

**BRONX COMMUNITY
COLLEGE**

of The City University of New York

TECHNOLOGY STRATEGIC PLAN

2006

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I. Technology Vision & Introduction

Bronx Community College's vision for the use of technology is to use it as an innovative tool for learning, management support, and process simplification. We will focus our technology investments on supporting our institutional mission "to provide a strong academic foundation for students of diverse backgrounds, preparations, and aspirations in order to further their success in their chosen vocations, their future education, and their community involvement. To achieve its mission, the College maintains high standards of instruction to meet the learning needs of every student."

To assist in furthering its mission, Bronx Community College engaged in the update of its Technology Strategic Plan during the months of May, June, and July, 2006. The planning update effort was designed to assess the progress made by the institution since the publication and implementation of its original plan, "Bronx Community College - Information Technology Strategic Plan, 2003."

As the first step in the planning process all segments of the College community were invited to focus group sessions conducted by an outside consultant to measure the degree of progress achieved during the previous three years (copy of the findings attached as Appendix 2). The focus group findings were then presented to the College's Technology Oversight Committee, who, with the assistance of the consultant, met during the months of June and July to assess the focus group feedback and develop the current plan update.

II. Technology Goals & Strategic Outcomes

As has been the College's practice, its technology planning efforts have been designed to complement and support institution-wide strategic planning. Consistent with this approach this version of the academic and administrative technology strategic plan update specifically reflects the goals of the institution as set forth in the College's updated "BCC Strategic Plan 2010" and the "Bronx Community College, Campaign for Success, February 15, 2006", its new *Five Year Strengthening Plan*, which is being designed to promote student and institutional success.

Goals

We will employ technology innovations to assist the College in achieving its mission and new strategic priorities by:

- Encouraging continued improvement in teaching and learning
- Advancing liberal learning (including general education initiatives)
- Fostering a student-centered environment
- Ensuring resources to support student success
- Promoting effective and efficient college operations and business practices
- Improving internal and external communications and college visibility

Outcomes

We will realize our vision if the following outcomes are achieved:

- BCC graduates are well-prepared for a technological society
- BCC graduates have the skills and knowledge appropriate to their academic disciplines and career choices
- BCC students, faculty, administrators, and staff use technology
- BCC students are encouraged to embrace and creatively use technologies
- Communications among BCC students, faculty, administration, and staff is effective
- Relationships with the community, other educational institutions, business and industry, alumni, and professional organizations are mutually beneficial
- BCC delivers effective, efficient, quality student services
- The use of technology enhances academic processes
- The use of technology streamlines and simplifies administrative processes
- Technology is used to support analysis and decision-making at all levels

III. Technology Guiding Principles

Recognizing the need to set forth a statement addressing the role and direction of technology that is consistent with BCC's mission and goals, the Technology Oversight Committee has recommended the following nine guiding principles:

1. Promote efficient and effective technology which enhances teaching and student learning.
2. Foster technology improvements that simplify student interactions with College administrative functions.
3. Ensure ongoing assessment of the quality of our technology infrastructure, programs, and services.
4. Maintain a coherent and effective faculty and staff instructional and mentoring framework to promote effective integration of educational and information technologies.
5. Adopt an integrated, flexible and easy-to-use information management system.
6. Enable intra- and interdepartmental information sharing.
7. Adopt technologies based upon industry standards and the College's present and future needs, focusing on current availability, flexibility and growth potential.
8. Optimize the availability of funding for hardware, software, training, and staff to maintain and support a dynamic technological environment.

9. Allocate resources with an emphasis on multi-purpose, shared use.

IV. Strategic Technology Priorities, Objectives & Action Plan

The following strategic technology priorities reflect the combined input of the BCC user community, members of the Executive Council, and the membership of the Technology Oversight Committee. As such, these priorities represent areas for improvement deemed necessary for the College to continue its efforts to ensure that the technology environment at BCC contributes to the achievement of College and University goals for success:

Priority #1: Reorganize the Technology Oversight Committee's (TOC) function and structure

Objective: Ensure the representation and active participation of all segments of the College community, particularly the faculty, on the TOC.

Objective: Ensure that the TOC reports to an appropriate executive decision-making body, so that recommendations emanating from the technology governance process receives proper review and consideration.

