaluating the appropriateness and impact of systems and technology for your needs and the campus at large, think about the points below. These issues might be part of your discussion with the OCIO director.

- What is the purpose of the hardware/software you are intending to purchase?
- Is there another system that is similar on campus? If there is, how does it meet/not meet your needs?
- Is there commercial hardware/software available that may meet your needs or do you want to build a system “ground up”? Alternatively, would you like to purchase available software/hardware and modify it?
- Will the hardware be networked?
- Will there be interfaces (either live interfaces with databases or importation/exportation of data) with other departments/programs or systems in the institution or outside the institution?
- Can your hardware/software be utilized in other areas?
- Do you expect computer center support? If so, what kind of support is needed (servers, network, applications, maintenance, development, programming expertise, etc.)? If not, how will your system be supported (hardware and personnel)?
- Are there upgrades expected or available in the near future?
- What is the expected purchase price of the system and projected operating costs?

2. Initial discussion with OCIO Director of Academic and Research Computing. Be prepared with appropriate facts and documentation, based on guidelines listed above in Scope. The

outcome of this discussion will be a determination of how to proceed with either the acquisition or further investigation and review. The OCIO will help identify individuals or groups that should be consulted to provide expertise, assistance, and guidance in the preparation of the brief proposal or business plan. The OCIO director will also determine whether a project is appropriate to the scope of the academic review or one of the other review groups.

3. Proposal Development. Develop a brief proposal or detailed business plan for presentation to the UEIC (Education proposals) and, eventually, the Information Management Council (IMC) if needed, as determined during discussion with OCIO Director of Academic and Research Computing. Refer to Appendices A and B for proposal outlines. A team from the requesting department will develop the proposal, with assistance and consultation from individuals or groups identified in the discussion with the OCIO Director. These could include staff from Procurement and the Budget Office, technical experts from the OCIO-IS or computer center, and specific committees such as the Campus Infrastructure Committee, the University Education Infrastructure Committee (UEIC). A detailed multi-year funding plan (3-5 years) shall be included in each proposal.

4. Presentation to UEIC: Project manager will submit the brief proposal or detailed business plan describing the project to the UEIC chair for review at the council's next meeting. If an expedited review is needed, the project manager will inform the chair. The project manager will present the project to the council at the next regularly scheduled meeting, unless it requires expedited review.

5. Presentation to Information Management Council (IMC). A member of the Information Management Council who is on the UEIC in collaboration with the requesting party will present the project proposal and supporting information to the IMC for discussion and approval.

Special Considerations:

1. Expedited Review. Projects that are time-critical might require review and approval outside the typical schedule. In such cases, project leaders should notify the OCIO Director of Academic and Research Computing as quickly as possible to discuss the project and request an expedited review. In such cases, it will be the responsibility of the requestor to compile the appropriate information, consult with advisors, and outline the business case in preparation for an expedited review by either the OCIO Director, the UEIC and the IMC as appropriate.

2. Project Tracking. The Office of the CIO or the IMC should create a mechanism to track projects that have gone through the review process. Tracking should provide information about implementation, successes, problems, actual expenditures versus projections, and other data that might be instructive or useful for process evaluation, strategic planning, or other activities.

3. Support and Consultation. Requestors should consult with their department or college-based ITC (computer support staff) early in the process of identifying and evaluating technology needs. Requesters who do not have ITCs on staff, should contact the OCIO Director of Academic and Research Computing for referral to an appropriate consultant to work with.

The UEIC should meet before the review process is formally announced to the campus, to address and make decisions about the following issues, so this information can be shared with the university community:

- *Frequency of meetings*
- *Minimum number needed for quorum*

- *Immediacy of response to requestors bringing projects for review*
- *Communication mode for reviewing urgent proposals*