



# **Solving the Top 10 IT Issues of 2019**

CampusWorks' Solutions for the Year's Most Pressing Challenges

**CAMPUSWORKS**  
Insight. Ingenuity. Impact.

## **Top 10 IT Issues of 2019**

1. Information Security Strategy
2. Student Success
3. Privacy
4. Student-Centered Institution
5. Digital Integrations
6. Data-Enabled Institution
7. Sustainable Funding
8. Data Management & Governance
9. Integrative CIO
10. Higher Education Affordability

Once again, EDUCAUSE has harnessed the collective wisdom of higher education professionals to identify the top 10 IT issues facing colleges and universities this year. Industry leaders and decision makers use this list to identify what's important and where to focus in their planning and management activities. At CampusWorks, we use it to refine our services and strengthen our team to ensure we're offering the most valuable, relevant solutions to help colleges and universities overcome today's most urgent challenges.

According to EDUCAUSE, higher education's collective focus in 2019 is to organize, standardize, and safeguard data before applying it to our most pressing priority: student success. They've categorized this year's top ten IT issues into three main themes—empowered students, trusted data, and 21st century business strategies—dubbing it the “Student Genome Project.”

Since 1999, CampusWorks has been helping colleges and universities optimize operations to support student success, enable data-driven decision making, and remain relevant and competitive. Armed with decades of higher education leadership experience and expertise, CampusWorks brings valuable insight, creative thinking, objective recommendations, and a student-centered approach to every challenge. In the following pages, you'll learn about CampusWorks' solutions for tackling the top 10 IT issues facing higher education this year.

## What is the Student Genome Project?

Technology has not only transformed how institutions operate and educate, it has poised them to collect and use data in previously unimaginable ways. Like the Human Genome Project of the 1990s that sequenced DNA to help scientists understand the basis of heredity and improve health outcomes, EDUCAUSE's "Student Genome Project" seeks to understand student data to help improve educational outcomes. EDUCAUSE has categorized this year's top ten IT issues into the following three themes:

### Theme 1: Empowered Students

In their drive to improve student outcomes, institutions are increasingly focused on individual students, on their life circumstances, and on their entire academic journey. Leaders are relying on analytics and technology to make progress. *Related issues: Student Success (#2) and Student-Centered Institution (#4).*

### Theme 2: Trusted Data

This is the work of the Student Genome Project, where the "sequencing" is taking place. Institutions are collecting, securing, integrating, and standardizing data and preparing the institution to use data meaningfully and ethically. *Related issues: Information Security Strategy (#1), Privacy (#3), Digital Integrations (#5), Data-Enabled Institution (#6), and Data Management and Governance (#8).*

### Theme 3: 21st Century Business Strategies

This is the leadership journey, in which institutions address today's funding challenges and prepare for tomorrow's more competitive ecosystem. Technology is now embedded into teaching and learning, research, and business operations and so must be embedded into the institutional strategy and business model. *Related issues: Sustainable Funding (#7), Integrative CIO (#9), and Higher Education Affordability (#10).*

In the pages that follow, CampusWorks will explore the three themes of the "Student Genome Project" and the issues that comprise them, offering insights and solutions for each.

**Source:** Grajek, Susan (2019, January 1). *Top 10 IT Issues, 2019: The Student Genome Project*. Retrieved from <https://er.educause.edu/articles/2019/1/top-10-it-issues-2019-the-student-genome-project>



## Theme 1 | Empowered Students

Student success begins with students. Successful institutions will be those that examine how they can use technology and analytics to improve student outcomes. EDUCAUSE identified *Student Success (Issue #2)* and *Student-Centered Institution (#4)* as the issues that support student empowerment. Let's take a closer look:

### **Issue #2. Student Success:** *Serving as a trusted partner with other campus units to drive and achieve student success initiatives.*

Student success isn't limited to learning, it includes every facet of the educational journey. When one department isn't operating effectively it can affect the entire institution. Despite numerous technologies that enable collaboration and communication among and between departments and students, many institutions experience functional silos and communication challenges that impede efficiency and disrupt the student experience.

If your institution is struggling with these issues, you might benefit from a Functional Area Assessment. This effort employs functional and technical experts to evaluate each department's operational efficiency, ability to interact with other functional areas,

and quality of student services. By carefully examining your institution's business processes and technology usage, inefficiencies will be uncovered and improvement opportunities identified.

When the assessment is complete, your team will receive a final report that details the team's findings and recommendations and provides an actionable roadmap to optimize and integrate your functional areas to empower students and support their success.



**Issue #4. Student-Centered Institution: Understanding and advancing technology's role in optimizing the student experience (from applicants to alumni).**

Business processes are at the heart of every college and university. They are designed to serve students and help them succeed, but over time they can evolve organically and unsystematically as institutions try to keep up with the dramatic changes taking place in higher education. Eventually, these processes end up hindering the very students they were designed to help.

