CCSF Accreditation Response Team – Recommendation #9: Technology Resources

Meeting Minutes: July 31, 2012

Attendees: Kim Ginther-Webster, JR Hall, Monika Liu, Eric Raznick, Carol Reitan, Tim Ryan, David Yee

Minutes: we decided that we will call the meeting notes “minutes” and include attendees, approve as part of the agenda. Minutes from July 24 and July 31 will be up for approval at August 7 meeting. K. Ginther-Webster volunteered to continue to take minutes.

Next meeting will be Tuesday, August 7 in the afternoon, time and place tbd.

Handouts: agenda, draft planning and budgeting timeline, progress matrix

I. Summary of Activities from July 24 (Inventory of Academic Labs; Assessment of current Technology Plan; Identification of Funding sources)

- Need to define equipment, include not only academic labs/centers, but staff workstations, specific kinds of equipment such as printers, projectors, software licenses, servers. Also consider staffing component of maintenance.
- Many funding sources used in past are one-time or limited, we are tasked with ongoing planning. Knowing past sources will inform us about current state, but need to work with budgeting groups on future budget sources once we identify needs and costs. Funding sources should not lead the conversation, needs should.
- Work on guidelines to require departments to plan for long-term maintenance and support of technology requested as part of one-time grants, before the grant is submitted, if there is an expectation that the technology will remain in use after the period of the grant expires. Any acquisition of technology (not just grants) must be accompanied by a plan for maintaining it.
- Inventory of labs/centers should include everything, whether or not ITS is actively involved in it, so we can assess current usage and need for technology throughout the college. Strategies to gather our data will include contacting department chairs and deans. Kinds of use such as credit/noncredit should be included for setting priorities. Students are increasingly likely to bring their own computers/handheld devices, we need to accommodate this in planning for lab needs.
- Staff desktops/laptops – what do we continue to provide? What are criteria for meeting staff needs, and what are differences among departments? For example, the library’s integrated system has certain hardware requirements for running the circulation desk clients, but other department faculty might be better served with laptops or tablets. Cost for desktops is relatively stable – newer more powerful machines tend to cost the same as previous model. Currently around $900 for a desktop. Laptops have much wider range of costs. Different models are available for acquisition: purchase new equipment, used equipment, leasing, stipend for faculty to get their own devices.
- Need some models for replacing technology by our next meeting. On acquiring used computers, it was determined that we should not set our expectations for technology too low. We need to set a baseline of current technology to work from to meet student needs. However, we have so many very old workstations, we may need a bridge or incremental step to get from where we are to a reasonable baseline. This might be expressed as a two-part plan for getting upgraded in the immediate future and then a regular cycle of upgrading from the baseline. Leasing tends to be more expensive than purchase, but would require the college to budget and pay annually, which may be good discipline.
- Departments need to inform ITS about lab needs for planning for maintenance and replacement. We should consider sharing spaces among departments, and whether specialized labs should be the exception, not the rule. Planning should be holistic and look at many factors including staffing needs for
helping students in labs. Prioritized criteria for student labs/centers should be developed relating to user needs, such as health and safety, hours, etc. JR Hall has a preliminary list.

- Our technology plans should have a set of guiding principles as well such as sustainability, college-wide service – basically a statement of technology philosophy. (Later in the meeting we discussed the need to define the principles somewhere, e.g. does sustainability include staffing considerations? Also, principles like simplicity and standardization were suggested.)
- Other equipment, e.g. the private cloud of servers and storage, and software licenses – identify what we have and needs/use of these as well to incorporate in our planning.