Objective: Charge the TOC to focus upon the following key areas for technology planning and review:

- Regularly assess and update the strategic plan for technology.
- Engage in ongoing discussion to ensure an effective technology-aided teaching, learning and research environment.
- Ensure that students, faculty and staff are provided access to informational technology services and support.
- Recommend priorities for information technology resources.
- Assist in the development or review of information technology policies and procedures as needed.
- Review and recommend standards for hardware and software for faculty and staff use.
- Inform the College community regarding institutional technology plans, policies, and procedures.
- Advise the IT Department and administrative and academic units as they establish and work towards technology services goals and objectives.
- Conduct an annual assessment of the degree of achievement of institutional goals and objectives for technology.

Objective: Improve communication of College technology plans, tools and services throughout the College community.

- Objective:** Establish a formal communication process to ensure that technology issues, concerns, and recommendations find their way to the TOC on a routine and timely basis.
- Objective:** Establish a staffing capability to ensure that TOC requirements for follow-up action(s) be addressed and communicated to the appropriate College entities.
- Objective:** Establish a procedure to integrate the work of the TOC with other existing academic and administrative planning committees and processes of the College.

Action Plan:

The Executive Decision-Making Body will determine an appropriate committee structure for the Technology Oversight Committee to ensure that the College's technology governance process addresses the objectives outlined above.

The Senior Vice President for Administration and Finance will ensure the new technology governance structure is approved by the President and acknowledged as the standing committee of the College for technology advisement.

The Executive Decision-Making Body will ensure broad representative membership of the College community on the Technology Oversight Committee. Members should be able to carry out the objectives outlined above, while representing the interests and needs of their department. .

The Senior Vice President for Administration and Finance will ensure that the new Technology Oversight Committee is in place and operating for the 2006-2007 academic year.

Priority #2: Develop a strategy to ensure the development and adoption of curriculum based technology competencies for students

Objective: Develop an approach to coordinate the work of the TLTR, the TOC, the CTE, College academic departments, the Library, and the Department of Information Technology in adopting and implementing appropriate curriculum technology competencies for BCC students.

Objective: Ensure that standards not only address curriculum wide information literacy requirements, but the discipline specific needs of each academic department as well.

Objective: Establish a formal process for evaluating the degree of adoption of curriculum based competencies, by course and discipline, in order to assess the integration of technology within the BCC curriculum.

Action Plan:

The Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs will establish a process for integrating the work of the TLTR and academic departments to facilitate the adoption of curriculum competencies for all BCC students.

The Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs, or his designee, will work with the TLTR, CTE, and academic departments to determine the status of technology use among all academic departments and their degree of readiness to adopt, or develop, curriculum competencies.

Based upon input received the Vice President for Academic Affairs will determine appropriate expectations for departmental participation in the curriculum competencies effort and establish a timeframe for implementation by all academic departments and units.

Priority #3: Ensure the ongoing evolution and maintenance of a high quality, technology enriched, teaching and learning environment

Objective: Coordinate the resources of the TLTR, the Center for Teaching Excellence, the Department of Information Technology, and the Library to facilitate the development of a robust course development support environment for faculty who wish to integrate technology into their teaching.

Objective: Provide faculty with the instructional course design support necessary to effectively integrate technology into their courses.

Objective: Encourage and support faculty who wish to exploit the full capabilities of the Blackboard course management system as a teaching and learning tool.

Action Plan:

The Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs, in consultation with the Senior Vice President for Administration and Finance and the Executive Director of the Department of Information Technology, will develop an appropriate strategy to coordinate the efforts of the CTE, the Library, IT, and the TLTR to coordinate

and facilitate faculty support for the integration of technology within the curriculum and to support faculty technology teaching.

In order to facilitate the effort to coordinate and enhance faculty development resources, and to gather the background information necessary to guide his decision-making, the Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs will initiate efforts to gather the following baseline data:

- Existing technology use by faculty, by course and by discipline.
- Blackboard use by faculty for face-to-face teaching, as well as for delivery of partial or full asynchronous courses.
- The results of existing faculty development programs, their cost and benefit.
- Reactions of students to faculty use of technology in their courses.
- Emerging teaching technologies and strategies, their potential benefit and cost.

Priority #4: Implement College-wide technology tools that facilitate staff, faculty, and student service delivery, productivity, communication, and information and knowledge based decision-making

Objective: Establish a requirement that all internal college communications be accomplished via email.

Objective: Implement technologies to continually analyze and assess student needs, progress and performance in areas of academic advising, grading, and student tracking.

Objective: Implement improved automated processes in areas such as time keeping, PAF forms processing, degree audit, and transfer credit evaluation.

