The Division of Information Technology (IT) strives to provide the highest quality services and support to our constituency - the students, faculty, staff and alumni that make GW a standard for academic excellence. Core to our 2021 Strategic Plan is our continued commitment to partner with university stakeholders to promote GW as a model institution for collaboration between academia, research and the technology that supports its endeavors. In today’s modern, open access technology environment, it is incumbent upon the organizations that support IT functions to enable and promote cyber-security awareness and compliance, and protect institutional private information and intellectual property. Information technology is one of the most overtly recognized tools in the modern academic environment, specifically for on-campus, distance learning and research focused activities. A robust, modern and security focused IT service portfolio is and will continue to be crucial in enabling the reliable and seamless operation of everyday university functions.

Vision 2021: A Strategic Plan for the Third Century of the George Washington University presents an aggressive and ambitious strategy for the university. The Division of IT will continue to be a core contributor to ensuring the success of the transformational process outlined in Vision 2021. Four major themes drive future growth within Vision 2021, and the plan calls for actions that build on these themes to unite activities across the university:

Innovation through CROSS-DISCIPLINARY COLLABORATION
GLOBALIZATION
GOVERNANCE & POLICY
CITIZENSHIP & LEADERSHIP

The three themes outlined in the Division of IT 2021 Strategic Plan are aligned with Vision 2021 and will demonstrate a concise, focused roadmap for the development and future direction of information technology at the university. The Division of IT will successfully contribute to the Vision 2021 education, research and service goals outlined in each of its four themes. The appropriate icons for the four themes are identified with each goal in the Division’s plan to show how it clearly aligns with Vision 2021:
In order to drive this alignment with Vision 2021, the Division of IT undertook five key planning approaches that focused on including as many constituency perspectives as possible: surveys and open forums for division members in order to gather comprehensive input to the Division of IT 2021 Strategic Plan themes; interviews with students, academics and staff to better understand their challenges and goals; rationalization and inclusion of elements from the Division’s previous strategic plan - continued focus on essential components that still matter in lieu of those that have reached a quantifiable transition point; third party market research regarding key challenges and initiatives that are crucial to the academic community; and finally, whiteboarding sessions to refine, drive clarity and ensure focus to our stated themes.

Our intention was to present a clear, concise and most importantly, actionable plan that the Division could execute against. We married this with a commitment to crafting a vision that would challenge the status quo and push the Division to deliver in a bold and continually evolving manner. After all, “innovation distinguishes between being a leader and a follower.” – Steve Jobs

The Division of IT would like to recognize stakeholders within the GW community for their time, contributions and willingness to recognize us as a partner in the successful execution of the Division of IT 2021 Strategic Plan.
The university, higher education and technology are experiencing an unprecedented time of change and opportunity. Through the 2021 plan, the George Washington University has developed a vision to strengthen its position as a world-class research and teaching institution through investment and innovation across the university. The Division of Information Technology will continue to maintain a critical role in the pursuit and achievement of the 2021 strategic goals, giving additional focus to enhanced cyber-security demands in support of critical IT and research related functions. This means looking at the way that we operate and identifying ways where we can continue to strengthen our organization and refine our approach to offering technology services. Specifically, the Division of IT must do the following across the organization in order to answer this call:

- **Optimize its Structure**: Tune the organization to best respond to and meet the current and future needs of the university.
- **Enhance its Processes**: Make the organization more agile, flexible and better equipped to perform its mission.
- **Prioritize**: Focus on the things that truly matter.

The word *focus* is one of great importance and gravity to the Division of IT 2021 Strategic Plan. We choose the word *focus* because it is a challenge to prioritize work that matters the most while delivering the greatest value to the largest possible portion of the GW community. As we sought to understand our capabilities and limitations, it became clear that focusing on what truly matters is what separates great organizations from good organizations. The Division of IT will continue to work with the GW community on solutions that will provide the best value and outcomes. Focusing in the right areas is how we can most significantly enable the university to reach its goals.
As we developed this plan we asked: for the Division of IT to be a great organization, what core competencies must we master? As a result of that work, three strategic themes emerged. We believe that to best provide value to the university in the pursuit of its goals, the Division of IT must excel at each of these themes. The strategic themes point to opportunities that the Division of IT has to contribute to the success of the university and Vision 2021 in a vital way. Despite our commitment to focus on the strategic themes, we understand that there always will be university initiatives and priorities that are important to its success but that do not directly align with the strategic plan. Technical innovation and emerging trends are hard to predict, so as we move forward, it is essential that we not let our focus devolve into narrow-mindedness.

