

## **Information Technology and Strategic Communication Committee (IT & Strat Comm)**

### **Year End Summary 2020-21**

**Committee members:** Tony Buhr, Diana Dolliver, Matthew Hudnall, Patrick Kung, Russel Peterson, Jonathan Whitaker, Keith Williams

**Co-chairs:** Matthew Hudnall, Patrick Kung

The IT & Strat Comm Committee focused on the following tasks during the year:

1. Coordinated with OIT on various technology rollouts, issues, and enhancements.
2. Coordinated with Strategic Communications personnel on rollouts and messaging.

#### **1. OIT Coordination**

The committee met with UA OIT team three times to discuss all current and planned UA IT initiatives.

These included: updates on status of DUO use, completion of migration of main email service to Office 365 with modern MFA, migration of student email from Google to Microsoft Outlook in May 2021, a new VPN to accommodate increased traffic (partially related to going remote due to Covid), relocation of UA HPC housing from Gordon Palmer to Ridgecrest to address current limits on power and accommodate planning for future growth, upgrade of Blackboard nine in the upcoming Fall 2021 for a future migration to Blackboard Ultra, switching to Comcast for cable TV on campus.

Related to Covid, discussion items included OIT coordination with the UA System; tracking app (Healthcheck), contact tracing app (GuideSafe), Sentinel testing and associated privacy/security related concerns when registering/using these platforms; installation and proper cleaning of instructional IT equipment for hybrid classes; hotspot loaners for the end of Spring and Summer online teaching.

The committee also engaged OIT to gain clarification and address a number of pertinent incidental issues. These included a short, temporary email interruption incident in Feb. 2021. Regarding the security flaw in Microsoft Exchange servers worldwide (including UA's) reported in early 2021: UA, OIT and Microsoft reviewed email to make sure no one's account had been hacked. Hackers were not successful in compromising the servers on campus. OIT has eliminated and rebuilt the servers so there is no residual evidence of the hacking remaining. The topic of HIPAA protected Zoom sessions was also addressed.

#### **2. Strategic Communications Coordination**

The committee met once with Strat Comm personnel to discuss a number of projects and issues. These included: the launch of a new UA homepage, new Wordpress theme roll-out, new policy for webpages including plan to make a turn-key app for faculty website. Improvements to the Inside UA platform and online UA News center were discussed. Difficulties in filling positions leading to a 30% staff reduction was also discussed. Messaging related to Covid matters and Strat Comm coordination with UA System was clarified.

**2021-2022 Goals**

1. The committee will work to bridge the current gap between Strat Comm and the UA faculty.
2. The committee will work with OIT to address UA faculty's concerns about campus wide IT day-to-day support and UA HPC needs so that UA remains competitive in IT-supported research activities.