Action Plan:

The Technology Oversight Committee will approve a draft policy for recommendation to the President, which will establish the College email system as the primary method of communication between and among College departments and personnel.

The Senior Vice President for Administration and Finance and the Vice Presidents for Academic Affairs and Student Development, in consultation with the Executive Director for Information Technology and the new Technology Oversight Committee will coordinate a process to review existing policy for student use of

College email accounts and make recommendations for modification of the policy as deemed appropriate.

The Executive Director for Information Technology, the Associate Dean for Research, Planning & Assessment, the VP's for Academic Affairs and Student Development and their designees will develop systems alternatives and a timetable for coordinating and improving reporting on student academic performance.

The Executive Director of Information Technology and his Administrative Systems management and staff, in consultation with the Senior Vice President for Administration and Finance and appropriate Department heads, will identify systems alternatives, and a timetable for improving automated processes in areas of time keeping, PAF forms processing, degree audit, and transfer credit evaluation.

Priority #5: Adopt a policy, and implement a strategy, to facilitate the professional development of all faculty and staff with the goal of establishing baseline technology competencies and routine use of available technology tools

Objective: Identify institution-wide technology tools (e.g., email, appointment scheduling, etc.) and establish standards regarding their use by members of the College community.

Objective: Develop a strategy to begin to address the disparity between and among staff, administrators, and faculty regarding the use of the College technology infrastructure and software tools and systems.

Action Plan:

The Executive Director for Information Technology will identify and document those technologies, which constitute standardized institution-wide technology tools. The Executive Director will then prepare recommended standards governing reasonable institutional expectations for use of such technologies by all College employees for review by the TOC and other appropriate committees and entities for ultimate consideration by the President.

The Executive Director of Information Technology in consultation with other members of the executive staff will coordinate the evaluation of areas of need, recommend, and implement a comprehensive faculty and staff development program for technologies, as appropriate to the position. This development program will include requirements for all newly hired faculty and staff, as well as address ongoing development requirements.

Priority #6: Address key physical plant and technology infrastructure issues that pose impediments to ongoing technology progress

Objective: Identify and implement an effective solution to the network bandwidth constraints confronting the institution.

Objective: Implement wireless networking in all appropriate academic teaching and learning spaces.

Objective: Continue to optimize space utilization for classroom and laboratory facilities; establish plans to retrofit additional space as appropriate to expand technology in classroom and learning environments.

Objective: Establish a desktop recycle plan consistent with the needs of academic and administrative departments and based upon funding availability, specific use, and equipment life cycle expectations.

Action Plan:

The Executive Director for Information Technology, supported by the Senior Vice President for Administration and Finance, will continue to seek a solution to resolve the network bandwidth constraints currently affecting the College. The Executive Director will keep all appropriate College entities informed of progress achieved, and the potential timeframe for resolution.

The Executive Director for Information Technology will develop, and publicize, a plan to expand wireless network capability to all appropriate academic and administrative areas within the College. The Executive Director will work with the Senior Vice President for Administration and Finance to establish a capital budget and timeframe to support the wireless plan.

The Executive Director for Information Technology, in consultation with the Technology Oversight Committee will develop a desktop computer replenishment plan with appropriate replacement timeframes based upon cost, application requirements, and projected useful equipment life cycle. The Executive Director will submit the replenishment plan to the Senior Vice President for Administration and Finance for final review and approval.

APPENDIX 1

Situational Analysis

A. Institutional S.W.O.T. Assessment

As an integral component of this strategic planning process, the Bronx Community College Information Technology Planning Committee conducted an assessment of the institution's existing strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. The results of the assessment follow:

1. Strengths

- BCC enjoys a dedicated faculty and staff.
- The institution embodies a spirit of collaboration.
- Institutional personnel are committed to student support
- There is a warm, collegial atmosphere among all members of the college community.
- BCC benefits from a beautiful campus environment.
- The College has the advantage of strong, stable leadership.
- An accomplished faculty is a major strength.
- The faculty and administration are committed to personal and professional development.
- Academic program planning is strong.
- There is a shared vision, a commitment to student success, and high standards.
- The College has strong community roots among those who know us and enjoys a positive reputation within the community.
- BCC students are motivated; they are committed to personal achievement and success.
- The diversity of BCC's students, faculty, and staff is a significant strength and institutional differentiator.
- There is a large pool of potential students from which the institution draws its primary enrollment.
- After a period of decline, the institution's enrollment is now growing.
- Successful postgraduate outcomes are a hallmark of the institution.
- The College enjoys a good reputation and a track record of positive outcomes.
- The College's Institutional Planning Model provides a positive framework for institutional assessment, planning, and progress.
- The College supports a good technology infrastructure as exemplified by quality network and web services.
- The introduction of a technology fee has helped to provide the financial resources to support numerous critical technology initiatives.
- The institution has a strong history of grants acquisition and benefits from a solid grants capability.
- There is strong collaborative support for technology innovation among the faculty.
- The University is driving issues of student success.

