

WESTERN WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY ITEM SUBMITTED TO THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

TO: Members of the Board of Trustees

FROM: President Sabah Randhawa on behalf of Brent Carbajal, Provost, and Vice President of Academic Affairs

DATE: April 22, 2022

SUBJECT: Information Technology and Cybersecurity Update

PURPOSE: Discussion Item

Purpose of Submittal:

Information Technology Services (Chuck Lanham & Chris Miller) would like to brief the Board of Trustees on the current state of the University's information security posture (primarily in response to active threats stemming from the conflict in Europe), and the current state of the University's IT infrastructure (as we come out of Covid operations and adapt to the next normal).

Background:

As a result of the conflict in Ukraine, the US federal government has advised the public sector, including higher education, to be on heightened alert for the risk of a cyberattack. Western is engaged in initiatives to improve our security posture, and better protect our students, our systems, and our data.

Pivoting to infrastructure, Covid put many stresses on the way the campus teaches, learns, and works. Those stresses required Western to accelerate aspects of its digital transformation; now that we are coming out of Covid, we have some of successes to build on, and some gaps to close. Most importantly, we have a significant need to invest in the recruitment, retention, and development of IT employees to mitigate the threat of increased remote IT work opportunities and "The Great Resignation."

Strategic Questions:

1. What questions or concerns does external conflict raise for the Trustees, vis-à-vis cyberattacks and information security at Western?
2. How should Western's experience during the pandemic with online teaching inform a strategy to provide greater access to education through online instruction and the support infrastructure?
3. How should Western's experience with remote work during the pandemic inform a future strategy to empower remote/hybrid work experiences that prioritizes employee engagement, development, and well-being?