



# **Creating Pathways to Develop Student Professionalism: A New Direction**

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# Valparaiso University

[www.valpo.edu](http://www.valpo.edu)



- Co-ed, four year, private university
- Independent Lutheran affiliation
- Nearly 4,000 students from all 50 states and 57 countries (includes graduate programs and Law School)
- More than 70 programs in five colleges: Arts & Sciences, Business Administration, Engineering, Nursing, Christ College (the honors college)

# About Us

## Jeni Elkins

- Long & varied career in technology
- Came to VU in 2004
- Currently is Coordinator of the IT Fellows Program

## Becky Klein

- 10 years in IT at VU
- Started as student employee
- Currently is Manager of Help Desk Services

# In the beginning...

- Began in 1986 with about a dozen students
- No central IT department until 1990
- The first Help Desk
  - Founded in 1990
  - Full-time staff shared duties
  - Business hours only (M-F 8am-5pm)
- Students at the Help Desk (a.k.a. “StuCons”)
  - Began in 1992 with only experienced students
  - On-the-job training, staff meetings, email communication
  - Paired experienced staff with newbies
- “Blue Forms”

# Technical Assistants

- Position created in 1994
- Network card sales and installations
- Residence hall labs
- Campus connectivity issues

# The Help Desk

- 1996 restructuring
  - Help Desk Manager position
  - HEAT system
  - Pay scale
- Growth and turbulence
  - 1999 expansions
    - Help Desk Specialist position
    - StuCon Manager positions
  - 2001: StuCon Specialist positions
  - HD Manager position turned over multiple times
  - Recruitment issues
  - 2004: new HD Manager, new building

# A Name Change and More...

- Change in leadership
  - Dr. Yohe retired as Executive Director
  - Dr. Trinkle took over as CIO
- No longer Electronic Information Services, but Information Technology
- CIO Top 100 Award, 2007
- Help Desk Specialists moved to Tech Support

# Laying the Groundwork

- First step was combining TA and Tech Support Specialist positions
- The concepts:
  - An honors employment program for students interested in technology
    - Model was ITAP at DePauw University
  - First year: rotational training
  - Second year and beyond: internships
  - Notation on transcripts

# Getting Started

- Jeni pulled double duty – Help Desk and IT Fellows
- Recruitment efforts
  - Freshmen (26):
    - Admissions mailings
    - On-campus and telephone interviews
    - Cohorts
    - Rotations based on interests
  - Upperclassmen (50):
    - Interviewed by Jeni and Dennis
    - Internships based on skill sets



# Educating the Fellows

- Training
  - Boot Camp vs. Leadership Academy
  - First year vs. subsequent years
- Enrichment Seminars
  - 60 to 90 minute sessions covering both professional and technical topics
  - Requirement: attend 2 sessions per semester

# Year One In Action

- Leaders emerged from the start
- Move-in weekend worked very well
- Increased our diversity of services
- Classified ads for future positions
  - Interviewing process
  - Placement
- CIO change

# Lessons Learned

- Over 14 enrichment seminars; however, we need to vary times offered
- Not all rotations offered the minimum number of hours
- Journaling vs. Blogging
- Balancing positions with school work

# Leave of absence

For the past 3 months, Jeni has been on a leave of absence that ended with the beginning of this conference. Therefore, the information presented is based on knowledge of the program as it stood in late July.

# Changes and Future Plans

- Full Leadership week for freshman candidates only; dep't training as requested
  - Help Desk & Tech Support offered Boot Camp
- Cohort structure
- Rotation assignment
- Internships to all be in-house this year
- 1/2 credit to be offered to IT Fellows who successfully complete each semester
  - Written assignments, rubrics, evaluations
  - Passing grade is 40%
- Better coordinated curriculums to insure training quality



# Questions? Comments...

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