



OFFICE of  
INFORMATION  
TECHNOLOGY

# DRIVING CHANGE

CONNECTING PEOPLE AND TECHNOLOGY

2019-2023



## OUR PROCESS FOR DRIVING CHANGE

In July 2018, the Office of Information Technology (OIT) started the process of developing a new strategic roadmap. With the university's strategic plan still under development, our hope was to build our departmental roadmap side by side with the university's plan to ensure alignment.

To begin building the strategy, OIT engaged an impartial third party to conduct comprehensive discussions with stakeholders at all levels of the organization, including students, faculty, campus support partners, deans, and vice presidents.

Associate CIO Kamalika Sandell led the process along with OIT's senior leadership team. All OIT staff members contributed their input, which was combined with that of campus partners. Additionally, the team conducted assessments of the technology landscape in higher education and the technology industry at large, which were embedded within our new strategic roadmap.

As input to building the strategy, OIT considered strengths, weakness, gaps, and opportunities, identified through stakeholder feedback, as well as assessments from internal studies and external benchmarks. Additional targeted assessments were conducted for specific areas, such as the university's enterprise resource planning system (ERP), cloud strategy, and unified messaging, to influence the timing and priority of initiatives.

The team articulated OIT strategy with a bold mission and vision statement, an affirmation to AU values, and a set of four imperatives that position our organization for the future. Each imperative is further detailed into initiatives and projects that bring the strategy to life and map out implementation priorities for the coming years.

The draft strategy was socialized with internal staff and campus partners to solicit feedback and build support. This strategy is a guide to the division's future thinking in support of AU's strategic plan and is intended to be a living document that will go through regular and frequent reviews as the university's plans evolve.

## CIO'S MESSAGE



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David Swartz".

**DAVID SWARTZ**  
Vice President and  
Chief Information Officer

American University embarked on an ambitious journey with the publishing of its new strategic plan, **Changemakers for a Changing World: 2019-2023**. The university now turns its focus to effective implementation of this strategy. Each division of the university needs to align with and support this ambitious journey.

To support American University's transformation, the Office of Information Technology (OIT) will play an important part in each of the different strategic imperatives and work streams related to scholarship, learning, and community. A key role for OIT is to empower work to change the culture of how we work and to help the university excel at execution by achieving our designated targets and realizing desired outcomes to:

- Improve retention and graduation rates
- Achieve operational excellence throughout AU
- Enhance our reputation
- Diversify and grow revenue

To formalize our pathway forward, OIT has developed a strategic roadmap to empower the university with technology, improve business processes, and execute successful project and portfolio management. The OIT roadmap articulates our plans, activities, and proposed changes.

This technology roadmap is a living document, which we will assess and revise as the needs of AU evolve and changes occur that affect higher education. The four major strategic objectives are:

1. Deliver technology that transforms the university with focus on agility, availability, efficiency, and being user-centered
2. Enable community innovation leveraging our strong secure core
3. Enable transformation and operational excellence through project and change leadership
4. Foster an inclusive learning organization and maximize individual's potential

These objectives bring together the initiatives that our staff are planning in support of the broader goals of the university. We believe this roadmap strongly reflects our core values as an institution, and will position us to lead the campus to empower change as required by the new AU strategic plan.

## OUR MISSION

Connect people and technology to empower excellence at AU

## OUR VISION

Lead organizational transformation with innovative technology

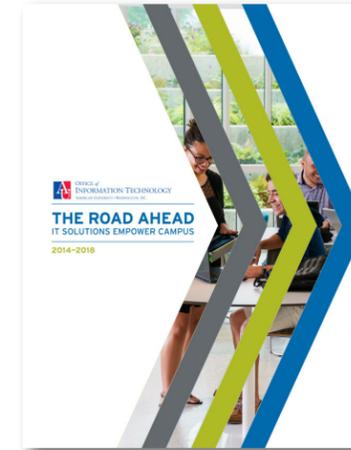
## OUR VALUES

PUTTING AU'S VALUES INTO ACTION

- **INTEGRITY:** Do the right thing, even when no one is watching
- **EXCELLENCE:** Aim high and exceed customer/service expectations
- **HUMAN DIGNITY:** Acknowledge the whole person
- **COMMUNITY:** Collaborate openly
- **DIVERSITY, EQUITY, ACCESSIBILITY & INCLUSIVE EXCELLENCE:** Build solutions for everyone
- **FREE INQUIRY & SEEKING TRUTH:** Seek facts, appreciate civil discourse, be curious, and continue learning
- **IMPACT:** Realize business value through future-focused solutions and innovative technology



## EVOLUTION OF OIT STRATEGY



OIT's previous strategy, **The Road Ahead: IT Solutions Empower Campus**, developed in 2013-2014 focused on large-scale modernization of several infrastructure components and platforms. Plans included fully reorganizing the university's network, including wired and wireless, implementing an enterprise customer relationship management system for all key engagement-focused functions – recruitment, advising, and development, eliminating the legacy Unidata platform for the university's core ERP, revitalizing analytics, and adding industry standard applications in lieu of the existing legacy custom applications across the board.

