

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (IT) GOVERNANCE

1. General

It is critical that the College's information technology (IT) resources, applications, and manpower be managed in a manner that enables the College to apply new technologies and adopt new processes effectively while enhancing and encouraging the innovation required for the College to excel in all aspects of its mission. To accomplish this goal, the following IT governance framework has been developed based on a collaborative model that includes formal input, review, and approval processes for decision making. This policy describes this framework and defines the roles and responsibilities of individuals and groups involved with IT governance to ensure effective input and decision-making pertaining to IT policies, standards, guidelines, processes, and procedures.

1.1. Information Technology Governed by this Policy

The term IT is applicable to a wide array of technology systems used at Northern, and for the purposes of this policy includes but is not limited to:

- Telecommunications and facilities infrastructure (e.g. voice and data networks and supporting cable plant).
- Computing (e.g. servers and development environments for productivity and high performance computing).
- Enterprise-wide applications and user services (e.g. Banner).
- Instructional technology (e.g. classroom media systems and services, distance learning).
- Video (e.g. CATV, video applications on the network, security video).
- Peripheral technologies (e.g. printing and scanning).

2. Roles and Responsibilities

Roles and responsibilities for the individuals and groups involved with IT Governance at NORTHERN are described in the following sections.

2.1. Northern IT Director

The IT Director provides leadership and direction for the College's shared information systems to include institution-wide strategic planning and budgeting for information technologies. The IT Director also oversees coordination of all IT-related functions across the College.

3. Overview of IT Policies, Standards, Guidelines, Processes, and Procedures

Policies, standards, guidelines, processes and procedures take a tiered approach to defining IT principles and providing IT-related direction to the College. The table below defines the differing levels of scope, authority, and compliance requirements for each category.

	Scope	Approval	Communication	Compliance
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IT Policies	College-wide, high-level policy	Board of Regents	All faculty and staff and students where applicable	Violation could result in discharge or dismissal
IT Standards	College-wide or limited to a IT function-technically specific	President	All affected faculty, staff, and students	Violation could result in system damage, loss of IT privileges, and/or disciplinary action
IT Guidelines	College-wide or limited to a IT function-technically specific	President	All affected faculty, staff, and students	Violation could negatively impact performance
IT Processes & Procedures	Associated with an IT application or process-technically specific	Northern IT Director	Departmental faculty or staff responsible for IT application or process	Violation could result in incorrect results or outcomes

4. Northern IT Policies

Northern IT policies are designed to provide the College community with unifying statements that describe fundamental IT principles, the reasoning behind the principles, and institutional procedures necessary for implementation. They help ensure compliance with applicable laws and regulations, enhance the College's mission, promote operational efficiencies, and/or reduce institutional risk.

4.1. Development

The development of effective policy statements requires both input from individuals who have extensive knowledge on the subject matter and input from individuals affected by the policy. Anyone wishing to propose an IT policy statement should send their request to the Northern IT Cabinet. If the Cabinet determines a need for a specific policy, it will assign individuals most closely involved with the subject matter to work with the Northern Policy Office to develop a preliminary draft. The preliminary draft will be reviewed by the IT Managers Council and then sent to the IT Agents Networking Group for comment. The Networking Group will forward their comments to the IT Managers Council for consideration. After the Council's review, the proposed policy is sent to the IT Cabinet and the IT Governance Council for endorsement. After endorsement, the Northern Policy Office will follow standard Northern protocol for approval of institutional policy. This protocol includes review by key areas selected based on the nature of the proposed policy, Deans Council, the President's Executive Cabinet, and the campus as a whole.

4.2. Approval and Communication

All Northern IT policies must be approved by the President in writing before distribution. Upon approval by the President the campus is notified of the new policy via email.

Information concerning the policy will also be posted on the IT Director website.

