



ACADEMIC COMPUTING AND
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Let me welcome you to a new monthly column that will focus on timely topics, interesting happenings, and other relevant things across our division. It's one of several ways we'll be looking to increase communication throughout our department.

The name, >path FWD:2020, is a fun play on words that honors both our technical work as well as the evolution that our teams are beginning together. We are crafting a path forward for 2020. One that will help us continue to be great for our CSU community and be full of opportunities.

Recently, we all joined together in another event that increased communication and relationship building throughout our division, the first ever All-Staff between IS and ACNS & Telecom. It was terrific to see everyone sharing, collaborating, and working together. In fact, this was so good, I'm happy to announce that we'll be doing these quarterly (March, June, Sept, and Dec) for 2020.



During the meeting, we asked team members to work together to develop questions that they would like to see answered. Following our commitment at the meeting, and our dedication to transparency, here are a few questions that came up the most:

How do we balance anxiety vs. opportunity in the face of potential change?

First, let me suggest we use the term “evolution” as opposed to “change”. “Change” can be a loaded term and have different meanings (and feelings) for different people. Instead, if we think about evolution, I think we can all agree that organizations need to continually evolve. We need to adapt. We need to be better for the future so we can be valuable to CSU in 5-10 years and not just today.

As you may have learned about me, I tend to approach things from a positive lens. From a mindset of abundance as opposed to scarcity. While there are things that will be ambiguous, the great news is that our teams will be involved, and we’ll make decisions based on data, facts, and feedback.



What’s the timeline for uncoupling the Library and ACNS & Telecom? What’s the timeline for aligning IS and ACNS & Telecom?

Dean Estlund and I have met and are targeting spring semester to have a purposeful engagement to look at how we uncouple the Libraries and ACNS & Telecom. We’ll be involving many of our team members in these areas to look at services, budgets, resources, etc. Our hope is to have plans ready to be implemented for July (FY21).

For our alignment of IS and ACNS & Telecom, we are targeting calendar year 2020. Based on the feedback and ideas you’ve all submitted, we’ll likely be working on several division-wide initiatives to ensure we make meaningful progress on this.

What will we call ourselves moving forward? Will we create a new name?

I’ve heard from many of you the suggestion that we should change our name(s). The thoughts expressed to me were that this will help with culture, bring us together as a team, remove historical silos, etc. While I agree on the need for a change in the future, we first need to focus on collaborating, building partnerships, and sharing more. Let’s walk together before we run together.



Once we've made progress in these areas, we can start the process of identifying re-branding if we think it's needed. Rest assured that if we do go down this road it will be a collaborative process.

How can we leverage the power of our IT departments as well as those from Distributed IT?

This is absolutely a key to our future success. By working more cross-functionally, as a division and a campus, we bring more diverse perspectives to the table. Research shows that more diverse teams outperform other teams and lead to better ideas,

outcomes, and decisions.

To take a step in this direction, we've brought on Kacie Reed (CVMBS) and Dave Carpenter (CHHS) to help us bring the campus voice into our leadership teams as well as help us devise ways to better partner and collaborate across our IT environments. I'm looking forward to the ideas they'll bring and the partnerships they'll help us form.

What are the future plans for renovations? Are there plans to address the IS side, 6th floor bathrooms, etc.? As our organization grows where will we put everyone?

Great questions! There's no doubt that we should come up with an annual plan to improve our spaces. I'll be working with Josh Clark and Barb Gustison to determine an annual budget line to continually refresh our office spaces. In terms of major renovations and additional space for new staff, we need to explore further what our requirements are, what future staffing projections look like, and involve our partners at Facilities. One area previously identified as having potential for renovation is the north side of USC first floor. This needs further exploration but is an interesting idea.

Going Forward

As we wrap up this month's column, I know some of you had questions that weren't answered. With a team this large, it's difficult to answer all of them and

frankly some don't have answers yet. However, it's my goal that in the coming weeks and months we'll develop those answers together. In the meantime, stay engaged. Participate in staff events and meetings. Contribute your feedback and ideas. Continue to do great work and produce high-quality results. My goal is that together, as a team, we'll craft our future and set a new direction.

Go Rams!
-Brandon

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be the name 'Brandon', written in a cursive style. The signature is located on a light gray rectangular background.