Academic Technology Plan

2005 – 2008

Stephen F. Austin State University
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Executive Summary

In December 2003, the Provost convened the Academic Technology Committee and charged the committee to develop a long-range plan for Academic Technology for SFA. The committee includes faculty representation from all colleges, academic technical support personnel, and leaders from key areas using or supporting academic technology. In developing the plan, the committee conducted a thorough Needs Analysis by soliciting input from students, faculty, and academic leaders. Based upon the data gathered during the Needs Analysis, eleven Goals and their corresponding Action Items and budget implications were declared.

Many of the data gathered indicate that our academic technology environment is in poor condition. Far from the “technology-rich” environment envisioned, SFA classrooms and labs are severely under equipped. We are “behind the times” in regard to wireless access and our technical support efforts are understaffed. Perhaps most importantly, we do not have an established plan or funding mechanism to address these issues on a continuing basis.

Some of the Goals put forth in this plan call for a total financial expenditure of $3,970,000* over the next three fiscal years, over and above amounts normally allocated to academic units for technology, in order to address the immediate shortages and gaps identified by the committee. Other Goals call for the establishment of support infrastructure, purchasing plans, and a continuing funding mechanism that will support ongoing needs and enable SFA to begin to become a technology leader among the academic community.

*Note: The cost for wireless networking is not included in the figure mentioned above, nor on the Summary of Budget Implications due to the fact that funding for wireless has already been requested by Information Technology Services. However, the cost of wireless is mentioned in the Plan so that the Provost might be aware of the investment required and support the expenditure at the cabinet level.
Methodology

During 2004, the committee met on a monthly basis to tour various academic technology components of the campus, to articulate a Vision Statement, and to design the planning process. In order to gather input from the campus community, a faculty town hall meeting was held and three major surveys were created and administered. The surveys included a student survey, a faculty survey and a department chairs survey. Raw data from each survey and the town hall meeting are available from the committee chair.

Working in subcommittees, the Committee examined data from inventory records, the Needs Assessment surveys, and the Action Items of the University’s Strategic Plan ‘08. Based on this data, Goals were identified and prioritized. For each Goal, a detailed Action Plan was developed including the rationale for the Goal, the parties responsible for specific actions, timelines, necessary resources, and an assessment plan.

In December 2004 a short list of priority Goals and their projected expenses were approved by the committee and forwarded to the Provost so that they might be immediately considered in planning for the FY 2005-2006 budget. This complete Plan was approved by the committee and presented to the Provost in May 2005.
Committee Members

Two editions of the Academic Technology Committee contributed to the formation of this plan. The initial committee membership initiated the process in December 2003. In September 2004, some of the voting committee members representing the colleges rotated off and were replaced with others who contributed to and/or voted on the final plan. The chair, and the supporting and ex officio members remained consistent throughout the planning process.

Chair
Dr. Randy McDonald

Initial Voting Members
Dr. Michael Doughty College of Applied Arts and Sciences
Dr. Betty Johnson College of Business
Dr. Mel Finkenberg College of Education
Dr. Ron Anderson College of Fine Arts
Dr. Dan Unger College of Forestry
Dr. John Anson College of Liberal Arts
Dr. Kevin Langford College of Science and Mathematics

Final Voting Members
Dr. Bob Ramsey College of Applied Arts and Sciences
Dr. Betty Johnson College of Business
Dr. Hung Sheng Lai College of Education
Ms. Jennifer Sholtis College of Fine Arts
Dr. Dan Unger College of Forestry
Dr. Kandy Stahl College of Liberal Arts (resigned before final vote)
Dr. Kevin Langford College of Science and Mathematics

Supporting Members
Mr. Phillip Blackburn Scientific Equipment Specialist
Mr. P.R. Blackwell Information Scientist
Mr. Greg Harber Lab Director
Mr. Herb Midgley Adjunct faculty providing technical support
Mr. Robert Judy Technology Specialist

Ex Officio Members
Mr. Bill Wagner Director, Information Technology Services
Ms. Monique Cossich Executive Director, Enrollment Management
Mr. David Justus Head of Library Systems
Dr. Marlin Young Associate Provost
Vision Statement

The mission of Stephen F. Austin State University is to provide students a foundation for success, a passion for learning and a commitment to responsible global citizenship in a community dedicated to teaching, research, creativity, and service. SFA’s vision is to become the national model of a high quality, student-focused, comprehensive university whose graduates are productive citizens and successful leaders.

In support of the University mission and vision, SFA must create and sustain a technology-rich environment that enables students and faculty to maximize the productivity and benefits from their teaching, learning and research activities. In our vision for Academic Technology, SFA models the appropriate and effective application of technology in service of its academic mission.

We envision an environment in which technology invigorates teaching in our classrooms and empowers field-based, lab-based and literature-based research activity. In this environment, technology facilitates the collaborative efforts among students, faculty, and fellow learners in the worldwide community to gather, analyze, create and present new information.

We envision an environment in which advanced and dependable technology fosters a growing passion for learning that spreads among SFA students and faculty. Thus, easy access to technology, electronic resources and support enables faculty to be effective teachers, students to be empowered learners, and all areas to the university to be productive researchers.

We envision a curriculum that is infused with opportunities for students to use technology and better understand its broader implications and where training by knowledgeable and effective instructors is available to help faculty and students become proficient users of technology.

