

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SERVICES

Accomplishments and Goals 2023-2024

This document outlines Information Technology Services (ITS) major achievements for 2023-2024. Technology enhances all university functions, significantly improving teaching, learning, and research. While not exhaustive, this document highlights what ITS Senior Leadership considers most significant.

ITS is the central information technology group that provides shared technical infrastructure, systems, and support for the university. ITS uniquely supports every school, college, unit, continuing education, and all domestic and international campuses. Additionally, ITS supports the Temple University Health System (FCCC/TPI/TFPP/Chestnut Hill) and affiliated clinical facilities. We partner effectively with the Temple community to achieve strategic goals and objectives.



HIGHLIGHTS

- Every organizational Service Level Agreement (SLA) was met with **no critical or major outages** disrupting University and Health System operations.
- The Digital Equity Center received an additional \$154,000 in grant funding to continue its community work.
- We handled over **194,000 Technology Support Center** contacts and front-lining support for twenty-five organizations, including Student Financial Services, Residential Life, the Registrar and University College.
- The Office of Information Security supported every new employee hire, job transition, and termination, in addition to supporting all investigations requiring email, file, data extracts, and digital forensics.
- ITS co-sponsored, for the first time, two Research Day events with the Office of the Vice President for Research and the Library.



OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

All opportunities and challenges projected for the 2023 - 2024 fiscal year in last year's annual report have been met.

Documented our Service Catalog to provide clearer definitions of IT services available to the Temple community and delineate between central IT and decentralized services.

Aligned IT with the Research community.

Implemented a Project Management Office, work intake process, work review, strategic alignment, and work prioritization.

Determined whether to enhance or discontinue specific services for the University community for 2024 - 2025.

Refined IT Strategic Building Blocks into strategic pillars to ensure our technology advancement roadmap aligns with the university's overall strategic initiatives.



Temple University IT Strategic Building Blocks

Six Information Technology strategic building blocks were identified on our roadmap for advancing technology at Temple. Many of these goals align with the overall university strategic initiatives.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & DIGITAL EQUITY

Harnessing technology to promote inclusivity and empowerment, ensuring everyone has access to digital resources and skills through initiatives like community broadband and digital literacy programs.

- We hosted the conference for [Technology Learning Collaborative \(TLC\)](#), a professional development organization dedicated to digital inclusion providers and advocates.
- ITS built deep connections in the Philadelphia Digital Equity community. We sponsored the [National Digital Inclusion Alliance \(NDIA\)'s Net Inclusion conference](#) this year.
- Working with the Philadelphia School District, we brought on an individual from their **Technology Apprenticeship program**. Additionally, we had an apprentice from the Drexel Cyber Security program.
- The Digital Equity Center hosted four trainees from the community this year, preparing them for new jobs in technology. Distributing more than 400 computers to the community, the **Digital Equity Center** received **three additional grants this year** from Comcast, Verizon, and the Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP/FCC), totaling \$55k.
- Temple was awarded **\$99K under the Digital Literacy and Workforce Development Grant** for the purpose of Advancing Basic Computer Skills Initiative for Career Seekers.

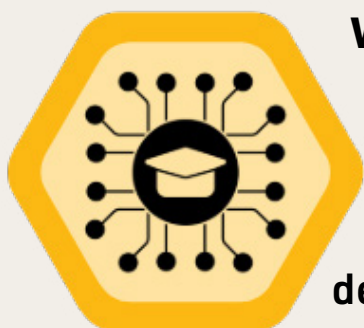


EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY

Transforming learning environments with advanced digital tools and platforms, enhancing teaching, and learning through interactive technologies, personalized insights, and innovative instructional approaches.

With the support of all Deans, we are moving toward **centralization of smart classroom support and technology funding** for all "110" defined rooms on the main campus. After more than a year of analysis and productive conversations, this work will yield significant efficiencies and economies of scale for support. Moreover, this project will improve the faculty and student experience across schools and colleges.

We expanded our enterprise **LinkedIn Learning online training** to the following departments, increasing student, faculty, and staff skills in professional development, academic applications for teaching and learning, student career development, diversity, equity, inclusion, student services, and residence life. The service is now being used and promoted by Human Resources, Center for the Advancement of Teaching, University Libraries, Career Services, IDEAL, New Student and Family Programs, Residential Life, and Student Conduct. This is great example of how ITS promotes the use of an enterprise purchase tool for the good of the University.



We started a training program on **Microsoft Teams**, covering various topics and providing online consultation for staff. These efforts helped the university efficiently use MS Teams. Approximately 485 faculty/staff attended "Getting Started with Teams" training, and 185 attended "Teams Calling" sessions. Specialty training courses were also held for different departments. Additionally, we provided training on applications like Panopto and Poll Everywhere for various schools/colleges and units.

Through our partnership with the Center for the Advancement of Teaching (CAT), we introduced a **policy on artificial intelligence (AI)** in the classroom, focusing on teaching tools like Turnitin, Proctorio, and Zoom.

