“Merging Library and Information Technology in a Liberal Arts College: Creating an Organization for the Times”

RESEARCH QUESTIONS:
1. What are the most essential and meaningful features that represent the “soul” of Middlebury College? What are the most important relationships/activities that connect LIS to these features?

   Resources:
   - Admissions web site & view book & staff
   - Alumni magazine & web site & staff
   - College publications/brochures; web site
   - Interview faculty, staff, college administration, alumni, students
   - Institutional Research surveys

2. What is and should be Middlebury doing to prepare students to lead rich and meaningful lives? How does/can LIS connect to these activities?

   Resources:
   - Commons / Student affairs / Career Services staff
   - Enrollment Planning / Athletics
   - Faculty, student, alumni, college administration interviews
   - Literature on value of college education (cf. employer-provided training)
   - Literature on life-long learning

3. Consider the services LIS staff provide to students, faculty, staff, senior administration, and the community. What do we do [exceptionally] well? What do we not do well? What are we doing that we should not be doing? What are we not doing that we should be doing?

   Resources:
   - LIS staff (for additional perspective, contact former staff working in industry or other colleges)
   - Interview students, faculty, staff across campus
   - Review reports such as: annual reports, external committee report, library and ITS surveys & focus groups, Minerva report, Library Planning Committee report

4. What external and/or internal forces do you see as most threatening and most beneficial to Middlebury’s LIS future?

   Resources:
   - News, articles, books, websites on the future “information industry”
   - Convergence of publishing, news, entertainment, communications, internet, computing (ex: AOL Time Warner)
   - Corporate models: .coms; NetLibrary, Microsoft vs. Sun, HP and IBM, DRA and Sirsi
   - Evolving technologies: wireless telephony & and handheld computing
   - College/University inter-institutional consortia and collaboration
   - College/University partnerships with vendors
   - Articles on computer privacy, security/viruses, rights to access and share to information, recordings, videos
   - Articles, books, websites on social, economic, and demographic trends
   - Interviews with students, staff, faculty, alumni, community members

5. The College issued a 10-year plan in 1991, and was reaccredited in 1999. How did the college expect to meet its goals during the 1990s? How successful was the College? What gaps remain? What new goals are defined? What LIS activities play into achieving institutional goals?

   Resources:
   - College planning documents (ten-year plan; special initiatives; curricular and residential peaks)
   - College annual reports
   - Reaccreditation self-study and report
   - Studies and reports relating to curricular and residential peaks and other
6. What should Middlebury look like in five years, and what should LIS do to get us there?

Consider these three scenarios:

a) How will a student will apply to Midd, pay a tuition bill, take a class, communicate with his/her faculty members and advisor, check-in to dining halls, gain access to residence halls, take an exam, read and research and write papers, make class presentations, collaborate with other students in the class, get grades and transcripts, apply for and interview for jobs, make travel arrangements for study abroad. What technologies will be with the student at all times? in common spaces? in the dorm room? at home and on the road?

b) How will a faculty member (one just hired out of grad school at age 28, and one who has been at Middlebury for 28 years) prepare for classes, teach a class, meet with students individually or in groups, submit grades/portfolio assessments, advise students, plan and gather and present materials for teaching, conduct and publish research, participate in conferences? What tools will be used in the office, in the classroom, at home?

c) What will a workday look like for a staff member (consider different departments, from academic coordinators to comptrollers to facilities management)? Will jobs be more specialized, or will everyone wear more hats? What technologies will staff use? How will staff get information to do their jobs? From where will they work? How will hours be tracked? What functions will their ID card perform? How will they communicate and collaborate? When and how will they learn new information services?

Resources:
- Articles and books on future of higher education
- Articles/interviews/planning documents from other colleges
- Articles/interviews/plans from public-service and private corporations

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS:

LIS will enrich Middlebury’s special/unique sense of community by promoting life long learning.

LIS will provide excellent service with:
- Understanding, anticipating and responding to user’s needs
- Proactive & aggressive training
- The right time, right location and right level

LIS will provide a comprehensive suite of tools and information resources to support the teaching and learning mission of the college.

LIS will earn and advance the reputation as the expert for library and technology resources through:
- Constantly upgrading our skills and knowledge
- Building confidence in our intellectual and information resources
- Promoting our resources and skills

COMMITTEES:
- American Disability Act compliance
- Communications
- Continual assessment
- Continuing Education
- Digitization
- Disaster
- Exhibits and lectures
- Information/Technology literacy
- Mission/Vision statement
- Orientation
- Social
- Web design and updates