The Mt. SAC Technology Master Plan 2009

The Mt. SAC Technology Master Plan (TMP) is intended to integrate with all institutional planning as well as integrate into the Educational Master Plan (EMP) and the Facilities Master Plan (FMP). Information Technology (IT) is an integrated function of the College and it is important that the TMP embody this integration and allow for an evaluative component.

Over time it became clear that technology, and more importantly, data, was being imbedded in disparate systems throughout the College. Diverse technologies entered into the College from many paths and sometimes in unexpected ways. It was becoming obvious that a consolidated strategy to implement and manage technology across the College was required for successful use of the technology and, importantly, to leverage success from the ever growing investment the College was making in technology.

Technology and related ongoing support and costs had to be viewed in the whole to manage the College responsibly from a fiscal perspective and ensure the required primary focus on Instruction and Learning.

INTRODUCTION

■ Mission Statement. The Information Technology (IT) team provides service and support to the students, faculty and staff of Mt. San Antonio College by providing leadership in the implementation, integration, application, delivery and support of information and instructional technologies. The IT team is committed to efficiently and effectively managing communication, academic and administrative computing, printing services, mail services and related information resources that support and enhance teaching, learning, community development and public service at the College.

■ Vision Statement. In order to fulfill its mission, IT is committed to providing technology resources to support student learning programs and services and improve institutional effectiveness, deliver prompt, courteous service to all clients, direct IT planning at the institutional level and provide leadership, partnership and support to divisions and departments within the College to ensure the appropriate implementation and application of technology.

IT will also strive to collegially establish, communicate and enforce standards for the use and delivery of information and educational technology, facilitate and encourage the use of information technologies within the College and maintain the mechanisms for appropriate information technology access, security, availability and integrity. IT will also evaluate and enhance the effectiveness of IT resources including human, physical and financial resources; research and evaluate emerging technologies; and implement and integrate new technology as appropriate.

■ SWOT Analysis. The SWOT analysis is used as a strategic planning method to evaluate the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats for the Technology Plan. The Strengths section identifies those attributes of IT that are helpful in achieving the objectives. The Weaknesses section identifies areas that are harmful to achieving the objectives. The Opportunities section identifies external conditions that may be helpful and the Threats section identifies external conditions which could do damage to the objectives.

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- **Objectives of Strategic IT Plan.** In order to accomplish the mission and vision statements listed, Mt. San Antonio College requires a comprehensive plan for information and instructional technology. A major goal of this plan is for Mt. SAC to continue to be a leader in the use of information technology in Higher Education. This is important in supporting the mission of the College and also important to the commitment for Mt. SAC to be recognized as one of California’s very best community colleges. It is clear that the College will continue to embrace emerging technologies that are critical to the College mission.

- **Aligning IT Goals with Institutional Mission.** In order for this Technology Master Plan to be an effective tool for directing the acquisition and use of information technology for the institution, it must be aligned with the overall planning efforts of Mt. SAC. In addition, the Mt. San Antonio Community College District and the California Community Colleges have directives that must also be part of the alignment. The Technology Master Plan is aligned with the overall College Plan through a Comprehensive Planning Process. This plan specifically integrates with the Educational Master Plan, Facilities Master Plan, and Business and Community Partnership planning process.

**PLANNING ASSUMPTIONS**

- **General.** Assumptions were used to create the Technology Master Plan including the use of centralized and integrated services for students and faculty such as the BANNER Luminis portal, increased usage of email, mobile technology and advanced communications. Online services such as counseling, classrooms, student services, etc. will require technology infrastructure to stay up to date and expand as required, and separate data information warehouses will need to be integrated into a centralized database system to reduce information redundancy and increase the accuracy of the information. Due to current economic conditions, it is estimated that funding for ongoing operations will reduce over the next three (3) years.

**STRATEGIES**

- **Student Services** plans include improved College-wide communications capabilities through use of an integrated, web-based system and a move to technology delivery of services such as online counseling.

- **Academic Systems** will plan to offer faculty web services for access to online rosters, student drops, faculty schedules, submission of grades, and online learning.

- **Administrative Systems** strategies will require ongoing maintenance of hardware and software, networks and telecommunications, and IT security as directed by IT “Best Practices.”

- **Training for the BANNER system** will be necessary as well as other third-party software applications and a move to a Technology Training Center and Online Assistance Center that offers training for faculty and staff in all areas of relevant technology.

