

### III.C. Technology Resources

Technology resources are used to support student learning programs and services and to improve institutional effectiveness. Technology planning is integrated with institutional planning.

III.C.1 The institution assures that any technology support it provides is designed to meet the needs of learning, teaching, college-wide communications, research, and operational systems.

III.C.2 Technology planning is integrated with institutional planning. The institution systematically assesses the effective use of technology resources and uses the results of evaluation as the basis for improvement.

#### DESCRIPTION

The college mission statement, in conjunction with the strategic, unit, and division plans, is the guiding source for technology decisions. Departments annually request technology; program review, unit and division plans develop these requests. One of the primary committees on campus is the Technology Steering Committee. This committee takes a proactive and holistic approach to assessing and identifying the need for technology for the entire college. The committee recommended in July 2005 that the college approach upgrades of technology based on a priority list: students first, then faculty, then staff, then administration.

The *Technology Master Plan*, approved in 2004, incorporates the college's overall vision of technology and outlines those goals of the college. The *Education Master Plan* and *Facilities Master Plan* include the assessment of college technology, indicating

that educational facilities being built and remodeled will contain some level of technology equipment in every classroom (known as a “smart” classroom) and learning center.

The reliance on the IT department’s making decisions to the Technology Steering Committee on approving whether or not purchases can be made has shifted. The initial request for technology is made by the department through the unit planning process, which then goes to the division plan and into the integrated college operational plan (ICOP). The Technology Steering Committee recommended a three-year technology replacement plan that the President approved in July 2005 whereby the college will lease all of its computers for three years and upgrade the systems every three years.

The IT department has been responsible for all maintenance and repair of computers and computer peripherals. The IT department consists of a manager, two full-time technicians, as well as an additional specialist who is available to perform setups and minor repairs. The office copying systems on campus typically have maintenance agreements, so repair is performed by the vendor. However, the college recently leased 400 computers, and terms of the lease is 24-hour on site repair if there is a problem occurs that is greater than campus technicians can repair immediately.

Support for online courses is marginal. The faculty through the Academic Senate Information Technology Committee (ASIT) will select one platform for college-supported maintenance for online classes. Currently, faculty use different platforms for the delivery of online courses. The faculty currently rely on external servers to host online classes.

The Technology Steering Committee is working to expand its *Technology Replacement Policy* to incorporate copying systems, printers, and computer peripherals so the college can gain some economies of scale in purchasing equipment and supplies, ease the training and use issues that arise from different brands of equipment scattered throughout the campus, and prevent the unnecessary duplication of equipment.

In February 2005, the college adopted the *Web Use Policy* and the *Network Security Policy* that cover technology reliability, security, privacy, and academic freedom. The Technology Steering Committee recommended and the President approved these policies.

The college has offered faculty and staff opportunities to attend computer applications training sessions on staff development days. The college has a software training package known as NETg that is available to all staff and faculty and provides hands-on training. The college is also developing a training calendar to begin facilitating Netg training in this year to aggressively introduce NETg to everyone interested.

The Technology Steering Committee recommends policies regarding technology and related equipment for the college. Technology needs are based on integrated planning and requests from unit and division plans. The college ICOP, for 2005-06, contained significant language about technology with and over half the resource requests in the division plans were technology related. This amount prompted the Technology Steering Committee to recommend the three-year replacement policy that led to the college’s leasing 400 new computers.

The college relies on the department chairs and division managers to assess department needs. The IT department also assesses overall campus needs and makes recommendations to department chairs, managers, and administrators.

### EVALUATION

Faculty and staff who were surveyed were asked on a scale of one to five (one being least positive and five being most positive) if the institution uses technology to enhance student learning. Respondents answered positively with an average rating of 3.2. The *Technology Replacement Plan* makes certain that requests for computer technology will be met and that the college will maintain state-of-the-art equipment. As the Technology Steering Committee continues its work to include computer peripherals, such as printers, projectors, and copying systems, the college expects that its needs will be met. An additional significant benefit to the college of the three-year replacement plan for technology is that it sets in motion technology expenses and relieves departments from spending time and planning on basic technology needs. Another advantage to a planned replacement program is that the technology equipment of the college is not expected to require the extent of repair that older equipment requires. Therefore, the college will gain efficiencies and savings as a result of this program.

The college has a number of computer laboratories on campus for students and faculty; however, the college is looking for opportunities to bring all of the support technology together in one large facility.

The college lacks programmed training, professional development, and support for instructional technology. The college,

however, is preparing a training schedule for NetG, which is a self-training computerized software program.

The college needs to focus training efforts for the faculty and instructional support staff so that technology can be integrated into the classroom. The college will be coordinating training with the ASIT Committee to ensure that the faculty is equipped to incorporate technology where needed in classes. The ASIT and the managers of each department will provide input on staff training needs. The college's overall focus, now that the equipment is available, is on training.

The college technology infrastructure is good in that the college has fiber cables throughout the campus. Even so, a degree of vulnerability exists with the current construction of the cabling throughout the campus because the approach, when adding infrastructure, has been to layer new lines on top of old lines. Therefore, the manager of College Information Systems' focus is rewiring so the infrastructure is protected and secure. The IT department is developing a comprehensive planning process for sufficient reliability and back up systems. The college can then increase its capacity to obtain and use technology. The Technology Steering Committee will address the disaster recovery and back up policy this fiscal year to make sure that the campus technology environment is secure.

An area of concern for the college is distance learning/online course offerings. Current offerings are limited. No proprietary systems or processes are in place. The faculty are discussing the future of online courses at the college including the selection of course management system and a faculty training component. The Technology Steering Committee and the faculty are currently reviewing platforms for

online classes delivery. The college partially meets this standard and a planning agenda is included to enhance the college's efforts.

#### **PLANNING AGENDA**

- Complete the *Technology Replacement Plan* to include standardization of peripherals including copying systems.
- Survey and offer technology training for faculty and staff.
- Develop a plan with timeline to improve the college's technology infrastructure.
- Select a software course management system and develop a management plan for online courses.