- The relationship between faculty and the IT organization is very positive; example being the Honors Program
- New faculty hires are bringing strong technology skills to the institution.
- BCC enjoys the highest ration of full-time teaching faculty to students in the CUNY system.

2. Weaknesses

- The College has a significant deferred maintenance problem: the physical plant is old and in constant need of repair.
- There is limited classroom space suitable for its intended purpose.
- Though we have numerous computer labs.
- The library suffers from inadequate facilities; it is housed in two separate locations and possesses limited seating.
- Fundraising is limited or nonexistent among alumni.
- The institution suffers from the lack of integrated central administrative applications systems to support College business operations.
- There is a need for more wireless classrooms more appropriately suited for teaching purposes.
- The complex funding mechanisms and centralized administration contribute to institutional impediments.
- While the College's grants acquisition capability is good, many times there is insufficient funding to support grant funded activity in "out" years.
- The institution needs to become more learner centered.
- There is a need for additional help desk personnel and coverage.
- There are uneven levels of faculty expertise and interest in technology.
- Adjuncts and weekend program instructors are not adequately connected to institutional technology resources and services.

3. Opportunities

- The College's newly implemented Technology Fee continues to provide close to one million dollars annually to support critical student-related technology needs.
- Finalization of the College's Master Plan will enable the institution to move forward on the design and construction of a new instructional facility, North Hall.
- The College should develop new academic programs and strengthen and evaluate existing ones.
- The College can greatly enhance collaboration and communication between and among other CUNY institutions, and other educational institutions generally.
- The College can continue to improve faculty research capability and program articulation with other institutions.
- The College can do more to improve management decision-making through the availability of better information resources.
- The institution can enhance its ability to pursue governmental and private grants to support the College's mission.
- The College can pursue the numerous sources of funds available for minority serving institutions.

- Infusion of technology more broadly into the curriculum will now be an important potential.
- Faculty can be better prepared to introduce needed technologies into the curriculum through formal faculty development efforts.
- The College will be able to better prepare its students for success in a technology intensive society.
- The College as a group of learners and scholars will be able to communicate more effectively, greatly enhancing a sense of community.
- The institution can greatly improve student support and administrative student advisement, student tracking and alumni services.
- Business processes and workflows can be improved for all College constituencies.
- The College will be able to improve alumni giving through enhanced alumni contact and tracking.
- Transfers to Lehman and other upper division institutions can be enhanced.
- The College will be better able to attract and hire IT-capable faculty and staff.

4. Threats

- As an institution dependent upon public funding, the College is continually at risk from budget cuts.
- City funded Schools can be negatively affected by the availability and distribution of state supported capital funding.
- Unanticipated enrollment increases or declines could have an adverse impact on the institution.
- College facilities are in danger of being cited for EPA violations due to the age of many campus buildings; this potential could have a significant impact on the College's ability to function.
- The institution suffers from space as well as scheduling constraints with respect to the efficient use of all of its facilities.
- Competition from private, other CUNY and SUNY institutions will continually impact the College.
- The College does not attract the attention it should from the CUNY Central Office.
- The national perception that somehow community college attendance is a less-preferred educational option can adversely affect recruitment.
- The new CUNY sponsored academic standings policy can adversely affect student retention.
- The continued attack on state and federal public funding for education threatens public institutions of higher education.

B. External Trends and Forces

As BCC updates its multi-year information technology strategic plan, it is important to establish which outside trends and forces will impact upon its efforts. Many of these external forces noted below will be outside the institution's control.

