

**Resolution in Support of Increased Communication and Transparency from  
The SUNY Old Westbury's IT Department with Faculty, Staff, and Students**

**WHEREAS** the SUNY Old Westbury's IT Department is responsible for conducting routine updates to the College Connect Portal, system changes, software conversions, and on campus and remote campus accessibility options for Mac, PC, and thin client applications; and

**WHEREAS** the Faculty, Staff, and Students are users of these IT Department responsibilities; and

**WHEREAS** we appreciate all the work the IT Department does and has done for the College during these challenging times; and

**WHEREAS** in the winter and summer months there is a pattern of reoccurring weather events (i.e., including, but not limited to snow storms, heat waves, and other inclement weather) resulting in power outages, and dropped, disconnected, or downed system connectivity to the campus servers; and

**WHEREAS** these issues occur during critical time-periods of classes, new/transfer student orientations and advising, and faculty research and grant writing activities; and

**WHEREAS** communication from the IT Department is either absent, delayed, or occurs too far in advance without contemporaneous reminders as to when such updates and system changes are scheduled to occur; and

**WHEREAS** system changes and updates should not occur during times where such access is needed for all campus constituents' work related purposes and when classes occur (i.e., between 6am – 11pm) and not during the days right before a semester begins; and

**WHEREAS** the SUNY Old Westbury's IT Department has either inconsistent or absent services for addressing IT related issues during the evenings on the weekdays and the weekends; and

**WHEREAS** when any power outages, downed systems, or other network and/or server related issues occur, Faculty, Staff, and Students have no alternative mechanism to submit service requests to the IT Department; and

**WHEREAS** when any updates and systems changes are instituted and require Faculty, Staff, and Students to refresh their browsers, change browsers, clear their history browsing data, clear their cache, and/or need to restart their computers in order for such changes to synchronize, they are not being communicated; and

**WHEREAS**, that SUNY Old Westbury IT Department requires increased resources and budget to hire more staff to address the aforementioned areas of concern raised by Faculty, Staff, and Students for working, teaching, and research related activities.

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the SUNY Old Westbury's IT Department adopt new best practices to communicate by email and text alerts to all Faculty, Staff, and Students any future routine updates to the College Connect Portal, systems changes, software conversions, and on campus and remote campus accessibility options for Mac, PC, and thin client applications well in advance with another reminder the day prior to these scheduled events; and

Information Technology Services, ITS, will provide, as best practice, notifications for scheduled updates via text alert and email, to all Faculty, Staff and Students, 5 business days prior to the scheduled event and outage and 1-day reminder prior to the date. Should the outage window be prolonged, or restoration of services not successful additional notifications are sent with an approximate ETA of restoration of service.

**BE IT RESOLVED**, that the SUNY Old Westbury's IT Department email and text alert Faculty, Staff, and Students well in advance and the day prior to changing any critical operating systems, email systems, thin clients, on campus and remote learning accessibility, and ensure Faculty, Staff, and Students are provided enough time/forewarning to save, backup, and upload to the cloud any teaching, research, and other important files to prevent loss; and

On IT Governance committee's recommendation to Facilities and ITS, and in order to speed up the notification process, if and when major interruptions occur that do adversely affect Teaching and Learning, Facilities or ITS will send a quick notification, foregoing detailed assessment and resolution estimated time, to all impacted constituencies.

**BE IT RESOLVED**, that the SUNY Old Westbury's IT Department proactively plan accordingly for threats to the availability of the system (i.e., including winter snow storms, summer heat waves, inclement weather, and power outages) to safeguard all data containing servers and IT relates systems on campus; and

Data housed in the College's data center are being backed up locally. Data housed in the ITEC data center is being backed up at that location.

