

STANDARD III.C

Technology Resources

Technology resources are used to support student learning programs and services and to improve institutional effectiveness. Technology planning is integrated with institutional planning.

III.C.1 The institution assures that any technology support it provides is designed to meet the needs of learning, teaching, college-wide communications, research, and operational systems.

III.C.1.a Technology services, professional support, facilities, hardware, and software are designed to enhance the operation and effectiveness of the institution.

Description

Laney College identifies, makes decisions about, and evaluates its technology needs in a variety of ways. These include the following:

- Unit plans and program reviews: Departments identify and assess technology needs as part of their annual program review cycle and through long-term planning for learning, teaching, and research.
- Department meetings: Departments discuss technology needs that are then presented to the Faculty Senate, administration, and other appropriate committees, or put into unit plans and program reviews.
- Division meetings: Faculty members specify technology needs to administrators.
- Administrative committees (e.g., Instructional Council and Academic Leadership Council): the President, vice presidents, deans, and other administrators discuss technology needs, in order to make policy decisions, such as resource prioritization.
- Technology Planning Committee (TPC): The Laney College Technology Planning Committee is a shared-governance body that gathers evidence about and discusses the college's technology needs, which it uses to make

recommendations to appropriate administrative and shared-governance groups.

- Shared-governance Groups: In addition to the TPC, other shared-governance groups actively participate in needs evaluations processes. They are: Faculty Senate, Classified Senate, Associated Students of Laney College (ASLC), College Council, Instructional Support Committee, Instructional Lab Task Force, and PASSPORT Business Readiness Team (BRT).
- Technology surveys – In an effort to identify Laney College technology needs and to assist in the development of a college-wide technology plan, Laney administers technology surveys. A Laney web site survey was administered to Laney faculty, administration, and staff in fall 2007 (IIC1a-1). The results of this survey provided valuable information about the need for new campus web sites. A Laney Technology Survey was administered in October 2008 and is discussed in the “analysis” section below (IIC1a-2).

Determining Institutional Technology Resource Needs

The recent technology survey provides an example of how Laney obtains technology information to inform decision-making and support assessment. The survey was administered online in October 2008, using SurveyMonkey. A link to the survey was emailed to Laney department chairs, program coordinators and those responsible for the planning and day-to-day operations of the college's technology resources. The Survey consisted of 29 questions that addressed all aspects of campus technology, ranging from distance education to computer labs. Of the 46 people who received the survey link, 33 (72 percent) responded, including 24 department chairs and one program coordinator. Response highlights include:

- 42 percent of respondents feel that 50 percent or fewer of Laney students are prepared to use technology at the college level.
- 52 percent feel that students do not have adequate access to technology on campus (outside the classroom) to perform their required work.
- 58 percent feel that students do not have adequate access to technology off- campus to perform their required work.
- 52 percent think that the technology resources available to their departments are “fair” or “poor,” whereas 48 percent feel that the technology resources are “adequate,” “good,” or “excellent.”
- 70 percent stated that their department’s instructional computers have Internet connectivity.
- 76 percent feel that their departments do not have adequate IT support.
- 56 percent feel that their departments do not have sufficient financial resources to obtain software licenses to meet instructional needs.
- 53 percent feel that there are insufficient professional development opportunities for faculty and staff to stay up-to-date in using their technology assets.
- 53 percent say that their departments plan to offer distance education courses.

The Peralta district is currently developing business intelligence tools to provide a web-based query ability for extracting information that Laney administrators can use to make data-driven enrollment management decisions. In the absence of this real-time data, Laney enrollment management is accomplished with the support of modern database management tools, such as spreadsheets, pivot tables, graphs and basic statistical analyses (IICC1a-5).

All of these efforts have been informed by the leadership of two educators, the dean of business,

math, and sciences and the current Faculty Senate president. The dean was assigned to facilitate work at the college and with the district. The Faculty Senate president volunteered several years ago to serve as college ambassador and member of a team of California community college educational technology facilitators. Each of these representatives have led electronic communiqués within the college and at the district level that have informed many aspects of the planning, decision making, and evaluation of technology as articulated above.

Procedures for Meeting Technology Resource Needs

Technology needs identified by Laney College faculty, staff, and administrators are vetted in appropriate committees and evaluated as to their importance. Laney administrators and faculty leaders base their technology decisions on the desire to meet the needs of teaching and learning, as well as college-wide communications, research and operational systems. Long-range planning and consensus-building are important components of Laney technology planning.