1. **Constituent Expectations:** Students, faculty, staff, trustees, legislators and the community at large expect an ever-improving return on their investment in higher education. As a public institution, with a strong social and community service mission, BCC must continually deliver quality services to all its constituents in order to meet their diverse needs.
2. **Tempo of Technological Change:** Given the revolution in technology over the past twenty five years, it is reasonable to expect that technological change will continue unabated.
3. **Teaching and Learning Expectations:** BCC's students will expect IT integration in their education. Use of technology is critical in the learning and teaching process, and requires access to the infrastructure for continued professional and academic development of faculty and students.
4. **Asynchronous Course Delivery:** Alternative methods of course delivery (time and location independent) are growing, providing viable alternatives and supplements to traditional classroom instruction.
5. **Internet Impact:** From commercial applications and research capabilities to a vehicle for alternative course and instructional delivery, the Internet is significantly impacting upon higher education. The introduction of Internet II will require ever increasing bandwidth for research and educational applications.
6. **Outcome Measures:** Emphasis upon outcome measures is expected. Students expect value; BCC will be measured by its ability to help students to achieve their goals.
7. **Information-Technology Proficient Employees:** As the marketplace continues its reliance upon IT, it is BCC's responsibility to assure that students' education and training are commensurate with the demands of the local economy and society at large.
8. **National, Regional, and Local Economies:** Fluctuations in employee demands create a significant need for retraining various segments of the workforce, to which the College must respond.

The external factors discussed above currently shape, and will continue to shape, the economy, the development and use of technology, the quality and nature of academic instruction, the ways in which we administer our institutions, and the challenges students confront. While these factors cannot be controlled, a constant and vigilant regard to their existence, as well as a continual focus upon their potential impact, will continue to enhance Bronx Community College's positive presence in higher education.

APPENDIX 2

BRONX COMMUNITY COLLEGE FOCUS GROUP FINDINGS May 2006 Submitted by Bill Brennan

OVERVIEW

During the course of my interactions with members of the BCC community it became apparent where the strengths and weaknesses lie within the existing College-wide technology environment. Users universally recognize that significant improvements have been made to the technology environment since 2003 as a result of the implementation of the recommendations in the BCC, Information Technology Strategic Plan, 2003, which was confirmed by a comparison of user reported improvements to the goals and objectives outlined in the 2003 plan. However, several key issues did emerge which will require College focus during the current strategic planning update effort to ensure that technology progress continues.

Implementation of the Tech Fee, newer and many more computers, improved network access including numerous wireless access areas, substantially reduced virus infiltration on the network, significant improvement to access and services within the College Library, implementation of a number of administrative, business, and student service online support systems, more student and faculty computers and labs, and significantly enhanced helpdesk services are just some of the many improvements noted by users in the focus group sessions.

Five strategic issues emerged during the focus groups that I would recommend be minimally addressed within the context of the current planning effort. They are; the role of the TOC and its subcommittees, academic technology strategy including curriculum standards and teaching and learning objectives, greater participation of faculty in technology planning, improved communication of technology plans and services, and the role of technology in identifying students at risk, improving student retention, and facilitating student success.

In addition, as was the case during the 2003 planning effort, certain technology impediments exist which will hamper efforts toward progress in several areas. These technology impediments must be addressed within the context of the current planning effort and should receive early attention in any action plan that is developed.

I have divided my observations for review into the following three areas; strategic issues, strategic technology impediments, and raw focus group comments.

STRATEGIC ISSUES

1. The Role of the TOC

As originally envisioned in the BCC Information Technology Strategic Plan, 2003, the Technology Oversight Committee (TOC) would function as the top level oversight body for the review and recommendation of technology policy, priority setting for major projects, resource allocation, as well as providing a voice, through its three subcommittees, for the needs and concerns of users in the academic, administrative, and IT communities. As the committee has evolved, it appears to function in a very limited capacity, primarily for allocation of Tech Fee income, and its academic/instructional and administrative subcommittees play a very limited role.

The TOC has clearly served the institution well in its role of resource allocation of Tech Fee income as one only has to observe the many improvements in the academic environment, particularly for students, to confirm. However, it seems to be somewhat off-course at the moment from comments from both administrative personnel and academics who suggest that the TOC is not communicating its actions well, nor being perceived as having a role as an advocate for the needs of users.

Chairs of both the academic/instructional and administrative subcommittees suggest that they are not clear about the role of their subcommittees in the technology decision-making process, or how to clearly articulate their needs and issues to the TOC. This situation contributes directly to two additional strategic issues to be discussed later in this report; improved communication of technology plans and services, and greater participation of faculty in technology planning and decision making.