If your institution is struggling with inefficient business processes, you might benefit from a Process Reimagine & Redesign (PRR). A PRR can help you understand how your institution is currently using technology and how to optimize it to support the student experience. By facilitating participation among faculty, staff, and students, you'll get a broad understanding of the current student experience at your institution and will be able to create a shared vision of the desired experience.



By first defining what student success should look like, you can easily identify and eliminate operational barriers that stand in the way. Using a best-practice methodology will help ensure a consistent approach across all evaluated areas and resources. Since admissions, academic advising, registration, and financial aid all contribute to the student experience, every department should work together to create an academic atmosphere that supports students as they navigate your institution's processes and procedures.



## Theme 2 | Trusted Data

As pressure mounts to improve student outcomes, more institutions are leveraging their data to make informed decisions. Though instrumental to strategic planning, the rise of big data has led to concerns about collecting, securing, integrating, and standardizing data and the institution's ability to use it in a meaningful and ethical way. Successful institutions are those that can safely and securely mine high-quality data and leverage it to support student success. EDUCAUSE identified *Information Security Strategy* (#1), *Privacy* (#3), *Digital Integrations* (#5), *Data-Enabled Institution* (#6), and *Data Management and Governance* (#8) as the issues that support trusted data.

**Issue #1. Information Security Strategy:** *Developing a risk-based security strategy that effectively detects, responds to, and prevents security threats and challenges.*

Colleges and universities are attractive targets for cybercriminals because they collect robust data about their students and employees yet often lack current, sophisticated security measures present in other industries.

Developing a strong information security strategy begins with understanding your weaknesses. You can identify, evaluate, and address your institution's risks and vulnerabilities by conducting an IT Security Assessment that includes:

1. Internet-based threats assessment and penetration testing
2. Network infrastructure assessment
3. Critical network and computing assets assessment
4. User computing environment assessment
5. Physical and environmental security assessment
6. Wireless network security assessment
7. Policies, procedures, and documentation assessment



Once the IT Security Assessment is complete, the findings can be used to develop a framework for strengthening your institution's security posture and protect your data.

**Issue #3. Privacy:** *Safeguarding institutional constituents' privacy rights and maintaining accountability for protecting all types of restricted data.*

As technology continues to change and evolve, information security threats are growing ever more sophisticated. Gone are the days of hackers simply trying to gain notoriety by unleashing annoying viruses and spam. The complexity of today's attacks is high, and the stakes are even higher—costing victims sensitive data, disrupted operations, hefty fines and restoration costs, tarnished reputations, and public embarrassment.

It's challenging for any organization to continually monitor and prevent against increasingly sophisticated security threats, but this is especially true of budget-strapped colleges and universities. If your institution is struggling to keep up with information security best practices, you might benefit from a Collaborative Services arrangement.

Collaborative Services now make it possible for all colleges and universities to access affordable information security leadership by offering these resources on-demand and allowing institutions to use as much (or as little) as they need—and pay accordingly. Collaborative Services allow institutions to “turn on and off” technology services, like cybersecurity leadership, giving them access to all the technical support they need for a fraction of the cost by taking significant overhead out of the equation.

**Issue #5. Digital Integrations:** *Ensuring system interoperability, scalability, and extensibility, as well as data integrity, security, standards, and governance, across multiple applications and platforms.*

When your administrative system is aligned with your institution's goals, powerful results are possible. However, in time, even the most successful enterprise resource planning (ERP) implementations can become mired in inefficiency.

If your institution's ERP system is no longer living up to its expectations, you might benefit from an ERP Assessment. This evaluation can help you gain a better understanding of how your organization is using its administrative system and make decisions about upgrades, process changes, training, and/or new investments to provide an optimal student experience.

**Issue #6. Data-Enabled Institutional Culture:** *Taking a service-based approach to data and analytics to reskill, retool, and reshape a culture to be adept at data-enabled decision-making.*

Colleges and universities rely on data and analytics to help students succeed academically, inform strategic decisions, and improve operations. It's critical to ensure that your reporting solutions are aligned with the institution's goals and are used effectively to meet your community's reporting and analytical needs.

If your institution is struggling to collect, maintain, and leverage data, you might benefit from a Data, Analytics & Reporting (DAR) Assessment. This evaluation can help your institution achieve a data-enabled culture by providing insight into how the current DAR environment is being used, highlighting strengths and weaknesses and identifying opportunities to better leverage these investments.

**Issue #8. Data Management & Governance:** *Implementing effective institutional data-governance practices and organizational structures.*

Data is not only critical to state and federal reporting, it's also the driving force behind the strategic decisions guiding the future of your institution. But the old saying, "garbage in, garbage out" applies here. That is, your institution's reporting and decision-making capabilities are only as good as your data is clean.

