IT Town Hall Meeting

November 27, 2012
My History at Virginia Tech

- Joined Virginia Tech in 1986 as an assistant professor in the Department of Electrical Engineering (now the Bradley Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering)
- Served as a Program Director at the National Science Foundation from 2006-2009
- Served as Electrical and Computer Engineering department head from 2009-2012
- Became VPIT on October 1, 2012
“Virginia Tech faces a new horizon defined by a future characterized by geopolitical and geo-economic transition, an accelerated pace of globalization, and structural shifts caused by technological innovation.”

IT and “A Plan for a New Horizon”

“... we have entered an era of data-driven, networked societies.”

“New forms of digital, networked scholarly communication will require intensive faculty development ...”

“We aim to become the national model for the merger and application of the arts and technology as a catalyst for educational excellence.”

“The plan for 2012-2018 is guided by four structuring challenges that impact the entire university: the implications of global interdependence; the challenges of a data-driven society; meeting our research expectations; and the continuing need to focus on organizational efficiency and flexibility.”
Structuring Challenges: The needs and challenges of a data-driven society

“We will empower our students to be knowledgeable, wise, and effective participants in an increasingly digital age in areas ranging from art to science to civic discourse.”

“Virginia Tech is committed to a progressive agenda that provides the educational opportunities, computational infrastructure, and learning spaces necessary to prepare students and faculty to excel in this environment.”

“Our goals are to ensure competency in data analysis and computational methods as a component of general education for all students and to develop an appropriate infrastructure for e-learning and high-performance computing.”

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“Studying the complex interactions among genomic, environmental, and behavioral factors will require methods that are grounded in high-performance computing and networks capable of moving, processing, and storing enormous volumes of data. Virginia Tech’s strengths in computational science and high-performance computing provide us with a unique opportunity to be leaders in this area of health-related research.”

An increased capacity for data-intensive, high-performance computing—including geographic-information systems, visualization, and policy informatics—is crucial to facilitating advanced research in these areas.”
Responding to Challenges: The life of the mind

“In addition, students are expected ... to demonstrate competence in fundamental areas such as computational-thinking skills ...”

“Computational thinking and informatics/digital fluency are becoming basic skills needed in all disciplines.”
“Advances in technology are dramatically reshaping the educational landscape in two important ways: by creating unique opportunities to enhance classroom and online education and by expanding the range of essential skills that students must acquire in order to excel in complex and rapidly changing digital and networked environments.”

“Virginia Tech remains strongly committed to exploring how to best harness technology to improve the quality of education it offers students.”
Responding to Challenges: The life of the mind

“The university also remains committed to expanding access to affordable and high-quality education to commonwealth residents through online education.

“Developing information-literacy, digital-fluency, and computational-thinking skills is an important facet of every student’s educational experience at Virginia Tech in the 21st century.”

“Continue to investigate, develop, and utilize current and emerging technologies to enhance traditional classrooms, provide mobile access, and expand high-quality distance-learning opportunities.”
Information Technology has never been more important to higher education, especially at Virginia Tech.

- Advance and leverage technology to transform teaching and learning
- Advance and leverage cyberinfrastructure to enable state-of-the-art research in science, engineering, and other fields
- Apply IT to increase productivity and contain costs across the enterprise
- Ensure the security of our data and IT resources and leverage IT to contribute to the safety of the university community
- Serve as a model for advanced IT capabilities
Our Mission

The mission of Virginia Tech's Information Technology organization (IT) is to serve the university community and the citizens of the Commonwealth of Virginia by applying and integrating information resources to:

- Enhance and support instruction, teaching and learning;
- Participate in, support and enhance research;
- Foster outreach, develop partnerships with communities and promote the capabilities of advanced networking and communications;
- Provide, secure, and maintain systems allowing the university to accomplish its missions.

http://www.it.vt.edu/
My View of What’s Important for IT in 2012-2013 (Part 1)

- Ensure that we effectively provide core services, recognizing that both needs and technologies are constantly changing
- Provide leadership to the University, and beyond, in online and other technology-enabled teaching and learning
- Position ourselves for a high-performance computing, large-scale storage, and visualization environment suitable for a 21st Century research university
My View of What’s Important for IT in 2012-2013 (Part 2)

- Provide leadership to the University to structure and prioritize enterprise system development within and beyond central IT
- Contribute to the introduction of “computational thinking” across the curriculum
- Lay the groundwork for future IT infrastructure needs
- Complete the IT strategic plan for 2012-2018
All of these goals require collaboration.

- Within IT
- Across the University
- In the state and the broader higher education community
Organizational and Professional Characteristics to Cultivate and Value

- Ethics
- Responsiveness
- Adaptability and Innovation
- Leadership and Outreach
- Collaboration and Teamwork
- Communication