Information & Technology Governance Decision Document

January 27, 2025

Scope

UW-IT currently operates both Microsoft 365 and Google Workspace platform services for the UW. Both platforms provide email, calendaring, online file management and collaboration, and options for third-party applications. The UW began offering Google Gmail and Calendar in 2008 while standardizing other departmental email solutions to Microsoft email and calendar.

In most UW units, individual faculty, staff and students have the option to choose either platform. The adoption of each platform varies widely by unit. Over time, both services have seen an increasing volume of 3rd party applications which have led to increased service support costs and risks.

Governance Review

- In 2023, as part of its review of UW-IT services, the IT Service Management Board recommended that UW-IT "reduce our reliance on the UW Google service by working to increase departmental adoption of UW Office 365." (IT Service Management Board 2023 Report)
- In 2024, I&T Enterprise Technology Board formed a Working Group to review opportunities and risks in Microsoft 365 and Google Workspace. In November 2024, the Board voted to approve the Working Group's recommendations, outlined in this summary from the Enterprise Technology Board.
- The I&T Executive Committee reviewed the recommendations in January 2025 and voted to approve the Board's recommendation.

Recommendation of the I&T Executive Committee

UW-IT is charged to initiate further UW-wide discovery, analysis, planning, and resourcing for the M365/Google service changes approved by the Enterprise Technology Board. In summary, these changes are:

- Over time, discontinue enterprise support for UW Gmail and Google Calendar and migrate to UW M365 Email and Calendar services.
- Continue to provide enterprise support for Google Content Authoring Tools: Drive, Sites, Docs, Sheets, Slides, Forms, Meet, and Keep.
- Provide training to support use of M365.
- In both Google and M365, mitigate risk from third-party applications that integrate with these platforms.
- In Google, eliminate high-risk/high-cost and low-value "consumer" applications through a review process.

This is a directional decision, meaning that I&T Governance has set strategic direction on behalf of the UW, based on stated goals, intended benefits and assumptions, and with the expectation that detailed planning, discovery and design will provide course corrections.

Once a plan has been developed by UW-IT it is expected to be proposed to the Enterprise Technology Board for a decision to implement.

Rationale

The intended benefits for this directional decision are described in [this summary from the Enterprise Technology Board](). They include:

- Make better use of limited support resources by focusing support on a single platform;
- Enable unified scheduling in one calendar;
- Enable full protection from UW Proofpoint;
- Continue to deliver value from Google Content Authoring tools;
- Help people adopt tools the UW seeks to standardize on; reduce barriers to entry and increase value from standard tools; and
- Help people avoid unintentional risk from sharing sensitive data with third parties or opting in to contracts without standard UW protections.