If your institution is struggling to collect, manage, and organize accurate data, you may benefit from a Data Standards Process Reimagine & Redesign (PRR). During a Data Standards PRR, a team of experts will review how your institution uses data and its degree of accuracy while looking for opportunities to optimize processes to ensure successful data management and stewardship across the institution. This analysis includes a review of state and federal reporting as well as primary data reports used to make strategic decisions.

When the project is complete, you will receive a detailed report of the team's findings, which will help you understand how your institution's current data governance practices and organizational structures measure up against best practices. You will also receive actionable recommendations to help you improve data integrity and enable insightful analysis that will result in better, faster decisions.



## Theme 3 | 21st Century Business Strategies

Technology must be embedded into the institution's strategy and business model in order to remain competitive, attract new students, and support student success. While technology is one of your institution's greatest costs, it's also one of the greatest enablers of student success, which has a direct impact on funding and sustainability. Successful institutions are those that embrace technology and use it effectively to support their missions. EDUCAUSE identified *Sustainable Funding* (#7), *Integrative CIO* (#9), and *Higher Education Affordability* (#10) as issues that support 21st Century Business Strategies.

**Issue #7. Sustainable Funding:** *Developing funding models that can maintain quality and accommodate both new needs and the growing use of IT services in an era of increasing budget constraints.*

When an institution's financial resources are limited, IT operations often fall prey to budget reductions, which affect the entire organization and can impact the student experience.

If your institution is struggling to balance increasing IT demands with budget limitations, you might benefit from Strategic Technology Planning. This forward-looking process helps colleges and universities improve their business models and maximize every budget dollar to meet the institution's current and future demands through the effective and cost-efficient use of technology solutions.

Strategic Technology Planning employs an integrated, holistic methodology that is tailored to your institution's specific needs and unique culture. By including a diverse mix of stakeholders in the process, you will gain a broad view across your organization and candid perspective of the current state while envisioning new possibilities for the future.



**Issue #9. Integrative CIO:** *Repositioning or reinforcing the role of IT leadership as an integral strategic partner of institutional leadership in supporting institutional missions.*

Information technology plays a key role in helping an institution achieve its goals. But when IT is not seen as a strategic partner in supporting the institution's mission, it can become reactive—focused on fixing problems—rather than proactively planning and implementing strategies to support student success.

If your institution is struggling to elevate the role of IT within the institution, you might benefit from an IT Staff Assessment. It begins with a comprehensive review of the IT organizational structure, evaluating staffing allocation and workload to determine if the current model is set up to meet your institution's goals and objectives. It will identify areas where you need additional support and training to meet those needs.

An IT Staff Assessment will help you recognize areas where technology can be used to automate manual processes and reduce workload so your staff can shift their focus to higher-priority tasks. When the project is complete, you will receive a final report with actionable recommendations to help optimize IT and elevate it as a strategic partner within the institution.

**Issue #10. Higher Education Affordability:** *Aligning IT organizations' priorities and resources with institutional priorities and resources to achieve a sustainable future.*

Whether you are a technology guru or not, it can be challenging to know if your IT solutions are delivering the maximum return on investment. If you suspect that you could be getting more value from IT, you might benefit from a Second Opinion Technology Assessment, which provides an objective evaluation of your current technology infrastructure, helping you to identify deficiencies, areas of improvement, and cost-saving opportunities.

When the project is complete, your team will have a better understanding of the current IT environment, a roadmap for increasing efficiency, and a framework for making IT investment decisions.

## CampusWorks Can Help

Over the past 20 years, CampusWorks has become a trusted partner of countless colleges and universities across the United States and Canada. We serve higher education exclusively, so we have a deep understanding of and appreciation for your institution's mission, vision, and values as well as the business and technical challenges you're facing. Since we are not associated with any hardware or software vendors, institutions know they can count on us to listen to their needs, provide unbiased insights into their organizational challenges, and develop tailored solutions with their best interests in mind.

CampusWorks' professional services team is comprised of senior-level technical and functional experts who have the experience and skill to take on your toughest challenges. Our services are rooted in systems thinking and reach across the institution—from Student Services to Human Resources to Finance to Academic Services—to remove obstacles standing in the way of success. We pride ourselves on the collaborative partnerships we form with our clients, and we value the opportunity to work alongside your team to implement change, achieve transformational results, and ensure lasting success.

Dedicated exclusively to higher education, CampusWorks' capabilities include:

- Academic services
- Accreditation and compliance
- Assessments
- Business process optimization
- Cybersecurity
- Enterprise resource planning (ERP) support
- IT leadership
- Network and infrastructure services
- Project management
- Shared services & collaborative services
- Staff augmentation
- Strategic planning

"[CampusWorks'] time with our teams and colleagues has made a meaningful difference in our ability to help support and serve our students and community."

- Philip Needles, VP of Student Services  
Montgomery County Community College, PA

[Contact us](#) today for a free, no-strings-attached consultation.

Call us at (941) 316-0308 or email [success@campusWorksinc.com](mailto:success@campusWorksinc.com) to get started.