Information Technology Services (ITS) Suggestions

The following is a list of improvement opportunities that we feel are important to consider, some of which have been discussed in previous meetings.

1. Streamline the multiple help desk services offered by different functional units within the University. In the finance area alone, there is the "fame" help desk, the Accounts Payable customer service area, and a Bursar’s customer service area – and there could be more. If they cannot be combined, they could adopt similar tools and toolsets, like the Remedy service management system.

2. Migrate the separate email and calendaring systems used by the Controller’s Division, the Treasurer’s Office and others to the University’s central email and calendaring platforms.

3. Facilitate better ongoing knowledge sharing across the University, by using a knowledge base tool to document best practices, policies, roles and responsibilities. Developing and maintaining knowledge base content would be an issue, as these activities would need to be resourced. As an example, the Bursar’s office provides online help through its website to students but not to internal NYU departments, making it difficult and time-consuming for them to obtain answers to questions. A tool like the web-accessible KMR knowledge base currently used by ITS and a number of other units could be helpful by providing a level of self-service to administrators and staff.

4. Adjust the budget process so that units that manage their budgets effectively are permitted to carry over unspent amounts to the next fiscal year, rather than being penalized by losing these amounts and facing reduced line amounts in the coming fiscal year. In addition, we feel it is important to incorporate better automated forecasting and projecting capabilities in the budgeting process, for example by using the capabilities provided by the rollout of Hyperion.

5. Provide reports that are more comprehensive and flexible. Sometimes, several reports have to be run to obtain an answer to a simple question.

6. Leverage automated tools and resources used across the University. Examples include document management and some of the tools mentioned earlier for service management, calendaring, etc.

7. Continue to collaborate across units to negotiate better contracts and site licenses for the University, and performing periodic reviews of existing software/hardware contracts for possible use in negotiating better renewal terms.

8. Provide more and improved ongoing training for applications, systems, and job functions.
9. Improve Accounts Payable level of service, accountability and communication, by assigning AP representatives the responsibility to be subject matter experts for particular sets of business units.

10. Continue to explore outsourcing possibilities, wherever appropriate.