After technology needs are identified, the college attempts to meet them in a variety of ways. The Laney College Technology Planning Committee (TPC) is a shared-governance body that recommends solutions to various technology issues. The TPC contributes to decisions regarding distance education, new web site development, faculty computer allocation, instructional lab support, policy and procedures, and other related issues.

Using Technology to Enhance Institutional Operation and Effectiveness

The Peralta district strategic plan encourages distance education and, as the result of a year of deliberation by shared-governance committees, the district has adopted Moodle as its online course management software. Moodle is an open source software and will allow Laney (and Peralta) to draw from the open source community for training and support. Peralta has already developed a series of Moodle sites for distance education purposes (e.g., eperalta.org and eberkeley.org) and has procured domain names to enhance Laney College’s distance education web presence (elaney.org, elaney.net, elaney.com). Laney

recently hired a distance education (DE) coordinator at .25 FTE. Hiring another DE coordinator in spring 2009 will augment the capacity of this position. DE coordinators will help faculty develop online and hybrid courses, maintain a database of all Laney distance education offerings, and perform related tasks (see DE job description, IIC1a-3).

An increasingly urgent need for a new college web presence was revealed, in part, by the Laney web site survey administered to Laney faculty, staff, and administrators in fall 2007 (IIC1a-2). In response to this need, Laney will soon begin development of new college web sites also using open source technology. This technology will allow Laney faculty, staff, and administrators to easily develop and maintain their own web sites, with the support of extensive, free, online training and technical support through the open source community; it will complement the distance education efforts of the college. Cost efficiencies, including free software, technical support, and training, make this plan highly appropriate for difficult economic times. The Laney faculty, staff, and administration will be empowered by their ownership of these new web sites, rather than restricted by the costs associated with the ongoing consultation necessary for a site developed by a commercial entity. A PowerPoint presentation included in the evidence list for this standard illustrates the college's plans for implementing the open source web paradigm (IIC1a-4).

Student application for admission to Laney and registration for classes is done online through CCCApply and PASSPORT (PeopleSoft) student administration systems. When fully operational, instructors will be able to use this technology to submit grades, view rosters, and communicate with students online. The newly refurbished Laney Welcome Center, staffed with student ambassadors and equipped with dozens of computers with Internet access, allows students who do not have off-campus computer access or who may have difficulty with the online registration process to register for Laney classes with personal assistance. During these trips to the Welcome Center, students also learn how to obtain counseling and other student services support.

Laney College provides tutoring instructional support by maintaining open entry/open exit computer and writing labs with faculty staffing. These services are described more fully in Standard IIC (Student Learning Programs and Services).

Integrating Technology in the Classroom

In terms of the use of technology in the classroom, Laney College's goal is to improve the quality of education by:

- Using technology in unprecedented ways to be a step ahead of other learning institutions.
- Making education relevant in the context of a global community.
- Providing students the tools to take charge of their education.

Laney is advancing technology in education by focusing, not simply, on technology, but also on how to effectively integrate it into Laney classes. The college is committed to creating a learning platform that integrates technology with a student support network (<http://www.collegeinfocus.com/>). The innovative Universal Learning Design (ULD) project, created by a Laney professor, led to the development of the Universal Learning Lab at Laney. The Laney College Universal Learning Lab offers two levels of support. On the first level, Laney supports students in participating classes who are using Kurzweil text-to-speech technology as a component of their classes. Using this tool, students edit papers, listen to their text books and access their teacher's embedded study support. (Kurzweil is described in detail in Standard IIC.) On the second level, the college provides a general drop-in lab for everyone.

This program is supported by the Laney College administration, along with numerous faculty members across disciplines. This concept is also being developed on other college campuses throughout the state, and has garnered the interest of educators in European countries.

Evaluation

The college meets this standard.

Planning Agenda

The results of the college's technology survey, along with information obtained through committees and anecdotally, clearly show that Laney needs more technology support, including IT staff, financial resources for purchasing new software, training and professional development support, and support for offering distance education classes. College faculty, staff, and administrators will continue their work with the Peralta district in the coming year to identify and obtain resources to address these issues.

In addition, the survey reinforces the general perception that many Laney students need assistance in using technology at the college level. During the coming year, the college will introduce new opportunities for students who need help with technology, both in terms of instruction (i.e., basic computer classes) and student services (i.e., counseling).

