Information Technology Planning Board (ITPB)

September 24, 2002 Retreat

Summary Portfolio Discussions and Position Statements

A. Campus IT Planning Positions

1) Planning for infrastructure must focus on campus solutions. Facilities and services that must be viewed as campus priorities include: networking, directory, authentication, data warehouse, and email. In addition, the campus should direct attention to storage of research and instructional data and disaster recovery.

2) Infrastructure requires investment. Infrastructure should be treated as a core investment rather than as an expense on the margin. Investments should be examined in terms of payback, demand, and other tangible and intangible benefits.

3) Planning for infrastructure must focus on interoperability. Since effective sharing of data and information across units is as critical as it is challenging, planning for infrastructure requires development of principles and processes to define, create and maintain standards coordination, accessibility and modularity, including the use, where feasible, of open standards and open sources.

4) From an enterprise perspective, UCLA will continue to depend on both distributed and central IT systems. The choice of central or distributed systems should be made differently for different purposes, and a system may be central in one respect (e.g., standards) but distributed in another (e.g., facilities or services). Central services, facilities, etc. should be offered only if they can provide the same or better quality at a lower cost than what can be provided locally. The university derives great value by distributing various functions to support local and individual needs. But there is also a need to coordinate management of IT by integrating central and local needs, and resources. To encourage this hybrid model, the campus should give priority to projects that are more collaborative and/or comprehensive than others.

5) The question of local development vs. collaborative effort requires a balanced approach. There is a need for coordination and collaboration on projects within UCLA and with peer institutions. The specification of guidelines about the choice of solutions (building on the work of others through open-source, standards-based solutions, as well as off-the-shelf solutions, for example) should be of equal importance to selecting the right projects to fund. Collaborating with other universities on open-source projects would leverage the efforts across many universities and lower the cost of development.
6) **High-volume procurement is a key tool for managing IT costs.** Without absolute restrictions on choice, many types of IT purchasing can be managed effectively through coordinated, high-volume purchasing.

7) **Approach to undertaking large projects should be modular and phased.** Projects should be designed so that where there is not enough funding for the entire project, it could still proceed in phases. Additional functionality could be implemented when funding becomes available. All projects should be fully costed for a projected life cycle. Costs should include development, support, maintenance and replacement.

8) **Students should be a major focus in the application of technology and should have more extensive input into the process.** Several of the portfolio projects should draw very strongly upon student input. Likewise, the campus wireless project should extend to all common areas where students congregate, creating opportunities for student collaboration and the ability to work independent of location. Software licensing initiatives (Microsoft and anti-virus software are examples) should extend to students. The UCLA/supplier alliance agreements which offer products at significant discounts include students and should continue to do so.

9) **Student integration into an IT enhanced instructional environment requires focused attention from a campus perspective.** The system for student remote access is an initiative that could potentially change the way student homework computing is done. Instead of waiting for machines in overcrowded open labs, students could work at from preferred locations at times convenient to them. The campus should be able to leverage commonly applied tools to lowering the development, management, interaction and delivery costs significantly.

10) **Projects development must include establishment of proper policies.** Many times a technology solution cannot be built without a corresponding policy to guide the design. Since the number of issues currently on the table is so large, priority in developing a policy should be given to those issues that have a corresponding project already developed.

**B. Campus IT Portfolio Positions**

11) **Support computation-based research through coordinated leadership and shared computational resources and services.** The campus must provide an information-technology-rich-connected environment to support multidisciplinary research needs. To leverage the accomplishments of individual faculty who are international leaders in computation-based research, there is a need for coordinated leadership and institutional cooperation. The Computational Science and Engineering Institute is being developed to respond to these needs by providing partnership capabilities that leverage existing strengths in design of
materials, nanoscale devices and machines, protein function from gene sequences, simulations of biological functions, and many more.

12) UCLA in LA System meets campus strategic direction outlined above but requires attention to faculty use and involvement. In building the UCLA in LA Community Information System, the campus invested in a system platform that is database driven, flexible, scalable, and allows incremental addition of databases. This is a model that should be encouraged for other application development projects. The ITPB discussion noted that while the system is in place, there is a lack of faculty involvement by some key groups that could use this program as a research platform and could provide additional data links.

13) Many of the web/email policy issues should be addressed at the statewide level. Many issues (for example, retention of email) are not unique to UCLA. Instead of each campus implementing its own policies, those issues that are common to all campuses should be addressed as a coordinated UC effort. Any policy that is decided on at UCLA will be taken to UC to be sure it is coordinated with UC efforts.