



# Information Technology Plan 2008-2009

October 2008

## **Introduction**

Technology is embedded in all aspects of our institution. It facilitates our communications, supports faculty scholarship, enables learning and facilitates our administrative processes and decision-making. The ubiquitous nature of technology in our lives often makes us take it for granted. We have grown accustomed to assuming it will be available to us when and where we need it. Each year we discover new needs and new ways to use technology to transform how we work, learn and build communities. A technology plan provides long-term direction that informs how technology will be used at CSUN. It communicates our priorities and intentions for where we will invest to make the most of what technology has to offer.

Our environment is complex and our technology planning must be cognizant of the many organizations that make up our technology environment. The Division of Information Technology has primary responsibility for technology at CSUN, but it is not the only organization that provides IT resources. Our CSUN IT plan must be informed by the directions set by the Chancellor's Office and responsive to the needs and capabilities of the technology providers within our colleges and administrative divisions.

Research has shown that institutions who create methods to align their technology priorities with their institutional priorities achieve greater value from their technology investments. This plan creates just such an alignment. The remainder of this document describes the goals and strategies for technology for a three year timeframe as outlined in 2007 and how they link to our broader institutional planning priorities. The document also includes a sampling of the FY0809 technology projects that align with each goal.

## **Information Technology Goals and Strategies**

**Goal 1: Encourage the development and adoption of the use of technology to enhance and support a learning centered environment.**

Links to Planning Priority: Academic Excellence

### **Rationale**

The role of information technology in learning is one of the most interesting frontiers in higher education. Faculty have incorporated technology into the curriculum through simulations, technology mediated collaborations and access to digital content from a wide array of sources. We anticipate that our faculty will continue to innovate by incorporating technology into the learning environment in more ways. We want to be ready to support them by encouraging their innovation, providing the technology and support services they require to explore additional technologies and finding ways to support broader adoption of learning technologies.

We also anticipate that on-line learning will be an increasingly important part of CSUN's strategy. Hybrid courses offer a promising alternative that may enable the University to increase the utilization of our classrooms and break the link between learning and place. On-

line courses may enable us to offer access to our courses to more students. We need to make sure that our infrastructure and services are ready for these developments.

### Three Year Strategies

- Support faculty exploration and innovation with instructional technology and encourage their broader use.
- Maintain smart classroom technology that is in-line with faculty and student expectations.
- Support faculty efforts to use technology to effectively engage students with varied learning styles.
- Provide the infrastructure, applications and services required to support an expanded set of on-line course offerings.

### FY0809 Technology Projects

#### Smart Classroom Enhancements

- Based on feedback from two pilot smart classrooms in the Library, update our smart classroom standards accordingly
- Implement new smart classrooms based on budget availability

#### LMS Evaluation and Selection

A software selection process will ascertain which LMS software solution is best for our needs. The timeline below provides a roadmap to select and implement our next primary campus-wide LMS with the following milestones.

- Decide on the next LMS (December 2008)
- Implement (or contract with outsourced vendor) infrastructure of the next LMS (June 2009)
- Complete migration of courses and users (August 2010)
- We also need to determine whether to continue with the software upgrade of our current LMS (Blackboard CE formerly named WebCT)

#### Faculty Technology Support

Enhance Academic Technology support for faculty including:

- Classroom technical support
- Media services, video production and video streaming
- Accessible instructional materials (ATI)
- Faculty training
- Instructional technologies – Learning management systems, Assessment and quizzing, Lesson creation, Web-based conferencing
- Instructional design

Consolidation of faculty technology support in Oviatt including:

- Technology training
  - Classroom style training room
  - Informal modular faculty lab

- Video production studio
- Walk-in help desk (including media check-out)
- Faculty Technology Center

**Goal 2: Provide enhanced analysis, modeling and decision-making capabilities to support institutional strategies to improve graduation rates and decrease the time to graduation.**

Links to Planning Priority: Student Engagement

### Rationale

Increasing graduation rates and reducing the time to graduation are two of the most important institutional priorities for CSUN. The work underway with CSUN's My Academic Plan (MAP) system is an important initial step to use technology to impact graduation rates. Understanding the issues that impact retention and persistence requires sophisticated data collection and analysis. Technology can play a key role in helping us to devise and implement strategies to meet our goals. Other institutions have used analytical technologies to build predictive models to help students to choose their courses or to help academic advisors to proactively identify students that may be at risk.

### Three Year Strategies

- Design and deploy analytical capabilities that help to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of strategies to improve graduation rates.
- Deploy additional capabilities to enable students and faculty to model and monitor academic progress.
- Create predictive models of future demand for classes and classrooms.

### FY0809 Projects

#### My Academic Planner (MAP)

Enhance My Academic Planner software to include:

- Ability for students to design class schedules based on department roadmaps
- Ability for Graduate Studies Office to produce graduate degree audits

**Goal 3: Leverage existing and potentially new technology to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of business processes.**

Links to Planning Priority: User friendly business practices

### Rationale

There are opportunities to better utilize the capabilities of our current technology to support even more efficient business processes. We can also use technology to further our institutional goal to be a campus that is "user friendly". Technology offers the opportunity for us to deliver more self-service capabilities and information to our students and faculty. As our students

become increasingly mobile and increasingly “on-line” 24 hours a day, they will expect to be able to transact business with us anytime, anywhere. Technology and business process change will be critical to meeting these expectations.

