SSO (Single-Sign-On) – Accommodate single sign on to the portal, e-mail, NazNet and Blackboard.

Equalities: Both products ultimately allow for single-sign-on to the portal, e-mail, and NazNet "out of the box". Neither product can achieve SSO with the version and configuration of Blackboard at Nazareth. Blackboard requires a version upgrade to Blackboard Enterprise, which we are not pursuing at this time, at an additional initial cost of at least $65K.

Basic Differences: Academus' structure allows us to initiate and add more applications to our SSO system. With the Campus Cruiser structure, the vendor has sole control of (and responsibility for) additions to the system. Cruiser requires that each person's username and password be the same for all applications; Academus does not.

Details
Academus uses as technology called LDAP (Lightweight Data Access Protocol) to achieve SSO. We can implement our Datatel system's LDAP function for this (no additional cost). The existing database of users remains in Colleague and continues to originate there. This is a true SSO system in that the portal can hold multiple usernames and passwords per individual and pass them on to the appropriate application when called for. Other (3rd party) applications can be easily added as SSO as long as we have access to (i.e. own) the application.

Campus Cruiser uses a database of users within Cruiser that is a mirror (duplication) of our Datatel database and therefore does not require implementation of the LDAP service on our Datatel system. This solution is more accurately called a single username/password environment because the portal can only store and pass on one username and password for each user potentially limiting the addition of other SSO applications. Additionally, Time Cruiser Corporation, the vendor, decides which applications will be added to their SSO environment.

E-Mail Hosting – Provide a hosted e-mail application.

Equalities: Both products support a hosted integrated e-mail application solution that includes anti-virus and spam filtering.

Basic Differences: Academus' mail application is feature rich, but a new offering by them. Campus Cruiser offers a basic web mail application with 10 years of experience.

Details
Unicon (Academus vendor) has recently (in response to our request) committed to provide Zimbra as their integrated mail client within Academus and have no customers using this configuration yet. They currently support a standard web mail application and we would be Unicon's first Zimbra client. The Zimbra Collaboration Suite is a robust application that has functionalities (mail, calendar, contacts, and technologies) that are familiar to users of Microsoft Outlook.

Cruiser Mail is a standard web mail application with which they have much experience.

Datatel Integration – Integrate with Datatel products including WebAdvisor (NazNet).

Equalities: Both vendors are delivered the same "feed" of data from the Datatel system. Both support the upcoming R-18 Colleague release.

Basic Differences: Campus Cruiser currently uses the feed to more tightly integrate with Datatel than Academus does. Specifically, Academus confirms their capacity to populate personal calendars with "my courses" although they haven't been asked to do so before now. The portlet architecture to support the next generation of UI is in place in Academus and will need to be developed by Cruiser.

Blackboard/CMS – See SSO section above

Central Repository – Has a central repository for file storage.

Equalities: Both products have repositories for file storage, transfer, and sharing.

Basic Differences: Academus has the capability to attach to Nazareth file servers and Cruiser does not.

E-Mail Functionality – See e-mail section above

24/7 Support – Has 24/7 support for server availability

Equalities: According to customers, both vendors provide exceptional up-time for their servers.

Basic Differences: Cruiser has a proven track record with this function; Academus has one other client that they host servers for.

Customization – Capacity for customization of the application

Basic Differences: Unicon's primary business focus is customization, support, and consultant services. Time Cruiser Corporation's business focus is ASP (Application Service Provider).

Details:
Unicon has been supporting and consulting with customers that are using the uPortal framework for ten years. They developed Academus, built on this open-source framework, to supply a packaged application that is functional "out of the box" and therefore simpler to implement. Additional evidence of their customization service exists in their deliberate response to our requirement of a hosted e-mail solution. The service was already being considered in their business plan. Our request prompted them to evaluate and achieve it more immediately than might have otherwise occurred.

Time Cruiser is a service provider. Campus Cruiser is delivered identically to each customer. Customizations are made universally as determined by the Corporation themselves. The application is proprietary; Customization requires vendor endorsement and intervention.

Integration of the disparate campus calendaring and scheduling tools is a major undertaking that, according to both vendors, is extremely intricate and unlikely because the technology as a whole is not yet mature enough.