III.C.1.b The institution provides quality training in the effective application of its information technology to students and personnel.

Description

The District Staff Development Office conducts periodic surveys of employees to determine self-identified technology training needs of faculty, staff, and administrators (IIC1b-1). As new technologies are introduced, shared-governance bodies recommend training opportunities to the college and district administration. Such training is directed at faculty, classified staff, administrators or students, depending on the nature of the technology, and the representative body that is the source of the recommendation. Representative bodies that have made recommendations for technology training include: the District Technology Planning Committee, Laney Technology Planning Committee, District Academic Senate, Laney Faculty Senate, Laney Classified Senate, Laney College Council, and the Laney Business Response Team (for PASSPORT implementation).

In previous years, with the support of TTIP funds, Laney provided training for some new technologies

as they were introduced. However, the exponential rate of development in Laney's use of technology has put increased emphasis on the need for ongoing technology training for both faculty and staff.

From 2006 to 2008, a California Educational Technology Collaborative Ambassador Program introduced the college community to a large catalog of free and low-cost training opportunities focused on Microsoft Office Suite, Adobe, Web 2.0 applications, and more (<http://www.ccone.org/seminars/index.php>). Several faculty and staff members took advantage of these opportunities to improve and develop their technology skills. The District Staff Development Office provides ongoing technology training during professional development flex days.

Laney also hired a new distance education coordinator in November 2008, to help faculty learn to use course management software and develop new distance education courses. In addition, the Universal Learning Design project conducts regular professional development trainings to promote college wide interest and trains faculty on: using the Kurzweil text-to-speech software and annotating e-texts to support student learning.

Several IT applications are being implemented by the college at this time, including:

CurricUNET: In response to a similar need in the area of curriculum, and in alignment with practices at other California community college districts, faculty recommended and the district purchased another web-based application, CurricUNET (http://www.governet.net/home/higher_ed/), to enhance and streamline college and district-wide curriculum management. This dramatic change in the way the college originates, develops, reviews, and approves curriculum will necessitate an extensive investment in faculty and staff training. In order to transform the long-standing and complex paper-driven processes that are currently used, and based on the experience of other colleges/districts (<http://www.league.org/leaguetc/express/inn0211.html>), the college can anticipate a two- to three-year period of intense developmental labor to fully implement CurricUNET. This process will require faculty advocacy and a well-designed transition plan in order

to gain consistent district support.

Moodle: Beginning spring 2008, the institution provided course offerings to prepare faculty for teaching online, for teaching hybrid classes and on using Moodle course management software. Since then, the district has been expanding those offerings into a professional development track of regular training opportunities to support its expansion of distance learning classes—an institutional strategic goal—using distance education modalities. This approach allows faculty and others to become engaged with the software tools from a student perspective, e.g., a course on teaching with Moodle uses Moodle software to deliver course content.

As Laney increases its distance education offerings, faculty will require training in how to use the Moodle. Since the program is open source, there is extensive, free online training and support. In addition to these resources, Laney recently hired a faculty member to be the distance education coordinator at .25 FTE. In spring 2009, the college will hire another coordinator at an additional .25 FTE, bringing the total funded coordination effort to .5 FTE. In addition, the district has approved a .5 FTE district-wide faculty trainer, who will be available to all four colleges.

In support of its distance education curriculum, marketing initiatives and student/customer relationship management, Laney will continue to participate collaboratively in the development of new web sites for each college in the Peralta district. As this project advances, the college will use the extensive online training and support available through the open source community. In addition, the college is requesting funding for webmasters and trainers who will provide on-site training to faculty, staff, and administrators.

PASSPORT: With the recent implementation of the PASSPORT student administration module, the district administration hired RWD Technologies to conduct training for staff. RWD staff worked in conjunction with the college PASSPORT Business Readiness Team (BRT), a task force composed of faculty and appointed by the Faculty Senate

president. In response to feedback from faculty who attended the RWD training, the BRT conducted additional hands-on training during the summer and fall implementation. Faculty who attended the hands-on training became more comfortable with the system. The number of questions from faculty to the BRT diminished significantly following the hands-on training.¹

Similarly, a PASSPORT Super User group recommended training and support for students registering on the new system.² The college provided additional training and support for students at the Welcome Center throughout the summer and fall registration periods.

