

# Faculty Spotlight 2007 Summary Report

## Executive Summary

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Faculty Spotlight 2007 included representatives from colleges across the University of Alaska Fairbanks and affiliated rural campuses, Office of the Provost, and OIT leadership and staff (see Appendix p. 6 for a full list of participants). The following summarizes the attendees:

<i>Faculty</i>	21	<i>OIT</i>	9
<i>Staff</i>	10	<i>Provost</i>	3

Faculty Spotlight 2007 was held in the Wood Center Ballroom on Thursday, May 3, from 10:00 am to 2:30 pm. From approximately 10:00 am to 12:00 pm, the event was comprised of presentations and status updates by OIT representatives. From approximately 12:30 pm to 2:30 pm, the event was comprised of a dialogue between faculty and staff participants and OIT representatives to address participants' primary concerns.

Faculty Spotlight 2007 illuminated many areas where the University of Alaska Fairbanks can improve service to the academic community. The action items listed below emerged from the discussion between departmental attendees and OIT representatives.

## Action Items

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1. Faculty Spotlight Planning Team will notify academic departments of specific problems identified by faculty and prepare a problem/resolution document reviewed and revised by OIT leadership.
2. Prepare a formal response to the OIT-related concerns raised by Faculty Spotlight 2007 for distribution on July 13th.
3. Identify a date for the next Faculty Spotlight.

*Each group listed below will evaluate the designated items and provide a summary report no later than July 2nd.*

### OIT Leadership

4. Identify a new procedure to notify students, faculty and staff of impending changes to critical systems such as Blackboard.
5. Reduce lengthy outages. Some of them pose a safety issue.
6. Offer faculty access to Banner.
7. Address the issue of faculty input regarding software, support, and manuals, and student support.
8. Increase social software systems that support lifelong learning.
9. Increase opportunities for information fluency, faculty development, and transformative teaching.
10. Minimize the number of logins required to access university systems.

11. Forward request for support to repair photocopiers on campus.
12. Provide Blackboard training support to the extent a technician would present training/troubleshooting tips at the beginning of the semester.

### Support Center

13. Prepare and deliver statistics to the Provost office to increase transparency.
14. Resolve problems for distance students. Currently, Support Center does not work well for distance students.

### Campus Technology Services

15. Build a large “instructional lab” that holds more students.
16. Increase Smart classroom support to 10:00pm.

### Windows Server Group

17. Publish estimated or anticipated server costs.

### Desktop Services

18. Establish support for IE7 and Vista, and make support information available.
19. Increase support for Mac and Linux computers.
20. Offer support to visiting faculty who require FTP or next-gen FTP, and support Apple “Boot Camp” application.

### Core Applications

21. Establish procedures that enable faculty to move from semester to semester without problems. The current process is incredibly difficult.

### Network Operations / Engineering

22. Enable multicast throughout campus.
23. Identify reasons streaming video works well in some places but not in others, to include remote campuses.
24. Invest in equipment that will increase the connectivity speed in Irving and Arctic Health buildings.

### Video Conferencing Services

25. Address needs regarding distance conferencing quality and support.

### Faculty Spotlight Planning Team

26. Revise the focus of Faculty Spotlight.

27. Reduce the number of speeches and increase dialogue between OIT leaders and faculty. Dialogue did not become effective until the facilitator moved to the middle of the room.
28. Include student representative(s) in the meeting to more fully understand the needs of the user community.
29. Reduce the number of participants.

## Event Summary

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The purpose of Faculty Spotlight 2007 was to offer colleges, departments, and their faculty the opportunity to address their information technology concerns with OIT professionals in constructive dialogue. Faculty Spotlight 2007 included representatives from colleges across the University of Alaska Fairbanks and affiliated rural campuses, Office of the Provost, and OIT leadership and staff (see Appendix p. 6 for a list of participants).

To prepare for Faculty Spotlight 2007, OIT Campus Technology Services distributed a survey to identify key focus areas in advance of the event. Survey results were used to select OIT directors, managers, and professionals best suited to address overarching and specific concerns of academic departments and their faculty. At the time of the event, Spotlight organizers distributed index cards to participants, who used them to write down two (2) IT issues that were most critical.

Faculty Spotlight 2007 was held in the Wood Center Ballroom on Thursday, May 3, from 10:00 am to 2:30 pm. The first half of Faculty Spotlight 2007, from approximately 10:00 am to 12:00 pm, was comprised of presentations and status updates by OIT representatives. Lunch was served from approximately 12:00 pm to 12:30 pm, during which time participants' index cards were collected and compiled. The closing half of the Spotlight, from approximately 12:30 pm to 2:30 pm, was comprised of a dialogue between departmental participants and OIT representatives to address participants' primary concerns.

## Discussion Summary

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The following assertions emerged from the Faculty Spotlight 2007 dialogue:

### Support Center Help Desk

- The response time from the Support Center is too slow. For routine or simple tasks, such as registering a printer (on reconfigured networks that OIT messed up), the response comes after a very long wait.
- The Peregrine system does not improve efficiency. Peregrine reduces productivity across the campus; in some cases, tickets have been closed before the problem has been resolved. No apparent priority in problem and ticketing management; huge problems appear to carry the same priority as password resets. Support for mission-critical systems should be immediate. Participants suggested a cost benefit analysis to determine if Peregrine really helps the problem, or if Peregrine *is* the problem.
- Reports on Peregrine statistics are not widely available or known. Peregrine and other statistics are valuable only if their collection and analysis result in change to the system.

