

2020

ACADEMIC TECHNOLOGY PLAN



ACADEMIC TECHNOLOGY

COMMITTEE

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Background

Technology is transforming the teaching and learning process in the 21 century. The Academic Technology Committee was charged with creating and updating an Academic Technology Plan for Florida SouthWestern State College. The purpose of this plan is to outline how the college will meet the academic technology needs of its faculty and students. This plan is a work in progress presenting a vision of how the committee views the ways in which technology will contribute to the college's academic environment and overall student success. The plan will also explore the means to bring this vision to reality. . This plan will establish priorities related to the college's strategic planning in addressing academic technology needs. The college needs to respond to the immediate needs presented in the plan as well as the future needs. This Academic Technology Plan does not address administrative uses of technology.

The Academic Technology Committee initially created this plan in 2015. The plan was reviewed and updated in 2019. This document contains the updated plan which will take effect in 2020.

Mission or Vision Statement



This Academic Technology Plan is about teaching and learning, and the use of technology in this process. Technology enhances the educational experience of students in many ways. Therefore, it is important to develop an Academic Technology Plan that supports the mission of the college. Since technology is an important resource across disciplines, all faculty and students should have access to the most up to date technology possible. Technology should be integrated into programs rather than being viewed as an isolated add on to curriculum.

Overview



This academic technology plan builds on our current strengths, and makes recommendations for meeting the challenges of the future. Specifically, the plan addresses the need to financially support academic technology at Florida SouthWestern State College. This is the foundation for all of the recommendations in this plan, and it is outlined in clearly stated goals related to enhancing the technology infrastructure to meet the academic needs of the college. This includes providing consistent and current hardware and software, updating technology in all instructional facilities, and providing adequate training for faculty in using these technologies in the classroom.

Presently, all FSW students are assessed a technology fee of up to 5% of the tuition per credit hour. The purpose of this fee is to provide funding to meet the academic technology needs of the college. The fee is designated specifically for this purpose and all funds generated from this fee by law must to be used for academic technology.

Part I: Technology Initiatives

Goal #1: Provide adequate funding to replace aged equipment with faster, more reliable technology

Rationale

Presently, the college has 160-170 servers at an annual cost of \$160,000. These servers range in age from 0-7 years old with the average age being 3.5 years. Replacement costs for servers would be \$850,000. In addition, the college has approximately 260 switches, 90 of which are current. The switches have an annual cost of \$227,500. They are from 0-12 years old with a replacement cost of \$1,690,000. The annual cost for storage is \$200,000, and the average age is 0-7 years with a replacement cost of \$1,000,000. Presently the annual cost for projectors is \$30,202. They are from 0-5 years old with a replacement cost of \$151,011.

The age of some of the equipment is of great concern to the committee. Continued replacement at regularly scheduled intervals but will ultimately save the college money in the long run. For instance, the college infrastructure cannot handle any more bandwidth to support academic functions of the college. To upgrade the network infrastructure in the college server room to accept more bandwidth will cost the college \$500-600,000. The college will also need to replace the 1G connections between buildings in order to support the ongoing academic needs of the institution. These costs, without refresh funding, will continue to rise and students and faculty will start to have technology interruptions that will interrupt academic teaching.

The present IT budget is made up of mostly contractual expenses with no contingency funds available. Therefore, if something goes wrong with one of the servers, switches, or storage devices, the replacement costs will come directly out of the budget leaving little or no money left for other technology needs.

The students pay a technology fee of up to 5 percent of the tuition per credit hour, beginning with the fall term of the 2009-2010 academic year. The revenue from this fee shall be used to enhance instructional technology resources for students and faculty. This funding source should be directed at the academic technology plan.

Action Plan

- The committee recommends the technology department create a plan for replacing the outdated equipment and that the college provide the funding for these expenditures as a separate budget item.
- This would cost \$600,000 per year for five years or \$3 million total.
- A contingency fund should be set up immediately to prepare for any unexpected expenses without draining the entire IT budget and taking away from the needs of the academic unit.
- The contingency fund should be no less than \$500,000 per year.

Cost Breakdown

Hardware	Annual Cost	Replacement Cost
Servers	160,000	800,000
Storage	200,000	1,000,000
Switches/Network Infrastructure	227,500	1,137,500
Projectors	30,202	151,011
Wireless Network	100,000	500,000
Firewall	20,000	100,000
Total	737,702	3,688,511

The cost of replacing these servers (both physical and virtual), storage devices, switches, network and wireless infrastructure and projectors would be 3.6 million dollars over 5 years or \$737,702 per year.

Goal #2--Provide adequate support of current academic technology

Rationale:

Technology changes drastically in seven years. Faculty have been moved to a four-year refresh cycle. However, podium, student and lab computers are presently on a 7-year cycle. FSW presently has 2,754 student computers on all campuses. These computers are on a 7-year refresh schedule which costs \$2,065,500. In addition, FSW has 247 computers attached to a podium in the classroom. The present cost to refresh on a 7-year cycle is \$182, 250. The cost to refresh on a 4-year cycle would be an additional \$45,562.20.

Action Plan

- A new refresh schedule of four years for all student and podium computers should be implemented over the next three years. This will cost approximately 823,000 per year and should become a separate part of the technology budget.