4.3. Compliance

Northern IT policies contain governing principles that mandate or constrain actions and have College-wide application. The policy will state applicability to students, staff, faculty, and/or visitors and compliance is mandatory. If exceptions are allowed, the authority and procedure for requesting an exception will be delineated in the policy.

Individuals who fail to comply with College policy will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including discharge or dismissal from the College. Violations of IT policies should be reported to the Office of the IT Director.

4.4. Review and Revision

IT policies will be reviewed by the Policy & Procedure Committee periodically to ensure policies are up-to-date and meeting the needs of the College.

5. IT Standards

Northern IT standards are based on industry best practices designed to ensure that IT resources are effectively managed in support of the College's mission of education, research, and public service. IT standards define procedures, processes, and practices designed to provide an efficient, effective IT system; protect confidential information; minimize security risks; ensure compliance with federal and state laws and regulations, and facilitate an open, interoperable, accessible IT infrastructure that meets the needs of students, faculty, staff, and the College community.

5.1. Development

To ensure that IT standards effectively support the mission of the College and meet the needs of the College community, development of IT standards requires a broad base of participation and involvement of subject matter experts. Draft standards will be developed by the IT Managers Council and then sent to the IT Agents Networking Group for review and comment. The Networking Group will forward their comments to the IT Managers Council for consideration. The Council will publish the proposed standard on the IT Director website and solicit comments from the campus. The IT Managers Council will update the standard based on campus comment and submit it to the IT Cabinet for review.

5.2. Approval and Communication

IT standards must be approved by the IT Director in writing prior to distribution. Upon approval, ITS will notify all individuals impacted by the standard prior to its effective date and post the standard on the IT Director website. When a new IT standard is issued, the standard will indicate the timeframe for compliance, based on but not limited to, criticality, funding limitations, and/or equipment replacement cycles.

5.3. Compliance

The type of technology addressed in the standard will determine the groups or

individuals required to comply with the standard. Some standards such as password standards will apply to all users, whereas others may apply only to system administrators. Each standard will define those individuals who are required to comply with the standard. Failure to comply with a standard may damage a system, risk security, result in loss of IT privileges, and/or disciplinary action. To request an exception to an IT standard, submit a written justification to the IT Director. Violations of IT standards should be reported to the Office of the IT Director.

6. IT Guidelines

IT guidelines are directives and specifications, similar to standards, but advisory in nature. In essence, IT guidelines constitute recommendations that are not binding; however, it should be noted that failure to comply with IT guidelines may result in damage to a system and/or inefficient processes.

6.1. Development

IT guidelines are developed by IT personnel in consultation with applicable users and based on industry practices.

6.2. Approval and Communication

IT guidelines must be approved by the IT Director in writing. Upon approval, the IT Director's Office will notify all individuals impacted by the guidelines and post the guidelines on the IT Director's website.

6.3. Compliance

IT guidelines are not mandatory, but failure to follow applicable IT guidelines may result in less effective system performance and may negatively impact an individual's job or academic performance.

7. IT Processes and Procedures

IT processes and procedures provide electronic and manual mechanisms for IT-related functions or job duties.

7.1. Development

IT processes and procedures are developed by IT personnel in conjunction with applicable administrative personnel and are generally developed at the departmental and unit levels.

7.2 Approval and Communication

IT processes and procedures are usually designed in the course of application development and are approved as part of the overall project approval. These processes and procedures are documented in accordance with industry standards and communicated in conjunction with the associated project.

7.3. Compliance

Compliance with IT processes and procedures is critical to the correct functioning of the selected application. Any problems or issues associated with an IT process or

procedure should be reported to the IT Director.

7.4. Review and Revision

IT processes and procedures are reviewed periodically for applicability and accuracy and updated as required in accordance with the associated application approval protocols.

8. Departmental IT Policies, Standards, Guidelines, Processes, and Procedures

Colleges and departments may establish additional departmental IT policies, standards, guidelines, and processes provided they comply with College IT policies, standards, guidelines, and processes and are documented and communicated to departmental employees.