The roadmap was a call to action to the division to deliver on an aggressive mission. Maturing project delivery and service delivery skillsets, while investing in staff training on new platforms, were at the heart of success of the last roadmap.

In July 2018, when we kicked off the process of developing our new strategy, we were extremely proud to note that most of our aggressive delivery plans had been completed. As impressive as this delivery mission had been, both OIT and campus experienced a massive amount of change in a relatively short time. The sharp focus on delivery did not come without a cost, as it took away time from planning.

The feedback from internal staff and campus partners strongly urged that OIT spend more time with everyone building integrated strategies and leading the vision on what is possible. Our campus partners advised OIT to play a more strategic role - one that goes beyond successful technology delivery and

instead focuses on delivery of the business outcome, and full realization of the intended business value. The feedback emphasized the need for OIT to act as a bridge to the sometimes silo-ed discussions on campus.

Internally, with the massive influx of new systems, OIT staff underscored the need for continuous learning and increased exposure, not limited to their area of specialty, so that any of them could outline integrated solution plans when engaged with campus.

This new roadmap highlights planning and solution building as the strategic mission for OIT. Building on OIT's project and service delivery skillsets, it pushes us to become integrated solution builders and business leaders without losing our technology specialization. OIT now has a real platform to both enable the university's goals and lead the university's thinking by leveraging technology's power to change.



## DELIVER TECHNOLOGY THAT TRANSFORMS THE UNIVERSITY WITH FOCUS ON AGILITY, AVAILABILITY, EFFICIENCY, AND BEING USER-CENTERED

Global industry trends, such as expanding education ecosystems, increased competition and greater demands for personalized online and lifelong learning, are driving higher education institutions to challenge old business and operational models and promote the deployment of digital business platforms that can better leverage the ecosystem and transform the institution. Using an agile, user-centered approach, OIT will work directly with the AU community to develop and deliver resilient technology solutions in alignment with the university's mission and operational excellence.

### OBJECTIVES

- **Enhance technology operations practices**, improving our real-time monitoring of applications to better detect user-impacting issues, while continually planning for infrastructure and capacity upgrades
- **Optimize business continuity plans and practices** to ensure a well-prepared, thoroughly tested, cost-effective, and resilient response in the event of an emergency
- **Explore full-service cloud delivery platforms**, building in data governance and protection obligations
- **Develop a user-centered focus for all solutions**, including the AU community directly in the design and testing
- **Adopt application modernization as a strategic planning tool for campus**, regularly assessing enterprise applications to maximize value, incorporate self-service and automation, maintain currency, and retire legacy applications
- **Commit to continuous process improvement** to strengthen our service and solution delivery, while improving efficiency and productivity



## ENABLE COMMUNITY INNOVATION LEVERAGING OUR STRONG SECURE CORE

As AU embarks on an ambitious new strategic plan, OIT must continue to provide a strong and secure technology infrastructure, while leading the campus in efforts to maximize our investments to encourage innovation to enrich learning, improve collaboration, and transform the business. With a focus on creating a simple, accessible, and seamless end user experience, OIT plans to develop standards and processes to remove barriers to accessing data, while still maintaining its availability, integrity, and security. We will showcase emerging technologies to reveal what is possible by utilizing today's plug and play modular tools, sparking ideas and empowering the community.

### OBJECTIVES

- **Engage the campus community to encourage innovation in research, teaching, learning, and how AU works**, by building communities of practice to share successes and enhance technology skills
- **Develop data governance practices to better define roles, processes, and management controls**, consistent with AU's data retention and disposal policy
- **Manage access to the core through standard controls**, such as employing a standardized integration framework, authentication mechanism, user controls with role-based access and security protections
- **Leverage no-code and low-code systems** to simplify and secure our core applications to broaden the user base

# ENABLE TRANSFORMATION AND OPERATIONAL EXCELLENCE THROUGH PROJECT AND CHANGE LEADERSHIP

In an evolving and competitive higher education landscape, it is critical to stay vigilant of developments in the business and technology marketplaces. Emerging trends will be assessed for applicability to the University and integrated into our practices to achieve the greatest efficiency and effectiveness in our operations. Business processes will be transformed by adopting contemporary practices supported by the right technology solutions. Through project and change leadership, OIT will guide our stakeholders to adopt technology solutions that achieve increased productivity and quality of service to university constituencies.