Cost Breakdown

	#	Cost to Refresh on a 7 year cycle	Cost to refresh on 4 year cycle
Student Computers	2,754	2,065, 500	2,065,500
Faculty/Staff Computers	1391	1,043,250	1,043,250
Podium Computers	247	182,500	182,500

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Total	4,392	3,291,250	3,291,250
Cost per year		470,179	822,813

Goal #3--Provide classroom technology to meet the needs of the academic unit.

Rationale

FSW has 61 rooms with “smart” technology. Four of those rooms have the old smart board technology while 57 rooms have the new projectors. It would cost \$5,000 per room to convert the remaining 4 rooms to the new projectors. IT presently plans to replace all old smart boards with Interactive white boards within the next year.

Action Plan

- Support IT’s present plan to replace all old smart boards with Interactive white boards within the next year.
- Utilize the scheduling software to ensure that faculty who need this technology be assigned to these smart rooms.
- Increase the number of smart rooms as needed to meet the needs of the faculty
- Refresh the smart technology classrooms every 4-5 years.



Part II: Technology Training and Resources

Goal #5—Provide faculty with instruction in how to use technology.

Rationale

Technology is changing the way we teach. FSW expects its faculty, students, and staff to have technological literacy and competencies to function and compete in today's academic setting. The college must ensure that the faculty have the resources they need to incorporate this new technology into their teaching. To this end, FSW has been offering ongoing, formal sessions related to academic technology. They offer workshops facilitated by faculty and staff related to specific academic technology topics through the TLC..

Action Plan:

- Create a faculty/staff skills survey to determine the current level of technology skills among faculty and staff. Use these results to create new training opportunities for faculty and staff.

Goal #6—Provide faculty and students with hardware and software needed in their discipline and promote interdepartmental collaboration and resource sharing.

Rationale

Each department has its own needs in terms of hardware and software. Presently, each school devotes part of its budget each year to purchasing technology to meet the requests of faculty. However, there are still some common technology and software related needs that may overlap among departments and between schools. This overlapping need creates an opportunity for increasing efficiency through resource sharing. The amount of money budgeted for technology in each school needs to be communicated to faculty so they can work together to make sure resources are shared if possible.

Action Plan

- The amount of money budgeted for technology in each school needs to be communicated to faculty so they can work together to make sure resources are shared if possible.
- Provide a master list of technology and software being used in each department along with the potential for each to be shared with other departments.
- Keep track of departmental technology and software purchases more closely to help identify sharing opportunities.

Goal # 8—Involve faculty in evaluating and testing new technologies for learning and teaching.

Rationale

Before major purchases are made for technological equipment, faculty should be involved in evaluating and testing the products since they are the ones who will be using the products in the classroom.

Action Plan

- Involve the Academic Technology Committee when a major technology purchase is being considered for purchase.
- Invite vendors in to meet with the committee prior to purchase
- Send members of the ATC to conferences where new technology is showcased

Part III: Funding and Budget Issues

Goal #9—Devote all of the Academic Technology Fees collected to meeting the needs in this plan. In addition, actively seek new sources for funding college technology needs.

Rationale:

If, after receiving these dedicated IT and technology fee funds, more funding is needed, the college should identify and look for extra funding opportunities. The college will need to seek out new sources for funding the technology needs of the academic unit.

Action Plan:

- Develop additional sustainable technology funding strategies
- Continue to evaluate and develop processes for fair and timely technology allocation
Find alternative sources of funding to help implement this plan,
- Look to purchase enterprise/college-wide software contracts to save costs and offer the same technologies across all schools.

Part IV: Assessment and Evaluation

Goal #10—Examine the Academic Technology Plan on an annual basis to determine progress and to initiate changes.

Rationale

Continuous improvement should be the goal of any strategic plan. Therefore, it is important that this plan be evaluated on a yearly basis and updated each year.

Action Plan:

- Work with IT, Academic Services, Financial Services, and Faculty Senate to monitor how well the college is meeting the goals presented in this plan.

Goal #11—Assess IT support staff and funding on a yearly basis to ensure that the resources are available to meet the goals presented in this plan.

Rationale

As the college grows and the technology changes, the IT budget for hardware, software, and staff will be changing as well. It is important that the college provide IT with all of the funds collected from student fees designated for this purpose. In addition, the administration needs to make plans to continue to increase the IT budget so that the academic technology plans can be implemented.

Action Plan

- The ATC should work with IT to assess what it needs each year to meet the academic technology needs of the college.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Florida SouthWestern State College technology needs can be summarized by examining the strengths and weaknesses presented in this report.

Strengths:

- Dedicated and well-trained staff
- Improved helpdesk system manned internally
- Good student tech support center
- Robust training center for faculty and staff
- Plenty of professional development opportunities for faculty and staff related to technology

Weaknesses

- Outdated and aged equipment
- Lack of sufficient bandwidth to meet the academic needs of the college
- Lack of funding to keep up with the needs of the academic unit

Recommendations

- **Devote more funding to IT. This will help to meet the following goals set forth in this document:**
 - Update all academic technology on a 4-year cycle.
 - Replace outdated and aged equipment without draining the budget for other projects.
 - Increase the bandwidth capabilities within the next two years.
 - Update the technology plan on a yearly basis.