First and foremost, the TOC should be a policy setting/recommending body and a College-wide technology priorities arbitrator. Through its various subcommittees it should play two vital additional roles; first, as a forum for airing the needs, issues and concerns of various user constituencies and secondly, through its subcommittees, to act as an education vehicle to communicate technology policy, plans, and priorities to the College community.

During this planning effort it is strongly recommended that the role of the TOC be revisited and that a strategy be put in place to ensure that effective communication between and among various user constituencies can be addressed.

2. Academic/Instructional Technology Strategy

It was reported through the various focus group sessions that substantial improvements have been made to the academic/instructional environment. These improvements are exemplified by an increase in student labs, more and better computers for faculty and students, improved academic departmental lab facilities, media availability in the classroom through the use of mobile media carts, improvements to Library technologies and access within the Library, more network access to include numerous wireless locations, and a substantial increase in the use of technology by faculty at large.

However, while the above progress is a notable achievement, two high priority objectives within the 2003 Strategic Plan have not been achieved, and appear to lack a strategy for future progress. These are; Adopt minimum competencies for students and faculty, and, Continually assess the integration and effectiveness of technology within the BCC curriculum.

Specifically, while early committee work began to address the issue of student competencies its work languished after about one year and eventually stopped. Also, little progress was apparently made with regard to integration of technology within the curriculum as evidenced by the fact that one of the primary vehicles for delivery of technology aided instruction, Blackboard, is reported to have almost no growth in utilization over the past three years.

Reports from several faculty who were involved in the early stages in working to achieve the previous objectives suggest that no apparent institutional process/structure existed to enable their work to be reviewed and approved by an appropriate authority. It was also reported that there was a lack of an obvious coordinating mechanism to bring the work and interests of academic departments, various academic/instructional technology committees (e.g., TLTR), the CTE, and the IT organization together to achieve the above referenced objectives.

Given both the investment in academic technology over the past three years, and the continued interest of the institution and the faculty in achieving the above objectives, development of a process to move forward the integration of technology within the curriculum through the development of appropriate curriculum standards should be a high priority objective for the current planning effort.

3. Faculty Participation in Technology Planning

While faculty clearly identified the many improvements to the technology infrastructure and services, which have been accomplished over the past three years, they were uniform in their concern that they do not feel connected to, or full partners in, technology planning and decision-making at the institution. I believe that at least in part, the findings raised in the previous two strategic issues cited above (Role of the TOC and Academic/Instructional Technology Strategy) directly contribute to this feeling among the faculty.

If one looks carefully at the raw comments reported below in the Faculty Focus Group there are many reasonable questions and issues raised by faculty with respect to the current and future directions of technology for the institution. Many of these issues have activity already in progress or contemplated by IT and other entities on campus, such as the Library, however, there appears to not be any current vehicle in the form of a committee, or other appropriate venue, for faculty to raise questions and issues related to technology and obtain answers.

This apparent “disconnect” is the result of several factors. As stated earlier, the TOC academic/instructional subcommittee is not working as envisioned, thereby not providing one of the venues originally anticipated to solicit faculty input and provide responses to faculty concerns. Also, the absence of the process envisioned to achieve

the academic/instructional goals within the 2003 Strategic Plan also leaves a void with respect to communication between and among faculty, the administration, and academic leadership on these issues.

Achieving a shared academic vision for technology is crucial to the achievement of many teaching and learning goals for the institution. Engaging faculty in the “debate” regarding the development of curriculum standards and the future use of technology to enhance teaching and learning requires their active participation and buy-in. Developing an appropriate vehicle for communication with faculty regarding technology issues and plans should be a high priority issue for the current planning effort.

4. Improved Communication of Technology Plans & Services

Highlighted in all of the focus groups, the recommendation for improved communication regarding technology plans and services was a high priority for users. As has been mentioned earlier, the role of the TOC should be reviewed with regard to how communication of its activities can be improved. However, the issue of improved communication is one that clearly transcends the TOC.

The IT organization must work to identify routine ways to communicate its activities to the user community. Various committees charged, in part or in whole, with technology activities must communicate on a regular basis to faculty and students. The Library must communicate effectively with its various constituencies. Administrators should be fully informed of plans and actions with respect to technology, particularly with respect to the plans and actions of CUNY.

With effective communication comes understanding, tolerance, and good ideas. Much is going right at BCC with regard to technology progress and finding effective vehicles to promote that success and identify areas for improvement can only strengthen the institution and its efforts further.