TECHNOLOGY AS ENABLERS & PARTNERS

Leveraging technology as a strategic partner to drive collaboration, innovation, and efficiency, optimizing processes, and enhancing decision-making through digital transformation and emerging technologies.

- Provided technological support to **enhance campus public safety:**



We transitioned to the **RAVE Mobile Safety AppArmor (TUSafe)** for the start of the Fall 2023 semester. This transition involved incorporating routes, Flight information, health and wellness resources, and other relevant data into AppArmor.

As part of the Light, Camera, Technology Committee, we **installed nineteen new cameras on Code Blue phones** to improve visibility at the outer perimeter of the campus before August 2023. We replaced 484 legacy cameras strategically identified by Campus Safety. We enhanced our camera technology with new artificial intelligence (AI) for gun detection.

- Successfully led an 8-week committee to **envision the CRM (Customer Relationship Management) environment of the future at Temple University**, including a full introduction of the Slate CRM system for undergraduate prospecting and recruitment. There have also been extensive discussions around the strategic direction of our graduate schools.
- The **migration from Barnes and Noble to Follett as a bookstore partner** went live on June 24, 2024. This included removing all the technology (POS, desktops, and phones) and working with Follett to introduce their infrastructure. We are providing access to Follett for courses, faculty, and students, updating the Canvas LMS (Learning Management System), integrating with Follett Discover, handling a major contract change for exclusivity, and attempting to increase our bookstore adoption rates to provide better data in the future.
- We worked on **eliminating Diamond Dollars** and, as an administrative efficiency, moving the OWLcard office services to ITS Technology Support Services (formerly known as the Help Desk).
- We developed a new way to use our existing Genesys Call Center application to **automatically call thousands of students who have not selected a housing option**. The call asks the student to pick a few options that gauge their interest or connect to a live person, helping Student Residential Life to increase their occupancy rate.
- We supported the University by implementing several improvements, including the rollout of a new Professional Development Program (PDP) dashboard and a new Salary Increase System (SIS) process. We enhanced the pre-travel workflow, updated the Nelnet connector and streamlined the cell phone reimbursement workflow. We also introduced a new off-boarding employee checklist, modified our financial aid process, upgraded the degree audit system and assisted with Title IV regulatory changes. In addition to these efforts, we supported many upgrades and complex enhancements to systems supporting Human Resources, Finance, Institutional Advancement, and Facilities.

ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE, TRAINING, AND TRANSPARENCY

Fostering a culture of continuous learning and transparency with targeted training programs, speaking engagements, and publications to promote innovation and career growth.

- Eliminating barriers between internal and external teams, we **established communities of service operators and architects to address familiar challenges and develop solutions**. These groups will serve as a future model for rebuilding our technical culture, fostering enhanced communication and transparency.
- ITS consistently promotes training opportunities for our employees and actively shapes our direction through monthly culture committee conversations and regular innovation time aimed at advancing skills, knowledge, and technology. We are **currently prototyping cross-team internships to facilitate growth among employees and teams**, bridging skills gaps and providing redundancy where needed.



OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCIES, EXCELLENCE AND MODERNIZATION

Enhancing operational efficiencies through streamlined processes, resource optimization, and innovative strategies to achieve higher effectiveness and competitiveness.

- ITS successfully **consolidated a significant amount software into central funding**, eliminating redundancies and saving ITS and the university substantial funds and support resources.
- Last year, we conducted several rounds of bulk ethernet reviews and disconnects, resulting in **extensive savings for the budgets of various schools, colleges, and units.**
- We undertook a **comprehensive update of our infrastructure to maintain vendor compatibility**, encompassing hardware, operating systems, storage services, and our data center roadmap.
- We are partnering with the School of Business Institute for Business and Information Technology (IBIT) to **gather valuable feedback from students, faculty, and staff as we envision the future enhancements of TUportal, TUApplication, and the redesign of our intranet.**



STRATEGIC SECURITY INITIATIVES

Safeguarding digital assets and sensitive information with comprehensive cybersecurity measures, including risk assessments, threat detection, and compliance to mitigate security risks and ensure resilience.

We enhanced the University's Incident Response Plan (IRP) and developed critical playbooks that precisely outline actions for various cybersecurity scenarios. The IRP and playbooks were rigorously tested during a 90-person tabletop exercise in February 2024.

We documented our expected recovery time objectives (RTOs) for all critical applications and implemented recovery plans for a significant percentage to ensure survivability, significantly reducing business downtime.



This past year, we **launched an Annual Cyber Security Awareness Training program**, raising our compliance rate to over 86%.

We achieved the mid-point milestone in our two-year project to provide off-premises recovery solutions for critical services, with many of these services now covered.

Thanks to our proactive cybersecurity efforts, our **cyber insurance premium costs decreased**, while many other organizations experienced sustained increases or non-renewals.