Academic Information Technology Strategic Goals

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The intent in specifying strategic goals for academic technology is to guide academically-driven decisions regarding the use of technology and to facilitate the use of academic technology in support of the university's mission of academic excellence.

Role and Core Values

Sacramento State is dedicated to providing a high quality education for all its students. One of its core missions is "continually pursuing Excellence in teaching, learning, and student support…" In keeping with this focus, the role of academic technology within the Academic Affairs division is to provide an information technology environment that ensures a continual focus on excellence in teaching and learning and the quality of the student experience through the projects, processes, and services it provides.

In the area of academic information technology, we value and advocate for:

- Experimentation and innovation in technology-enhanced pedagogy to improve instruction and student learning.
- Support and training for faculty to comfortably and effectively use information, communication and presentation technology in support of instruction.
- Support for a diversity of instructional technology needs and a responsiveness to these unique needs.
- Student access to adequate computing facilities and resources that support instruction, testing, accessibility mandates, and academic support services.
- Faculty and student access to programs to improve information literacy and the ethical and respectful use of information.
- A balance between funding for University-wide academic technology needs and College level academic technology needs.
- A flexible approach that is based on information sharing, education and training toward computer and network security management.
- The importance of an interdependent and collaborative university and program-based academic technology governance structure.
- Decisions regarding pedagogy-based technology remaining within the domains of Academic Affairs and its respective units.
- The importance of timely notification of substantive technology developments including projects, processes and initiatives that fall within the scope of shared governance.
- Continuous progress that is planned, measurable and documented.

I. A Focus on Teaching, Learning and the Student Experience

A. Excellence in Teaching and Learning

In order to meet our mission of excellence in teaching and learning, faculty need access to effective and appropriate technology, as well as flexibility to adapt those technologies to the specialized needs of individual disciplines. Strategic goals are specified for each of the following four areas.

1. Faculty computing

Computers are embedded in the scholarly process of most disciplines and provide faculty with the necessary foundation for their work. This requires discipline-specific specialized software,

hardware, and timely support that is responsive to local needs**.** Strategic goals related to faculty computing include the following:

a) Establishing a regular replacement cycle for all faculty computing devices.

b) Developing standards for desktop and laptop University-wide purchases that take advantage of economies of scale, but yet are responsive to local users' needs.

c) Providing and supporting workstations from a variety of platforms and performance levels, running a variety of operating systems and representing a range of capabilities.

d) Providing local, timely and responsive support and flexibility for a diversity of technologies.

2. Faculty Technology Resources

Technology resources (including staff support and training services) that are provided to faculty form the foundation of all teaching that uses technology strategically and effectively. It is essential that these resources continue to meet the needs of faculty who use technology-embedded pedagogy. Strategic goals related to faculty technology resources include the following:

a) Providing adequate training to faculty on new technologies.

b) Ensuring adequate access to scholarly resources.

c) Ensuring that adequate accommodations are made for the ability of faculty to use privately purchased technology resources to perform scholarly and instructional work.

3. Technological Modes of Instruction

Providing alternative learning spaces that are optimized to support varied modes of instruction. Strategic goals related to technological modes of instruction include the following:

a) Providing a robust and reliable Learning Management System (LMS), with periodic evaluations of features that are needed, and the LMS overall.

b) Providing adequate tools to support a diversity of online and hybrid instruction.

c) Providing faculty and student support at a level adequate to promote the development and delivery of quality online and hybrid courses.

d) Supporting the use of virtual labs and virtual applications where appropriate.

4. Technological Innovation

New technologies and continuing on-campus innovation is critical to the instructional success of the University. Strategic goals related to technological innovation include the following:

a) Consulting on unit efforts to incorporate technological innovation into the academic environment in a timely manner, including the experimental, the cutting-edge, and the unique.

b) Collaborating on discipline-specific innovations such as the design of systems and networks, as well as the configuring of servers and clients.

c) Evaluating and recommending, when appropriate, new technology products, particularly those that show transformative potential for the teaching and learning environment.

B. Excellence in Learning Spaces

Facilitating multiple modes of presentation, interaction with and between students, and evaluation of learning outcomes is necessary for a positive and productive learning environment. Strategic goals are specified for each of the following two areas.

1. Computer classrooms and labs

Computer classrooms and labs have become an increasingly strained resource. It is essential that the university support adequate centralized facilities to accommodate single-use needs for teaching and proctored testing as well as on-going class meetings. It is also equally important to maintain on-going support for discipline-specific labs. These labs, by their nature deeply embedded into the academic environment, are a critical campus resource that must be adequately supported. Strategic goals related to computer classrooms and labs include the following:

a) Ensuring that computer classroom designs and renovations support varied instructional delivery formats, incorporate appropriate integration of the physical layout and instructional use of the space, and be optimized to reduce the time, effort and technological knowledge required to set up and use for instruction.

b) Ensuring that the unique needs of discipline-specific labs are met.

c) Providing workstations from a variety of manufacturers, running a variety of operating systems and representing a range of capabilities.

d) Ensuring computer classrooms are smart classrooms with access to flexible presentation technologies and have a regular replacement cycle.

e) Ensuring adequate resources for the timely support for classroom technologies with adequate times being designated for such support.

f) Recommending that courses using classroom technologies that require advanced technology support be limited to times such support is available.