**BE IT RESOLVED**, that the SUNY Old Westbury's IT Department immediately contact Faculty, Staff, and Students of any power outages, downed systems, or other network and/or server related issues for communicating when such problems occur with another follow up communication when such problems are resolved; and

In collaboration and coordination with Facilities Department and ITS, notifications regarding power outages, downed systems, fiber cuts, HVAC adversely impacted, will be communicated via phone, cell, email and text within a reasonable period after occurrence of the event. Notification window is directly related and dependent on the nature and complexity of the even. *See above regarding quick notification process.* Upon assessments of systems and services affected the ITS emergency notification process is put on effect via email and text. The ITS emergency notification process is comprised of several tiers of checks and balances and it is managed by many departments; B&F, Facilities, Communications to name but a few.

**BE IT RESOLVED**, that the SUNY Old Westbury's IT Department come up with separate, prioritized options for faculty to submit service request tickets. These options should include as a backup alternatives in case of power outages, downed systems, or other network and/or server related issues arise with step-by-step instructions on how to submit such requests when needed; and

ITS Department provides a very simple option to submit service request tickets; email to [servicedesk@oldwestbury.edu](mailto:servicedesk@oldwestbury.edu) or call x3098, 516-876-3098. In case of power outage, downed system or other network related issues, both email and phone services might be unavailable. Direct links to cloud

and hosted applications will be included in the body of the notification, i.e. Blackboard, Microsoft Office (email). A notification tree with Cell Numbers has been established in case of phone service interruption.

**BE IT RESOLVED**, that the SUNY Old Westbury's IT Department immediately email and text all Faculty, Staff, and Students to refresh their browsers, change browsers, clear their history browsing data, clear their cache, and/or restart their computers in order for any changes that were made to be synchronized; and

Notifications to Faculty, Staff and students will include instructions as proposed where relevant and applicable. These instructions can be found in the Service Desk area on our Portal and are saved and updated as Knowledge Base Articles. Know issues with browser compatibility are also posted on the Blackboard portal.

**BE IT RESOLVED**, that system changes and updates should occur during off hours (i.e., 11pm-6am) and 3 weeks prior the start of every semester; and

All scheduled system changes to the College's Technical Infrastructure are scheduled and occur, as a standard practice, during off hours. Emergency updates and changes occur as needed and required to restore service. Systems housed and maintained by ITEC, OpenSUNY, and application vendors, fall outside ITS's purview; however, all scheduled changes by externally maintained systems take place during off hours with the notable exception of emergency updates and service interruptions.

**BE IT RESOLVED**, the SUNY Old Westbury's IT Department hires staff to work during the evenings on weekdays from 5pm-10pm and on the weekends from 9am-4pm; and

ITS provides coverage via staggered schedule, flex hours, during Academic Semesters, when classes are in session. Staff hiring are directly correlated to budget availability and Cabinet approval.

**THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that SUNY Old Westbury Administration support the IT Department by helping providing them with the necessary resources and budget to hire more staff to address the aforementioned areas of concern raised by Faculty, Staff, and Students to ensure that they have the required access to IT systems on campus and through the remote campus for working, teaching, and research related activities.

ITS recognizes and finds value in this resolution. The abrupt transition to an expanded remote learning platform, along with the increased utilization of educational and student support software and services, clearly demonstrate the importance of investing more in technology resources to assist the College in achieving its mission. The administration has reacted positively and provided additional resources to ITS. In FYE 2012, ITS had a staff of 19.5 FTEs and a budget of \$3.5 million. Since then, the College has acknowledged the increasing importance of technology in teaching and learning by investing significant resources in this area. Currently, ITS has 25.0 FTEs and a budget of \$5.1 million, a 45% increase in resources since 2011. It is the administration's intent to further strengthen its investment in technology to ensure that faculty, staff and students have secure access to a sound technology infrastructure (Old Westbury's Digital Campus) for working, teaching and research related activities.

**Resolution Submitted** to the Faculty Senate Executive Committee on 09, 21, 2020

**Sponsored by:** The Psychology Department – School of Arts & Sciences

**Endorsed by: XX**