## OBJECTIVES

- **Lead and partner with campus in delivering transformational technology solutions** to achieve AU's shared organizational goals, such as the business process improvement initiatives, expansion of ServiceNow for service delivery management, integrating communications channels, and supporting capital projects, and research and learning
- **Develop methodology to measure and improve adoption of technologies** in which AU has invested and chart a course to mature utilization to realize its maximum potential
- **Improve agile project planning and management practices**, emphasizing a business solution focus, clearly articulating justifications and realized benefits, while providing regular status updates to all key stakeholders
- **Support use of a clear decision making framework** for project prioritization, governance, and risk assessment and compliance
- **Evangelize and showcase modern technology** that creates value and new opportunities



# FOSTER AN INCLUSIVE LEARNING ORGANIZATION & MAXIMIZE INDIVIDUAL'S POTENTIAL

People with diverse cultural backgrounds experience life differently and bring their own perspectives, which enhance creativity and innovation. We intend to harness the unique proficiencies and abilities of each individual to achieve organizational goals and continuous transformation. OIT will adapt workforce planning and development strategies to ensure alignment with future skill requirements. To this end, we will implement and sustain knowledge management structures to capture and evolve the intellectual capital available within the organization. True knowledge comes from experiences; from witnessing an event and drawing own conclusions. We intend to develop experiential learning practices to better understand campus problems and opportunities, and propose technology solutions.

## OBJECTIVES

- **Embrace knowledge sharing and management practices** to know the business, their processes, as well as the technology
- **Customize professional development/learning plans** to best meet both the individual's and organization's needs
- **Cultivate workplace sensitivity** to better acknowledge the whole person, both at work and beyond
- **Incorporate multi-channel communication, outreach, and training** to keep our staff and the broader community knowledgeable and informed
- **Re-architect the organization to incorporate new roles** required to support the ever-changing technology landscape



# ORGANIZATION OVERVIEW

Transparency and inclusion—in decision-making, planning, budgeting, and day-to-day operations—run throughout the work in the Office of Information Technology. The organization comprises multiple teams that collaborate to provide services in three functional areas as described below.

## ENTERPRISE SYSTEMS AND SERVICES

Enterprise Systems and Services improves the way AU conducts business with technology solutions that meet the needs of diverse constituencies. In the application analysis and development area, functional professionals partner with technical experts to design and deploy scalable, sustainable solutions. Business intelligence and reporting services help mature the university's data and analytical reporting capabilities, while web and emerging technologies support innovative digital and mobile tools. The network operations and enterprise infrastructure teams jointly administer the university's technology infrastructure, striving for reliability, availability, and stability of services on which the campus depends.

## INFORMATION SECURITY

Information Security supports AU's executive leadership and the community by evaluating the university's digital information assets for sources of risk throughout the IT planning, implementation, management, and ongoing operational phases. The group translates discovered risks into business terms to help stakeholders determine whether to accept, defer, mitigate, or transfer those risks. Additionally, the team is responsible for cyber incident response, delivering a security awareness program, compliance, audit, and enforcing policy and standards.

## IT CUSTOMER SERVICE

IT Customer Service employs industry-standard best practices for service management, change management, and performance measurement. This front-facing group constantly seeks to provide the highest quality of customer service to the AU community. Customer Service strives to manage end-user expectations, train the community on the latest technology, troubleshoot all IT-related issues, and equip faculty and staff with secure, reliable workstations.

## STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

- 1 DELIVER TECHNOLOGY THAT TRANSFORMS THE UNIVERSITY WITH FOCUS ON AGILITY, AVAILABILITY, EFFICIENCY, AND BEING USER-CENTERED**
- 2 ENABLE COMMUNITY INNOVATION LEVERAGING OUR STRONG SECURE CORE**
- 3 ENABLE TRANSFORMATION AND OPERATIONAL EXCELLENCE THROUGH PROJECT AND CHANGE LEADERSHIP**
- 4 FOSTER AN INCLUSIVE LEARNING ORGANIZATION & MAXIMIZE INDIVIDUAL'S POTENTIAL**

## IN CLOSING

With input from you, this OIT strategic roadmap has been developed to support AU's strategic plan, **Changemakers in a Changing World**. Our iterative approach provided us with numerous opportunities to deeply reflect on our changing role as technologists, business partners, and community members. The deliberations have led us to create an aspirational four-year plan that embraces leading the way as strategic visionaries—intentional in delivering integrated, user-centered services that provide value to the broader community.

We are passionate about the direction we are headed, as an office and as a University, recognizing there will be challenges and opportunities that will stretch each of us. Our focus will be to create inclusive opportunities that spark innovation and remove barriers to success.

With this roadmap, we reaffirm and commit to connect people and technology to empower excellence at AU. This roadmap has already taken shape in our hearts and minds. It will officially begin being implemented in connection with the 2020-2021 fiscal year. It is a living document that will be revisited, at least annually to ensure it is adapted to the changing needs of AU.





AMERICAN UNIVERSITY  
WASHINGTON, DC

Office of Information Technology  
4400 Massachusetts Avenue NW  
Washington, DC 20016

202-885-2550  
[helpdesk@american.edu](mailto:helpdesk@american.edu)  
[help.american.edu](http://help.american.edu)

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