2. Computer-based testing facilities

Increased use of Learning Management Systems and other forms of electronic testing have led to a shortage of appropriate facilities to meet the need for testing, and the University must find ways to provide adequate facilities. Strategic goals related to computer-based testing facilities include the following:

a) Ensuring that university labs are available for one-time reservations for on-campus testing by large, on-line and/or hybrid classes.

b) Ensuring that proctored labs are available during extended hours.

C. Quality of the Student Experience

While faculty need access to effective and appropriate technology to facilitate the teaching process, students also need access to effective and appropriate technology to facilitate the learning process. Strategic goals are specified for each of the following two areas.

1. Student computing

Support alternative learning experiences including access to ad hoc learning environments and mobile computing tools. Strategic goals related to student computing include the following:

a) Ensuring there is adequate access to open and mobile computing-friendly facilities.

b) Ensuring the integration of mobile devices into the campus infrastructure, facilities and equipment.

2. Student Technology Resources

Technology resources, including staff support, that are provided to students are essential to the success of the learning experience. Strategic goals related to student technology resources include the following:

a) Ensuring adequate funding and personnel for the support of student laboratories.

b) Ensure adequate training opportunities for students on hardware and software supported by the University.

c) Ensuring adequate student access to information technologies and library resources.

d) Ensuring that policies, guidelines and standards related to academic technology provide academic/program access for students with disabilities in accordance with all Federal and State legislation and California State University policies.

II. A Focus on Academic Priorities in the Use of IT Resources

Strategic goals are specified for each of the following three areas.

A. Budget and Funding Models for IT

Appropriate balance needs to be struck between funding for University-wide IT needs and for College and/or department level academic technology. Both need to be adequately funded, but academic needs must be met. Strategic goals related to budget and funding models include the following:

a) Ensuring adequate technology resources are provided to the Colleges.

b) Ensuring adequate college-based allocations of funding to allow for regular refresh of discipline-specific computer labs.

c) Ensuring adequate allocations to allow for regular refresh of faculty workstations including necessary discipline-specific software.

B. Security Issues

Recognizing that mandated security requirements must be met, it is important that a flexible approach be taken regarding campus security issues and that every effort be made to work collaboratively in meeting the legitimate security needs of the campus. A comprehensive security approach needs to be based on information sharing, education and training. Strategic goals related to security issues include the following:

a) Working collaboratively to meet mandated security requirements and devise appropriate levels of security for the campus.

b) Working collaboratively to devise solutions to legitimate security concerns, emphasizing education and training as primary tools for enhancing security in a campus environment.

C. Responsible Use of Technology Resources

Recognizing the growth in the use of social media in the classroom and in everyday communications, it is essential that efforts be made to ensure a respectful and productive learning environment. Strategic goals related to the responsible use of technology resources include the following:

a) Providing academic use of electronic and information technology that is accessible in order to meet the needs of students and faculty with disabilities. [1]

b) Establishing and maintaining a university social media policy and/or guidelines that promote the respect, privacy, and rights of individual and the university community.

III. Consultation and Collaboration in the Decisions Regarding Academic IT

Sacramento State is committed to an effective shared governance structure. Consultation is the key component of this process. The California State University, Sacramento Statement on Shared Governance and Consultation defines consultation within this context as "a mutual exchange of information, ideas, opinions, and recommendations from initial formulation to final determination of policy and procedures affecting the operation of those areas where primary responsibility rests within the faculty."

A. Consultation during problem definition and solution formulation

In the spirit of an effective shared governance structure, Sacramento State is committed to using its consultative process in the development and implementation of technology initiatives involving changes in academic technology. Recognizing that initiatives may be broad in scope and require significant time to complete, it is essential to maintain ~~the~~ transparency in the development and implementation of all relevant technology proposals, procedures, and decisions regarding academic technology.

B. Role of the Faculty Senate's *Academic Information Technology Committee* in academic technology decision making processes

Academic technology needs must be directly linked to the actual work of faculty and staff. The Academic Information Technology Committee is the recognized advisory body to the Faculty Senate and thereby represents the faculty. This committee provides counsel on academic technology issues and initiatives that affect the role and responsibilities of faculty. The Committee also facilitates the consultative and shared decision-making processes to be used when implementing ~~these~~ academic technology initiatives. Additional committee responsibilities include:

a) Developing a strategic planning process to assess and measure progress towards achieving the area-goals as specified in Sections I and II above.

b) Revising the areas and/or area goals to reflect future changes in academic technology needed to support the academic role and responsibilities of faculty.

[1] Reference http://www.section508.gov/index.cfm

c) Recommending Academic Information Technology policies to the Senate.

d) Reviewing new or proposed Academic Technology policies.

e) Recommending Computer Lab Use policies to the Senate.

f) Reviewing new or proposed Computer Lab Use policies.

g) Providing a forum for faculty to discuss academic technology issues.

h) Ensuring shared decision-making processes at all levels (dept/college/unit/university) and using multiple methods of consultation for all academic technology initiatives.

i) Facilitating collaborative efforts toward shaping academic technology services and resources in support of the University mission.

j) Ensuring accurate and inclusive data (evidence) is used when academic technology initiatives are decided upon.

k) Providing an annual report to the Faculty Senate on the Committee's current activities and progress towards the goals specified in sections I and II of this document.

IV. Assessment and Evaluation

Assessment of the progress towards meeting the goals defined in each of the above areas will provide the evidence needed to focus efforts on improvement. By identifying where improvements are needed, priorities can be set to guide efforts toward this improvement. As noted in section III.B.b, the Academic Information Technology Committee will establish a strategic plan which will include the evaluation process to be used in an on-going basis to measure progress in each area of the plan.