

College of Information Technology Annual Report 2003-04

The seminal event for the College of Information Technology this year has been the creation of the College itself which came into existence July 1, 2003. The new College of IT consisted of three academic departments (Information Technology, Information Systems, and Computer Sciences) and two support organizations (Student Services and Technical Support). The Information Technology Department was brought over from School of Information Technology in COBA. Information Systems was formerly a component of the Department of Logistics and Information Systems in COBA and Computer Sciences was previously a component of the Department of Mathematics and Computer Science in the College of Science and Technology. In addition, ten new faculty lines supplemented the College's academic complement.

One of the primary activities of the College during its first year of existence was to identify and achieve the countless short term goals necessary to the operation of a successful organization. Secretaries needed to be hired, essential equipment (e.g., copying machines) needed to be acquired, office space assigned, phone service set up and so on. The activation, testing and adjusting of the College's complex array of support technology was a major task in itself. Heroic efforts by faculty, staff, administrators and many individuals outside the College facilitated major physical and organizational changes that were completed with remarkable smoothness.

Once operations began, the College's administrative team initiated a year-long process of visioning, strategic planning, setting tactical goals, and establishing a completely new college culture. All of this took place in the context of the many important and often complex tasks that are a normal part of college life. These latter tasks included such things as class scheduling, performance evaluations, the promotion and tenure process, and budgeting. Each of these tasks presented challenges because the College had no history and all of its leadership team were new to their roles. As the College faced and met each challenge it received immeasurable help from the University's existing colleges as well of the staff of the Provost's office. In particular, Ron Shiffler, the Dean of COBA and Bob Haney the Associate Provost were extraordinarily generous with their time and expertise.

In the fall semester the College set up its internal governance structure as well as electing its first ever representatives to various university committees and task forces. A level-III strategic plan was created, a Quality Enhancement Plan was drafted, and an Institution Effectiveness study was done. The work to launch a new online BS in IT was completed and the program was approved by the Board of Regents in the spring.

During the spring semester all three academic departments drafted letters of intent for new Master's programs. Negotiations continued with Fort Gordon to develop a joint graduate program. The NCR project rolled out the first release of its commercial Point of Sale system with initial deployment at Elvis Presley's Graceland. The College also worked hard to develop the potential of its Professional Development Center with some 73 events being held there throughout the year. A summer Cyber Camp was also planned and marketed.

Throughout 2003—2004, the Dean, the Chairs and the Faculty worked tirelessly to establish and maintain links between the College and the high technology business community. Nearly one hundred new contacts were made (including such organizations as the Savannah Economic Development Authority and the U.S. Army). The College gave and hosted presentations, gave tours to dozens of visiting VIP's and met with and advised the leaders of many high technology companies in the area.

The 2003—2004 academic year has been one of tremendous activity and historic achievement for the College of Information Technology. One of our faculty put it best when he said, "I can't believe we've only been a college for 9 months—we've done so much it feels like we've been working together for years."