- **Fiscal strategies** will include careful management of ongoing technology expenditures and budgetary planning. Also, analysis related to the overall cost of technology will be conducted on an ongoing basis including one-time purchases, maintenance, replacement and support costs and the need to recruit and retain quality technical staff to maximize limited staffing budgets.

**IT GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

Historically, IT has divided it’s goals into “Strategic” and “Tactical” goals. Tactical goals are for short-term, immediate requirements. Strategic goals are the long-term, frequently ongoing items like projects such as upgrading the network and providing wireless access, which require significant resources to achieve.

With the advent of the Planning for Institutional Effectiveness (PIE) process including the annual updates to PIE, the names and forms have changed but the processes for determining IT priorities has remained consistent. IT is actively involved in various committees, task forces, and meetings around campus where impromptu suggestions are made or future activities discussed which may establish a new goal or modify a priority so that support will be available when that activity takes place.

All of the Goals and Objectives within this plan fall within a three to five year planning process. In addition, this plan will be reviewed each year by IT to provide updates as the technology environment at the college changes.

**ACTION PLAN**

This TMP Action Plan is used to describe and measure the goals of the Technology Master Plan including the planned completion date and a current status. This will be used by the Information Technology staff, college campus committees and other campus personnel to measure the effectiveness of the plan’s goals. This is a “first pass” type template to ensure that action plan items are included, prioritized and fully addressed.

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

The Mt. SAC Technology Master Plan could not have been completed without the campus-wide input from College Committees and Councils, IT Participatory Committees and regular IT team meetings. Thank you.
Technology Master Plan Q & A

■ How hard was it to build the Plan?

Because of IT’s ongoing planning efforts, the actual building of the Technology Master Plan (TMP) turned out not to be very difficult. IT started the processing by conducting an analysis of the current state of computing at Mt. SAC. Then, consistent with our past practice and to assist with building the plan, IT leadership met with academic departments and discussed their current and anticipated future needs. IT then evaluated the current infrastructure and administrative computing environment for future upgrades and known technological changes. All of these meetings were documented and summarized and were included as part of the TMP Action Plan.

From an Enterprise Application Systems perspective, planning evolved from the experience gained by moving from discrete, separate systems to a fully integrated system. It was clear that the College had to strategically move away from the perspective of separate technology for instruction versus administration. The systems implementation project planning, business analysis, and all related project work formed the basis for input to the TMP.

■ What did you learn about building the Plan?

During the plan building process, many IT staff members realized that planning in IT occurs on a daily basis—it just isn't always documented. In addition to continuous planning, staff learned that when they offer suggestions or input during a meeting for a new way to solve a problem or new technology that is coming, these ideas are often acted upon and incorporated in IT’s plans including our PIE process and the TMP.

It became quite evident that strategic and tactical planning go hand-in-hand and that creating a TMP is not a one-time event but rather an ongoing process.

■ What would you do differently next time you update the Plan?

Dale Vickers, Director of Academic Technology and Infrastructure — “We need to involve more people, specifically IT staff, sooner. It’s too hard for a small group to fully represent the entire multiple and diverse technological areas this IT department uses and supports.”

Vic Belinski, Chief Technology Officer, ‘It is important to capture discussion and decisions related to technology initiatives and solutions as they occur. All of this is critical data that allows for update and integration with the TMP.’

■ What words of wisdom would you share with your colleagues about to embark on this type of planning process?

Dale Vickers, Director of Academic Technology and Infrastructure — “Draft people to participate. Don’t just give them the opportunity and count on them to volunteer. Too many won’t and the loss of their input will negatively impact your final result.”

Vic Belinski, Chief Technology Officer — “Strategy and planning must become part of the culture just as day-to-day tactical decision making is viewed today.”

■ How does your plan support integrated planning?

The TMP supports integrated planning because it relies on and refers to the College's Educational Master Plan (EMP) and the Facilities Master Plan (FMP). The TMP looks to the EMP regarding future growth of academic programs and enrollment. The TMP relies on the FMP for direction regarding future infrastructure changes and new building initiatives and timelines. The TMP also informs the FMP by providing technology standards for all buildings including classrooms, labs, and office space.

■ Where can one find the Mt. SAC Technology Master Plan 2009?

Go online using the following URL and click on “Mt. SAC IT Master Plan:”

http://inside.mtsac.edu/departments/admin/it/plan/index.html