myMiami Portal Enhancement Project – Phase 3

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Vice President for Information Technology

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Document History

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1. Objective:

1.1. Build on the myMiami Portal Enhancement Project – Phase 2 project by enhancing the portal for new audiences (e.g. Alumni, Perspective/Accepted students, Parents, etc.) based on requests from the offices responsible for those audiences.

2. Background & Narrative:

2.1. In the summer of 2001, MCIS deployed Campus Pipeline’s portal product at Miami University as the myMiami service (myMiami 1.0). In the Fall of 2002, citing ongoing severe technical problems, MCIS decided to replace Campus Pipeline’s portal product with an in-house developed solution (myMiami 2.0).

2.2. Since that time, Campus Pipeline (now part of Sungard SCT) has replaced their product with a new portal know as Luminis. This portal is based on the open source uPortal project developed by the Java Administration SIG. This new product also includes the Documentum Content Management solution for managing web content within the portal. An enterprise-wide edition of Documentum can be purchased to manage additional web content outside the portal.

2.3. Realizing that the new portal might be better for Miami than the original portal product and that the university might decide to install Luminis, MCIS continue to license the Campus Pipeline portal products even though the product was not currently being used.

2.4. The following should be considered in evaluating the products:

- Robustness and reliability
- Cost
- Effort and time to implement
- Acceptance by stakeholders

2.5. The SCT Luminis & Documentum CMS License Evaluation project recommended that Miami University discontinue the SCT Luminis & Documentum CMS License and should implement the Blackboard Portal (now the Blackboard Community System) as the next rendition of the myMiami service (myMiami 3.0).

2.6. Based on the internal environmental Analysis, the current online course management system has significant shortcomings for students and faculty in the area of access, service, support, and capabilities.

2.7. Initial discussions involved exploring alternatives to the Blackboard Learning System. However, following Blackboard Day at Miami, July 21, 2004, where Blackboard brought in specialists to share information on the capabilities of the three components of the system, the desire for potential migration to another course management system no longer existed. This session was heavily attended by faculty.

2.8. Due to the choice of Blackboard as Miami’s myMiami portal strategy, this project will be incorporating many of the components of Project #6.

3. References:

3.1. IT Strategic Plan Goal 2.4 Enterprise Communications Applications: Explore and implement effective means of communications for all university constituent groups and between the university and the global community. Establish and promote a common technical foundation and shared architecture to leverage these communication tools.

3.2. 2.4.1 Communications Applications: Provide enhanced and new communications services (e.g., email, video conferencing, instant messaging, and web sites) to students, faculty, and staff and designated affiliates so that communications is conveniently accessed from on- and off-campus, easy-to-use, reliable, highly available, and secure. Systems must be enhanced to further combat unsolicited communications and viruses.

- 2.4.2 Use of Technology in University-wide Communications: Explore opportunities to improve the use of technology to enhance community and university-wide communications (e.g., broadcasting, LISTSERV mailing lists, etc.).

- 2.4.3 Scheduling/Calendaring: Explore possibilities for the use of technology to enhance university-wide scheduling and calendaring to support students, faculty, staff, and resources.
3.3. IT Strategic Plan Goal 2.14 Seamless Access to Information, Research, and Digital Resources: Develop a model for efficient integration of and seamless and consistent access to the university’s information resources including libraries, media, computing, telecommunications, and services such as the Internet and Internet2.

3.4. IT Strategic Plan Goal 3.2: Web-based Services through a Portal Environment. Explore development of a robust portal environment for unified web-based customer services that are tailored to individuals based on their affiliation with the university.


3.6. IT Strategic Plan Goal 1.1.2: Online Course Management: Collaborate with students, faculty, and researchers to develop online learning materials and media to enhance the learning experience for all students. Ensure continuous improvement in the mission critical online course management system and a robust web-based learning infrastructure to support courses at the university.

4. Deliverables:

4.1. Build on the myMiami Portal Enhancement Project – Phase 2 project by enhancing the portal for new audiences (e.g. Alumni, Perspective/Accepted students, Parents, etc.) based on requests from the offices responsible for those audiences:
   - Meets constituents needs
   - Policies to allow the system to grow and expand in a controlled and manageable fashion
   - Customer support is provided

5. Boundaries:

5.1. Work cannot begin until critical components of the myMiami Portal Enhancement Project – Phase 2 project are completed.

5.2. This project is not expected to start until January 2006 with completion in the June 2006 timeframe.

6. Assumptions:

6.1. Resources will be made available to work on the project in the timeline proposed.

7. Risks:

7.1. Prioritization of this project within all areas of IT Services and the university will not be consistent or understood.

7.2. The teams involved may not complete a thorough enough assessment of the needs and alternatives to ensure buy-in for the project.

7.3. University-wide resources will be unavailable or unwilling to participate in the execution of the project.

7.4. Needed IT Services resources may be redirected to other projects.