Technology is only a part of business process improvement. Analyzing and changing business processes is a skill unto itself. We believe that the IT Division should take steps to build greater skills in process design and incorporate process redesign activities into our implementation methodologies. This will enable IT to offer greater capabilities to support the University’s efforts to enhance business processes.

### Three Year Strategies

- Partner with University departments to identify priorities for improving business processes.
- Develop a strategy for making business processes and information available on mobile devices.
- Create additional project management and process improvement capabilities within IT that can be brought to bear on any University effort to use technology to improve service.
- Be leaders and influencers of the System-wide technology strategy on behalf of the University.

### FY0809 Projects

#### User Friendly Business Process Improvements

##### for Students

- Enhance *myNorthridge* portal 2.0 using Admitted Student portal as the pilot
- Implement eMarket - enable collection of miscellaneous student fees
- Electronic funds transfer to reimburse electronically (staff and faculty too)

##### for Faculty

- Evaluate linkage of class and lab grading – develop custom mod if necessary
- Enhance temporary faculty on-boarding and integration processes
- Enhance class demand/class wait listing

##### for Staff

- Enhance employee termination processes and change of employee position processes
- Streamline travel reimbursement
- Streamline hiring processes

##### for Auxiliaries

- Integrate auxiliary staff into state HR database to improve interfaces with ConnectED, A-Z, PeopleFinder, phone directory, etc.

#### Student/Alumni email

Assess student email needs, email options, and implement changes if necessary – probably to hosted solution such as Google gmail.

#### Faculty email

Assess faculty email needs, email options, and implement changes if necessary.

#### Leverage Computer Purchases

Identify desktop and server hardware standards to leverage server and desktop purchasing for University to reduce support cost and optimize purchasing power.

#### Web Clean up

Coordinate with web developers in each college and division to identify and fix broken links and outdated content.

#### Web Content Management system evaluation

Identify web content management system needs, evaluation options, and propose solution. (Budget limitations may constrain actual implementation.)

#### Server Backup

Streamline backup and restore processes for the IT data center servers resulting in faster backup windows which minimize performance impact during business hours.

### **Goal 4: Sustain a secure, reliable and stable technology infrastructure.**

Links to Planning Priority: User friendly business practices

#### Rationale

Our first responsibility is to provide a technology infrastructure that people can be confident in. Our infrastructure needs to be stable and secure. Our major applications need to be as reliable as possible. Technology has become such an embedded part of our daily lives that we want it to be something we can take for granted. Meeting this expectation is not an easy task. It requires careful choices about what technology to adopt and when to adopt it. It requires us to become more proficient at managing technology and technology projects.

Offering reliable technology is not enough, it must also be as secure as possible. Security risks continue to grow more numerous and more complex. To be secure requires changes in technology and changes in individual behavior. We need to implement strategies to raise awareness about information security and mobilize the entire University community to help safeguard our vital information.

#### Three Year Strategies

- Maintain the currency and performance of the IT infrastructure.
- Develop more extensive capabilities to manage and execute complex projects.
- Develop an information security strategy that balances the need to minimize risk with the desire to maintain an open environment that facilitates the exchange of information.
- Raise awareness of information security risks to individuals and the institution.

- Implement a technology funding model that sustains our ability to renew and replace vital technology.
- Maintain up to date, tested disaster recovery plans that support the institution's business continuity plans.

## FY0809 Projects

### Business Continuity

Develop a CSUN business continuity plan and test IT disaster recovery plans.

### Information Security Awareness Training

In coordination with the CO, serve as the CSU pilot for testing the new online Information Security awareness training.

### Wireless access enhancements

Upgrade and enhance wireless network access.

### Web Infrastructure Server Refresh

Design and implement new web infrastructure to support enterprise web environment.

### Data Center/Server Hosting

Evaluate and recommend approach for server hosting in IT data centers, including campus server inventory, identification of mission-critical servers, servers storing confidential data, and cost and server refresh options.

## **Goal 5: Deliver quality IT support services that are valued by the University community.**

Links to Planning Priority: User friendly business practices

### Rationale

To use technology effectively, CSUN will require high quality technology support services. We must provide training to help users understand their technology. As technology becomes more embedded in our classrooms, offices and business processes, we must be prepared to provide responsive, knowledgeable support. This requires us to improve the ways we provide service.

Supporting technology is not just the responsibility of the central IT division.. There are technology staff throughout the institution who play a role in managing technology and supporting users. We need to create a closer collaboration among all staff involved in technology management and support. We have to develop more effective forums for sharing best practices, sharing knowledge and helping all of our IT support staff to keep their skills as current as possible.

### Potential Strategies

- Develop service level agreements, service standards and metrics for IT services.
- Collaborate with departmental IT support staff across the University to deliver integrated IT services.
- Improve internal and external IT support processes.
- Implement a professional development program that builds and sustains the skills of IT support staff.
- Develop methods to minimize the disruption from the adoption of new technology.
- Implement a process for making technology adoption decisions that consider a broad set of factors including user needs, security, supportability and reliability.
- Improve the effectiveness of IT communications.

### FY0809 Projects

- Unified Technical Support System