II. Technology Plan Modifications (Draft consolidation, fiscal year synchronization, cost analysis, staffing considerations)

- Timeline for revision of current plan is end of September then through Shared Governance. However, T. Ryan spoke briefly with P. Mery in Research and Planning, and her work on the Accreditation recommendations will preclude her creating an employee survey and working with us on the new technology plan as had been expected. But we need some kind of technology planning process to follow.
- Can work with the 2009-11 Technology plan and pull relevant items from it for new plan. It was suggested that annual needs come out of other plans such as Program Review and Annual Plans. The college-wide Technology Plan might include ITS planning, and general goals for meeting the technology needs of individual departments, and pull in specific tasks annually from program review and other unit plans. Still need linkages to strategic plan and budgeting, staffing, and other overall planning. Concerns about existing tech plan: it is a mix on ongoing known needs (Banner, Library system, LMS) and wish list. Some items require additional staff and money, others are easy to do now. The annual review processes will allow us to distinguish among current needs and wish list.
- Planning for staff for technology support often requires some percentage of a staff person (e.g. half of a person’s time) and does not lead to hiring a new person. Then training and job classification issues come into play. Should plan for attrition and cross-training. Should consult G. Momjian about incorporating staffing issues into our response on the recommendation. Probably don’t need too many details about current staffing, but should set a benchmark for staffing levels against which planning for expanding or shrinking can be done.

III. Process and Prioritization

- Referred to timeline handout – prioritized technology resource requests are on the timeline for March 2013, which means cost info needs to be there by then. We expect needs to come out of program review (Fall 2012). T. Ryan will get more information for us about the planning and budgeting timeline.
- Question about who evaluates technology resource requests, we don’t know this. We can come up with a set of processes for evaluating technology requests. Things originating from ITS should involve consultation with other units on user needs, and things originating from other units should involve consultation with ITS on appropriate technologies and support requirements.
- Criteria such as integration of new technology with existing technology (e.g. Banner only works with certain products) and best practices, evaluation of technologies used at similar institutions, should be considered in selecting and evaluating technology.

IV. Academic Roles (Vocational/Perkins (not discussed); Credit/Non-Credit (not discussed); consolidation models)

- If we need to reduce the number of labs/centers or total computers available to students, we need criteria for consolidation, such as usage at a given time of day, proximity of different facilities (Cloud and JAD can’t be consolidated, for example). This relates to the earlier discussion of criteria for labs meeting
students needs. All assumptions about needs, usage, how criteria meet our mission, need to be made explicit so we know what factors to consider and select an appropriate model for decision-making.

- Software – have models such as key server for consolidating licenses. One issue is that these have been purchased on a departmental basis in the past, then other departments begin using the existing license, and original department can’t easily cut this from the budget. Centralization of certain software licensing may be necessary, make this an institutional cost rather than departmental one.

V. Administrative Roles (student services; ongoing baseline IT operations)

- Student Services pays for some technology items from their budget (printers, e.g.), but all computers have been acquired by ITS.
- Testing Center equipment now has to be replaced from ITS budget. New computers are important for testing. Explore whether this can be done in existing labs.
- What kind of other specialized technology needs are there in student services areas besides Banner? SARS in counseling is one example. There have been ongoing requests for the Banner document management system.
- ITS has done a staffing review, they have 42 employees and another 20 who are in ITS classification but are paid from other budgets. There are still issues with how this works to be determined. Planning must account for certain staff that are always needed regardless of the size of the institution, such as Banner support.

VI. Response Format and Documentation (not discussed)

VII. Matrix Completion Due August 3

- T. Ryan will start filling this out and send to the team by the end of the day July 31 for comment. Activities we selected to add today are:
  - Determine number of CCSF employees
  - Create models for replacement
  - List guiding principles
  - Coordinate revised technology plan
  - Articulate relationship among plans
  - Criteria lists

- By September 15 we need our draft language into the hands of other groups so we need to add some drafting tasks very soon.
- It was suggested that E. Raznick might be willing to draft the guiding principles. K. Ginther-Webster offered to draft something about the relationship among plans.

Other discussion: a college-wide access management software for labs has been in some parts of the technology planning in the past. In addition to meeting previously identified student and staff needs such as ease of use across locations, this would provide data on computer usage for planning purposes. We might consider prioritizing this in our maintenance/upgrade/replacement planning as a component to further improve our planning processes. On institutional level there is interest in using a system like the ARGOS report writer, but we need data-gathering tools to feed into this.