PROMT: In conjunction with the hiring of a large group of new contract faculty, the Faculty Senate and Office of Instruction assisted in coordinating formal orientations on a variety of topics, including email and PROMT for new and returning faculty (See, e.g., Staff Development Schedule for August 18, 2008 and October 22 Flex Day Schedule, <http://www.peralta.edu/apps/docs.asp?Q=Projects/17>). The faculty hires who received the training are regular users of the email and PROMT systems and many of them regularly update their department and faculty web pages.

The District Information Technology Data Center provided extensive training on the PROMT business management system soon after it was implemented and continues to offer periodic training. With the coming launch of the new administrative Business Intelligence (BI) software that will support querying the PROMT system for enrollment data, it will be important for the district to accelerate and expand beginning and advanced training for users of this product, as well as for the other business applications recently instituted.

TaskStream: For more than three years, the college has been actively engaged in an extensive campaign of changing its culture with respect to identifying and assessing student learning outcomes in the areas of student services and instruction. Based on the increasing need to monitor, track, assess, and report on these outcomes, the Learning Assessment Committee (LAC) identified and recommended the

purchase of an assessment reporting application to facilitate these processes institution-wide. To meet these needs, TaskStream (www.taskstream.com) was deployed in November 2008 and during an all day retreat, the LAC offered the first of several planned training sessions on its purpose, functions, and capabilities (IIC1b-2).

Evaluation

The college meets this standard.

All of the technology changes, improvements, and enhancements discussed in this section require knowledgeable users and a coordinated training strategy if they are to work well. Laney recognizes the continuing and expanding need for widespread training on efficiently using existing tools. The college is significantly upgrading its technology infrastructure so that it will have the ability to address in sustainable ways these increasing training-related demands.

Planning Agenda

In the coming year, the college will continue its work with the district to improve the efficiency and usefulness of district-wide training efforts, with an emphasis on more hands-on training opportunities. Laney will work with the Peralta district to identify and obtain resources for addressing these issues. Also, Laney will work to ensure adequate staffing for training faculty in the use of new technologies as they are implemented. Laney will continue to advocate for funding to increase its distance education efforts and to hire a Webmaster and trainer to assist in the open source web sites project. Further, Laney will actively seek external funding sources for these necessary technology improvements.

III.C.1.c The institution systematically plans, acquires, maintains, and upgrades or replaces technology infrastructure and equipment to meet institutional needs.

III.C.1.d The distribution and utilization of technology resources support the development, maintenance, and enhancement of its programs and services.

Description

Laney shared-governance groups such as the Technology Planning Committee, the Facilities Planning Committee, the Budget Planning Committee, the College Council, and the Instructional Equipment and Library Materials Committee assess the use of technology resources in order to improve student outcomes. The results inform the college's strategic and educational master plans. Recently, a district-wide Educational Master Plan Committee has been meeting to coordinate district-wide planning. Recognizing the need for specific college and district oversight and coordination of instructional technology, the District Academic Senate (DAS) is preparing a recommendation for the formation of a representative district-wide educational technology committee. The Technology Planning Committee and the Faculty Senate will provide Laney College representation on this district-wide governance body.

In 2006 an Instructional Lab Task Force of the Faculty Senate completed a detailed plan for structure and maintenance of campus instructional labs (Lab Protocols, IIC1d-1).

All departments are asked to include their plans for technology resources needs in unit plans and program reviews. The Technology Planning Committee will use this information as it formulates a college technology plan.

The Laney Administrative Leadership Council (ALC), consisting of the president, vice presidents, deans, and other managers, meets regularly to consider technology infrastructure upgrades and maintenance of technology programs and services. With recommendations from the Technology Planning and Budget Advisory committees, the ALC prioritizes needs and meets with contractors, architects, designers, and others to plan and implement technology upgrades. The ALC also is tasked with ensuring reliability in the systems, including necessary emergency back-up.

Many Laney technology needs have been met in the past two years with funding from local bond Measure A (passed in 2006). Bond money has been used for major infrastructure upgrades, including Laney

computer labs, networks, smart classrooms, a campus wireless project, and classroom refurbishments to support new technologies (IIC1d-2). As part of this major technology upgrade, full-time faculty members received new laptop or desktop computers (either Apple or HP), to replace those that were no longer operating well. Approximately 300 new computers were recently installed in the Laney math, CIS, and business computer labs. Two model smart classrooms (equipped with computer and audio-visual equipment) are already in operation, with more on the way soon. In September 2008, the Faculty Senate approved bringing twelve more classrooms to a basic or more advanced level of smart technology. This is an improvement over the college's previous (2002) five-year plan to ensure that all classrooms were equipped with at least audio-visual equipment for basic instructional support use. The district is in the process of refining and publicizing its three-level standards for what is now being called "interactive learning environments technology." It is expected that those standards will be applied in the next phase of smart classrooms installations, beginning in 2009.