Whether imbedded within other strategic issues, or addressed as a standalone item, improved communication regarding technology plans and services should be a crucial element within the current plan update.

5. Using Technology to Facilitate Student Success

An issue on the minds of many participants in all of the focus groups was the degree to which technology can be used to advance student success at BCC. Not surprisingly, this issue encompasses a range of possible technology initiatives from enhancing student preparedness for College, to monitoring student progress and being able to develop “early warning” capabilities for students at risk, to improved teaching and learning strategies to enhance student learning.

A few of the capabilities which were requested included electronic grading, electronic attendance monitoring, and better and more extensive use of Blackboard as a teaching and learning tool. It is recognized by many that this is an area where technology can provide a substantial service in advancing the strategic agenda of the institution.

While this appears as the last strategic issue in a list of five it should not be misinterpreted to mean it is the last in priority. In fact, I would hope the planning committee will consider the possibility that by focusing its efforts in this area we may find a vehicle to address other outstanding strategic issues which have been identified.

STRATEGIC TECHNOLOGY IMPEDIMENTS

Certain key technological and technology service impediments currently exist which must be addressed in order for the institution to continue on its path to further progress. Certain of these issues are well known and acknowledged and activities are already in place to address them. However, for the purposes of this planning cycle I believe they should be identified and documented.

These issues are:

1. Network bandwidth constraints – While substantial improvement has occurred with regard to the BCC network, peak usage periods appear to be seriously impacted by a lack of bandwidth. This problem is not isolated to BCC but rather impacts all CUNY schools in the Bronx. This problem impacts all on-campus users.
2. Student Email – While student email exists, it is generally recognized as ineffective. Problems cited include operational issues associated with when students are issued email to confusion between BCC email and the CUNY portal. Students apparently resist using email other than their personal account which further inhibits effective electronic communication with students. While this is not strictly a technical issue; student email does work, the educational, administrative, and student service goals for student email are clearly not being achieved.
3. Help Desk – Universally hailed as a high quality service it is equally criticized for delays in response time to problems and limited hours of operation due to staffing constraints. In our information and technology intensive world the reality is that users will need help and increasingly users will expect more from help desk operations.
4. Power constraints – Generally understood, but still an impediment to flexibility to delivering certain technological solutions is the limited/aged building power capacity.

RAW FOCUS GROUP COMMENTS

STAFF FOCUS GROUP

(Departments represented: Library, Campus Planning, Human Resources, Institutional Development, Continuing Education, Finance & Administration, Admissions, Registrar, College Relations, and Physical Plant)

Observed Improvements

Infrastructure more stable, no more bottlenecks, fiber in every building
More and improved hardware for faculty, including desktops and laptops
Library now wireless, laptop loan program
Website electronic reserves now available
Campus database for building and space planning now available
Moving toward implementation of Resource 25 for enhanced space planning
Help Desk much improved can log and track service requests
Helpdesk staff expertise excellent
Much improved on campus interoperability; clearly moving toward OS standard
IT work orders & PPS work orders working well
Have web access to work orders & follow-ups
Phone tree implemented and working well
Switched to Outlook and Express which has improved email from home
Automated physical plant work orders now online and working well
Student email now available
Email mailbox expanded
New electronic requisition system available
Library now has remote access to library databases, digitized instructional resources, reaching more students with information literacy program, about a five fold increase in computers for students in library learning resource center
Departmental websites now very helpful
Many wireless areas
Now have publicly available IR data on the Web
Degree Works implemented
Many new student services available online including bill payment to include Financial Aid

Outstanding Issues/Concerns

Student email available but not used effectively or extensively; confusion over CUNY Portal ID's & password and BCC email account
Missing link between portal and BCC email; 2-user id's and 2 passwords
Student email not available soon enough in semester, negatively impacts student use of Blackboard
Electricity distribution still a major problem in many buildings
Broadcast emails not always getting there, not isolated to BCC
Need grades and probation status available electronically; able to email in
New hires can wait for months to receive email waiting until they are in CUPS
Many times response time from helpdesk not acceptable; limited staff with lots of work such as setting up and distributing laptops in addition to responding to routine helpdesk calls

Large work order backlog
Need expanded helpdesk hours, evening and weekend
Need better CUNY helpdesk support for portal, email, Blackboard
Tech fee has been great help for students but doesn't really help staff and faculty
Library bandwidth an issue; bandwidth campus-wide a problem
Need College-wide data warehouse
Printers are an issue; too many types, insufficient standardization
TOC has not worked for administrators; not clear of the role of administrative systems subcommittee