**\*Provost Reichardt requests greater transparency in the campus-wide reporting of Support Center statistics.**

- A voicemail system for technical support is ineffective. Consumers leave messages but get no response. The Help Desk needs a telephone queuing system where consumers wait on the line until they reach a live technician.
- While self-service options may be available, they do not work for users. Self-service options are difficult to navigate because they are written for a technician audience. In order for self-service to work, the interface must be written in language that users can understand. This is tantamount to no support at all, especially for students who share their experiences with each other, including potential enrollees.
- Suggest outsourcing Support Center to vendors in order to expand services. Request Peregrine accounts for Rasmuson Library personnel in order to reduce demands on current Support Center staff.

### Software

- Withholding support for Windows Vista OS is unrealistic. New machines all have Vista; in order to get many applications to work properly or at all, faculty and staff must resort to hacking old drivers to patch problems.
- Lists of UA-available software, maintenance, manuals, and licensing are not integrated or updated. Additionally, the process for requesting new software and updated licenses is unclear.

### Instructional Development

- The current infrastructure does not encourage or support genuine instructional innovation. While local systems, such as Blackboard, provide online learning support, the systems are closed and present few opportunities for lifelong learning, “from K to gray.”
- Opportunities for faculty training and development need improvement. To teach effectively, faculty need greater familiarity with emerging social software—blogs, wikis, MySpace, chat clients—and pedagogy-driven instructional design.

### Communication

- While the process for registering for classes is transparent, the avenues for technical support are not. The appropriate channel for requesting technical support is fragmented. This presents a particular problem for rural students, or students taking classes at more than one MAU.
- As OIT implements changes to university systems, the changes are not publicized effectively. People “at the top” have no concept of what major changes mean to people “in the trenches”—fundamental changes are made and there’s no way back to solvency. People most affected by changes had no idea until it was too late. “Best intentions cause terrible problems.” Talk to people who need to implement changes.

## Participant Quotations

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The following quotations are transcribed from the index cards used to steer discussion during the latter half of Faculty Spotlight 2007:

- “Sometimes big changes are made to major systems. These changes can have profound effects on how a particular group has their workflow set up. It doesn’t seem that the users are always consulted or listened to before, and then *bad things happen*.”
- “IE7 vs. Banner. All new Windows-based computers coming with Vista—XP drivers not available for these and not vendor-supported. Vista doesn’t IE6—what is Banner vendor solution?”
- “Blackboard is mission-critical to our organization. Currently the ability to move easily from one semester to the next is incredibly difficult. Things are worse now than they have ever been.”
- “IT presence in remote parts of Alaska for data acquisition and telemetry.”
- “Better coordination with redundancy for IT maintenance efforts. Lengthy outages pose a safety issue.”
- “Faculty access to Banner.”
- “Streaming video, access across networks, and instructional design.”
- “Faculty input, software support and manuals, and student support.”
- “Distance conferencing and support.”
- “Instructional computer lab which can support large numbers of students ( $n > 40$ ) is missing.”
- “Slow Ethernet in Irving and Arctic Health Buildings (they are still 10-Base T, aren’t they?).”
- “Not enough desktop support, especially for Mac and Linux.”
- “Support for more ‘open’ and social networking systems both with existing systems and new ones—*authentic* systems that support lifelong learning, continuing education, browsing, etc.”
- “More direct opportunities for faculty development—pedagogy, information fluency, transforming teaching, etc.”
- “Students’ difficulties understanding and managing a variety of user names, log-ons, and passwords—I know several who don’t use the portal because they couldn’t get linked to Blackboard, etc. when they first started.”
- “Making sure there is someone available to troubleshoot smart classrooms during daytime and until 6 pm—7 pm.”
- “Essential instructional equipment like *photocopiers*.”
- “Could OIT provide Blackboard training support to the extent that someone could come into a class (my class) at the beginning of the semester and talk/troubleshoot items being used on Blackboard? I recognize that you could get swamped with requests, but I think the need is out there—at least my students report difficulty using Blackboard. I have never used it so my first stop will be the basic OIT training.”

- “Although there are programs in place to support students, they are not working in my experience. We need to find ways to support students that work for them.”
- “Help Desk doesn’t work for distance students.”
- “Server cost is unknown or unpublished.”
- “Visiting faculty wireless, FTP (or next generation FTP), and support for Mac/Boot Camp.”
- “Bandwidth: academic vs. entertainment.”

## Appendix

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### Faculty participants

Joe Mason  
Chris Beks  
Naoki Takebayashi  
Hans Nielsen  
Roger Hansen  
Doug Goering  
Rajive Ganguli  
Jon Genetti  
Jill Faudree  
Bill Witte  
Falk Huettmann  
Doug Reynolds  
Gary Newman  
Joseph Thompson  
Anita Hartmann  
Chris Swingley  
Jennifer Moss  
Greg Newby  
Rheba Dupras  
Ilana Kingsley  
Peter Prokein  
Jan Dawe  
Mingchu Zhang  
Glenn Juday  
Chris Lott  
Shari George  
Juella Sparks  
Jing Zhang  
Jodi Bailey  
Joy Morrison

### Office of the Provost participants

Paul Reichardt  
Susan Henrichs  
Hild Peters

### OIT participants

Steve Smith  
Tim Larrabee  
Michael Scott  
Joe Jordan  
Jaime Schwarzwald  
Donna Rohwer  
Mike Brase  
Martin Miller  
Jim Durkee  
Ramona McAfee