The Peralta Board of Trustees has recently approved spending additional bond money for Laney infrastructure upgrades. Laney has begun planning the renovation of the Laney Tower, which will include major technology upgrades, refurbishing of conference rooms, adding wireless capability, audiovisual presentation technology, and improving faculty offices (IIC1d-3). In addition, computer labs will be enhanced with audio-visual presentation capability, and Laney intends to become a fully wireless campus in this next phase of infrastructure upgrades. The twelve smart classrooms (mentioned above) are included in this project.

This school year (2008-2009), the Laney Technology Planning Committee (TPC) is preparing a comprehensive technology plan. While developing this plan, the TPC will review the instructional lab protocols report and, where the data remains valid, incorporate its findings. The technology plan will reflect support of current resources, as well as future needs that will result from advances in technology, adequate staffing requirements, and possible new facilities.

Evaluation

The college meets this standard.

Planning Agenda

Prepare a comprehensive technology plan during the 2008-2009 academic year.

III.C.2 Technology planning is integrated with institutional planning. The institution systematically assesses the effective use of technology resources and uses the results of evaluation as the basis for improvement.

Description

As mentioned previously, instructional departments, shared-governance committees, and administrative leadership teams play crucial roles in technology planning. These planning efforts are documented in unit plans, program reviews, the educational master plan, facilities master plan, and the results will be included in the college technology plan. Overall, the plan is integral to ensuring that prioritizations are data-driven decisions based on widespread shared-governance involvement. This, in turn, helps to attract and sustain broad interest in participation on the college's planning committees that have a voice in the development of the technology plan.

The 2008 technology survey (IIC1a-2) provided an approach to assessing Laney's technology efforts from the perspective of department chairs and program coordinators. A student satisfaction survey, currently being prepared by the vice president of Student Services, will assess student opinions on technology at Laney, strong and weak points of technology availability and implementation, and how Laney technology efforts can be improved. In addition, based on a fall 2008 agreement, Laney is participating in the California Community College Chancellor's Office (the System Office) survey of faculty and students who are teaching or taking distance education courses. The purpose of this survey is to assess satisfaction with distance education at the local level. When complete, the System Office will compile and provide the results of this survey for Laney College.

Shared-governance committees and the administrative leadership team regularly assess the

use of technology resources and use the college's current and past implementations to inform and improve its technology planning efforts.

Evaluation

The college meets this standard.

Laney technology planning is integrated with institutional planning through unit plans, program reviews, educational master plan and facilities plan. Administrators and faculty understand that college technology planning and the necessary integration of this plan with instructional and service programs delivery heavily influence the success of the college.

The importance of a functioning, informative and easily-navigable web site cannot be overestimated. Laney understands that its career technical education programs will have more successful outreach when the program web pages provide more accurate and engaging depictions of what they have to offer. Community engagement is fostered more effectively with online visitor surveys, blogs, and rich site summary (RSS) feeds. Site visitors are able to more easily locate class and program information in preparation for a seamless course registration

process. Distance education courses are better supported with online counseling, advising, and tutoring services, as well as improved teacher-student contact using synchronous communication. Further, accurate and accessible course, program, and institutional assessment and management information is a requirement of continuous improvement (e.g., the use of TaskStream, CurricUNET, and the Community College Survey of Student Engagement/CCSSE).

Planning Agenda

In 2009, Laney will administer surveys to students, faculty, staff, and administrators that will help assess the effectiveness of the college's technology use. The Technology Planning Committee will use these additional survey results in the development of a college technology plan, which will include a prioritization of technology projects. In addition, Laney will use the survey results to determine training needs and create a plan for how and where that training will occur. These survey results and the plans drawn from them will be thoroughly disseminated throughout the college community using all appropriate technology and college forums input opportunities.

(Footnotes)

¹ Interview with Kathy Williamson, Laney BRT chair (October 8, 2008).

² Go Live Support, email from Anita Black, District BRT coordinator (March 20, 2008).