FACULTY FOCUS GROUP

(Departments represented: Health & Physical Education, Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Math & Computer Science, History, Art & Music, Center for Teaching Excellence, Nursing, Education & Reading, Library, and Communication Arts & Sciences)

Observed Improvements

More computers for faculty, students & staff
Use has increased exponentially
Wireless in many locations
Faculty use has definitely increased
We have a rational process for distributing computers
There is increased use of the Internet
The network has less viruses and is more consistently available
Helpdesk support is excellent
Need College-wide data warehouse
Computer purchasing is much easier, particularly for software
Academic lab scheduling and availability is good for courses
Mobile carts for in-class use of technology a big improvement
Library resources are great

Outstanding Issues/Concerns

No wireless master plan; seems to be wireless by request
Blackboard use still low, no real progress, less than 10% of all courses
Lack of collaborative department problem solving; are we too compartmentalized & not taking advantage of our full capabilities
We have a Chemistry Smart classroom and no wireless
TOC has lost its way – faculty does not feel they have enough input into decisions
Faculty wants an accounting of how funds are being spent for technology
Bandwidth a major issue; more and more computers seek to share existing bandwidth
We need flexibility in hardware acquisition; Dells are not the only solution – we need UNIX workstations, Mac's, etc.
Mac not supported
Can no longer download BCC email from home
Pop servers no longer available, only Outlook & Exchange; a real problem for faculty and students
Failure of communication from IT

Need Web site policy for academic departments not driven by marketing issues; need faculty web sites

Library proxy server and database services not available, why?

Why has it taken 3 years to make the CTE operational?

We need an annual survey of technology on campus

Student email needs to be more flexible – why not alumni accounts, what about stop outs, why not student pop email – they don't use BCC's only their own

Why can't we have a secure faculty server?

We need a replacement strategy for broken & stolen equipment, why not the breakage fee from the Tech fee

We need Smart classrooms – we need an academic technology plan!

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

(Departments represented: Office of the President, Academic Affairs, Student Services, Institutional Advancement, Institutional Research, Administration & Finance, Information Technology, and Continuing Education)

Observed Improvements

Positive collaboration within the IT Department, IT areas working together now

Substantial improvement to network availability

More and better desktop tools available for staff and faculty

SIMS Mirror Project a major achievement

Enhanced online capability for many administrative areas a major improvement

Great improvement to Student Testing Office with online capabilities

Library a possible model for future academic improvements

Outstanding Issues/Concerns

Network availability needs to be expanded further; need more wireless – particularly in places populated by students

Need to think about ways to develop front-line staff to think differently because of technology – how can we better leverage the existing technology platform

We need to do a better job of bringing adjuncts into the technology environment – make sure they have the information and tools necessary to do their jobs

IT needs to do a better job of publicizing its progress and activities

We still have a number of manual processes that are labor intensive and ineffective – HR? PAF, Admissions/FA/Registrar, Grades/Attendance (for continuing Ed as well), too much paper flowing around campus

We need to use/create tools that will help with a major issue – student preparedness/success - we need an effective early warning system for students at risk (attendance & grading), we need to address student retention

We need technology standards for the curriculum, perhaps the General Education process can be used as a model

We are lacking instructional technology support for teaching and learning

Blackboard use a disappointment; we need to get faculty engaged

We need to clarify the role of the TLTR/TOC/Instructional and administrative subcommittees – isn't clear who was managing the money within the governance structure

We need some sizzle in the environment - public stations such as installed at Baruch College

STUDENT TOWN HALL MEETING

Observations/Requests

Biology lab works well

Definitely more computers available, good lab access

I'm a Mac user, no Mac labs on campus so I can't interchange files

Computers go up and down in the labs

Cafeteria thin client didn't allow student to access grades

Outlets are needed everywhere for laptops

Wireless service in the library is too slow

Students reported not knowing how to access their email and web site is confusing and complex; information should be given out at orientation

Need portable laptops for temporary use

Library PC's are limited

Why are PC's so slow?

I came with computer skills but there was no way to test out of required computer course

Computers in the labs are slow accessing the Internet

Not enough lab computers, particularly in the afternoon, computers will freeze and then you have to leave the lab

We need more access to PC's on campus, we need a place to just go and surf

Some library computers have WORD, some don't, some have Internet access and some don't - why