Communicate and Anticipate
Engage our stakeholders in a manner that allows the Division to become a trusted strategic advisor, collaborate and align with university priorities, better manage demand for capability and capacity, and operate more transparently with university partners to move forward together.

Meaningful Services, Value that Matters
Evaluate and streamline our product mix and cost models to maximize the value and capabilities that the GW community receives from our services.

Prepare, Protect and Mobilize Data
Data is a valuable asset and the Division of IT should take steps to advance the way it protects and presents data to drive greater value to the university.
COMMUNICATE AND ANTICIPATE

BUSINESS NEED
The Division of IT’s stakeholders desire an ongoing and meaningful dialogue that includes their own goals and strategies, technology roadmaps, project priorities, processes and other business needs. These challenges require a trusted partner to explore what is possible. The Division is uniquely positioned to create value through a strategic approach to communication and engagement. Division of IT staff serve as ambassadors to the many university departments, schools and divisions. Through its position, the Division sees the entire landscape of the university and will strive to socialize to the GW community as to what capabilities are available for consumption. As ambassadors, Division of IT staff can spread the value of technology knowledge throughout the institution. When evaluated as a whole, the Division can design highly effective and efficient enterprise solutions that can serve the needs of many, especially in light of Vision 2021’s focus on cross-disciplinary collaboration and expectations that constituents will have access to the same portfolio of resources to support their shared endeavors, rather than a series of one-off, independent solutions. Over time, this approach will build relationships and reduce costs and complexity. Heightened levels of partnership are possible, as meaningful engagement becomes a core competency.

KEY THEMES
• Engage with the GW community to support demand and capacity management. Quality IT service management requires the ability to understand the business perspective, anticipate and plan for solutions to meet student, faculty, staff and alumni needs. As Division of IT staff work with and represent different areas of the university, they can collaborate to better anticipate needs and look for synergies across the university business landscape. The Division can also more effectively inform technology roadmaps and collaborate with partners to best serve the university with the most effective use of limited resources.

• Enable alignment and prioritization. Demand for IT services typically exceeds the supply of resources needed to deliver those services. As a result, it is crucial for the GW community and roadmap owners to prioritize their needs and understand the critical path capabilities. The Division can then assist in aligning initiatives with areas of strategic importance. This requires commitment across the Division, as well as with partners and the GW community to help minimize resources allocated on non-strategic projects. In sharpening its focus on what truly matters, the Division of IT can create distinctive value in the most meaningful areas.

• Be leaders in collaboration. The Division of IT is in a unique position to take the lead in collaborating with multiple areas within the university community to align strategic objectives across GW. By establishing itself as a trusted advisor and maintaining this two-way dialogue, there will be greater transparency. This will drive the continuous discussion, partnerships and trust necessary for the Division to maximize its value and impact across the university.

• Create opportunities for internal communication and collaboration that will allow for better and faster decision making within the Division of IT. The GW community will receive a better experience as the result of this greater emphasis on sharing and collaboration.
COMMUNICATE AND ANTICIPATE

CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS

- Implement repeatable and mature processes for engagement with stakeholders
- Understand stakeholder roadmaps and identify synergies between roadmaps
- Accept and prioritize or reject projects based on strategic value to stakeholders and the university
- Stakeholders proactively consult with the Division of IT when business and technology challenges arise
- Act, engage and represent the Division of IT as one team to enhance collaboration and determine synergistic solutions
- Anticipate need and articulate solutions based on proactive consultation and engagement to prevent failure and ensure the success of university partners

IMPLEMENTATION APPROACH

- Create formal structures for proactively engaging the GW community and key stakeholders, as well as sharing this data across the Division of IT
- Utilize customer portfolios and budget plans to better understand, anticipate and manage demand across the Division of IT
- Prioritize a business and service-based architecture that is transparent and centered around the goals of the GW community
- Invest in flexible collaboration and sharing platforms, such as Colonial Connect, to expand the capabilities of GW faculty, students and staff

Anticipate Need
The Division of IT must always look forward to determine, demand and measure the need for new services to ensure the success of the university
MEANINGFUL SERVICES, VALUE THAT MATTERS

BUSINESS NEED

There is clear demand for the Division of IT to be competitive, current and excel at the delivery of enterprise services. We need to be agile and deliver value to the GW community by focusing on commoditizing those services that are not unique, and in turn ensuring those services that are specialized are delivered via qualified and capable resources. The Division of IT has a role to package enterprise services in a way that is beneficial to the GW community. This will allow us to refocus resources to design innovative solutions for those core services that allow GW to differentiate itself in the delivery of the modern digital experiences.

KEY THEMES

• Focus on delivering distinctive, differentiated IT services that meet the GW community’s needs and provide measurable business value.

• Offer commodity services where possible. Our ability to deliver with scale, cost, reliability and security in mind will drive what services we should offer. With Vision 2021’s focus on globalization and cross-disciplinary collaboration, we will deliver services that we know to be of value for constituents outside of GW. If it is a commodity for GW, it is a commodity for educators, students and researchers anywhere in the world.

• Act as a broker for those services that the market can provide faster, cheaper and more effectively. Time to implement is important. Services that meet student, faculty or staff requirements will be preferred over the pursuit of perfection.

• Provide shared capabilities for the GW community to leverage. Infrastructure as a service will be a foundational element.

• Act as a trusted advisor. Consult, develop and promote services to the community for shared awareness. Governance and policy stewardship must be infused in how the Division of IT provides it services, so our operating model is aligned with the Vision 2021 expectation of this programmatic approach.
MEANINGFUL SERVICES, VALUE THAT MATTERS

CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS

- Provision core services in a timely manner
- Build adaptability and flexibility into our core services
- Take calculated risks to innovate and enable the GW community
- Clearly define value added capabilities and services such as security, availability and project management in order for the GW community to differentiate our offerings from competing services
- Align our product and partner mix with student, faculty and staff demand. Ensure low usage services are retired and resources redeployed to areas of greater demand

IMPLEMENTATION APPROACH

- Develop and provide an onramp for the GW community to work with external service providers; leveraging our relationships, expertise and infrastructure to ensure success and best value for GW
- Invest in modular, reusable services that provide the greatest breadth of options for the GW community while reducing waste and complexity
- Continuously evaluate our IT services portfolio, shifting resources away from and eliminating services that no longer meet GW’s needs or current business priorities
- Invest in technology that enables GW’s mobile workforce regardless of platform, device or location
BUSINESS NEED

Data is a key asset and it is vital to have accurate, trusted data in order to make sound decisions across the academic, administrative and research domains. Being a data-driven university is not only important to GW, but it is a trend in the greater market and amongst our peer institutions. Providing the GW community with accurate and trusted data should be at the heart of everything we do. There are opportunities to better prepare, protect and mobilize our data and we intend to prioritize this as an area of focus and growth across the Division. Through this focus, we will support the expectations of the university to make relevant data available to a global audience.

KEY THEMES

• Invest to keep up with the university and market demands. The Division should consider planned investment in the areas that will provide high benefit value.
  • People with Data Skills: invest in hiring and training staff in skills that pertain to data management, data operations, data integration, data visualization, data analysis and business intelligence.
  • Technology Related to Data: invest in technology that enables us to prepare, protect and mobilize data.
  • Data Analytics: invest in data analytics to help the university make data driven decisions.
  • Big Data: set a long term vision on ”big data” usage in the academic, administrative and research domains.
  • Research: address research storage, security, data management planning and data sharing needs
  • Data as a Service: explore opportunities to expose core data as a consumable self-service offering.

• Execute on opportunities to better plan, implement and operate university functions. Taking advantage of these opportunities allows us to empower researchers and provide better services to students, faculty and staff.
  • Processes Related to Data: enable and improve processes that help the Division to deliver the right data at the right time to the right set of people.
  • Data-Driven Decision Making: improve responsiveness through data-driven decisions.
  • Communication: improve communication about the data that the Division holds and operates.

Mobilize Data
As new technology emerges and mobile devices become ubiquitous within the GW community, the Division of IT is striving to mobilize data safely and securely.
PREPARE, PROTECT AND MOBILIZE DATA

CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS

- Improve efficiency and solution delivery through reusability of data services
- Reduce manual efforts freeing resources for higher value added analysis
- Provide data at the right time for decision making
- Ensure reliable, higher integrity data supporting process improvement where needed
- Provide scalable and cost effective solutions

IMPLEMENTATION APPROACH

- Curate prevalent, trustworthy core data that can be used for self-service consumption
- Seed communities of practice to inspire innovation and maximize the utility of core data
- Build infrastructure, processes and standards to support sustainable, reusable data sets
- Develop a suite of services to support data-driven decisions through a predictive analytics platform