Fulfillment of this vision ensures that SFA continues to be a leader in the academic community and remains competitive in the world market of education.
Needs Analysis

A thorough needs analysis was conducted to determine the University’s current status regarding several academic technology concerns and stakeholder viewpoints. The needs analysis drew upon the work and conclusions of the Strategic Plan ’08, data from multiple surveys, and observations of committee members. The data and needs identified by the committee as the most outstanding and definitive of the current academic technology environment are summarized below under three subheadings:

- Access to Adequate and Appropriate Academic Technology
- Proficiency and Skill in Using Academic Technology
- Technical Support for Academic Technology

Access to Adequate and Appropriate Academic Technology

Action Item 57 of Strategic Plan ’08 calls on the University to “Improve instructional technology available in classrooms and labs”. In order for technology to have a positive impact on the academic mission of the University, students and faculty must have access to technology tools that are appropriate, powerful, and reliable. Strategic Plan ’08, students, department leaders, and faculty all expressed a need for greater access to computers, multimedia tools, software, and both wired and wireless networks.

Student Access Needs

Seven-hundred-seventy-six (776) students responded to an online survey about their academic technology needs. The responding students were reasonably distributed among all colleges and classification levels.

Most (86%) reported positively that SFA is at least somewhat effective in providing the hardware, software and networking needed to support their academic achievement in classrooms and labs. The remaining 13% - 14%, which, if extrapolated, represents over 1,000 students, indicate that significant improvements are needed in order to meet their academic technology needs.

Outside of classrooms and labs, students overwhelmingly (90%) report having the ability to access a computer and the technology resources they need and that such technology is usually up-to-date and functions well. Given that nearly 86% of students reported using their own desktop or laptop computer for most of their academic computing work, it is probably safe to conclude that students who own their own computers are the ones that report having no problems with access.
However, 1 in 10 SFA students report that they usually cannot access the technology resources they need or when they do, it is obsolete and functions poorly. The student survey gathered over 80 pages of written student comments. Although a number of positive comments were included, complaints about the insufficient quantity and poor quality of technology were predominant. As an example, out of 187 student comments about access, 145 students commented that SFA needs to provide more student computers. The following student comments are typical of what our students are saying about their ability to access computers at SFA.

The Biology department is always short on computers or short on ones that work, and other technology available in the scientific research area is almost never available through the school.

There is a computer lab in the Kinesiology building...about 3 out of 25 computers work.

HUES GIS lab needs several more computers to remedy the bottleneck that formed when projects come due.

Computers in the art dept are lacking.
I always had to wait on a computer in the library.

.....when I tried to depend on using the computers in the library, I realized fast that I needed a computer in my apartment to get anything done. The computers were always taken or not in service. We have to do something on computer nearly every single day for my major and the computer labs on campus are not exactly user friendly.

This semester was the worst semester I have seen in the computer lab at SFA. The computers were broken at a lot of the workstations and that made for crowding and inability to get onto computers when I needed to. This was very inconvenient. After a while I stopped even trying to go to the library to use the computer.

The areas mentioned most often as needing serious attention included Kinesiology, the Education doctoral lab, Biology and Chemistry both for computers and other equipment, the MIDI lab in Music, and Art. One Art student made a particularly long statement worthy of consideration.

The Art department is a continually growing department of SFA, more students come each semester. Yet they are treated like "step" children in that they do not have adequate or up-to-date software, necessary hardware and equipment to keep up with the demand new students are needing. More of everything including space is needed for the art department. You keeping adding fancy recreation buildings & etc. and do nothing for one of the only departments that is NOT loosing students! We need simple things like chairs, tables, adequate software that is not out of date, drawing tables, chairs, boards, and the buildings need to be painted. The college appears to do nothing unless it is on the main drag or in one of only a few buildings that "visitors" might see. Or that is what it looks like to a lot of students. Many students that I have talked to are leaving because your priorities are not right.

As the largest and most-used lab on campus, the LINC facilities naturally drew the majority of complaints and suggestions for improvement. For example, 30 comments were made specifically about the LINC being an unpleasant computing environment. Several complaints had to do with the noise level and crowded
conditions in the LINC as well as it being “too hot and stuffy”. The following student comments are examples of the more politely worded complaints.

*Library computer areas need to have designated "quiet" areas and designated "group project" areas. It's difficult to concentrate when loud, young, inconsiderate students are talking on cell phones or chatting about their latest trip to the local club.*

*Also, sometimes it gets very noisy in the main computer lab and it is hard to concentrate. Too much visiting and too loud of voices make it sometimes not very conducive to working and studying.*

Students made additional comments about other labs on campus and the overall computing environment. The overall inadequate number of computers on campus was made clear. However, a combination of other factors seem to be preventing student access including a lack of consistency in hardware, software, and operating hours throughout the campus. For example, many students are unaware that SFA has other college-supported computing labs besides the LINC. Those who were aware of labs in other buildings complained that they have limited hours. Forty comments specifically mentioned needing better hours for labs and indicated that when college-supported labs are closed, students are unable to access the subject specific hardware and software they need because it is not provided in either the LINC or other labs. Lack of consistency between labs and classrooms makes it difficult for students to complete the process of research, production, and presentation required for many projects.

Regarding all labs on campus, students indicated strongly that they wanted free printing, operating systems that were not locked down, and the ability to use their USB drives. The following comments are typical of the 60 that specifically complained about the lack of access to free printing.

*SFASU is making it harder for students to stay and graduate because tuition and fees keep getting more expensive every semester and they have less resources available. We used to have the option of dot matrix printing for free in the library at that option was taken away. I do not know of any place in campus where I can print a document for free and that's not fair. I don’t see why I have to pay for a copy if I have already been charged for the service.*

*The largest academic technology is dot-matrix printers, or free printers, or at least profit-free printers. Just how much is the University making off of students who are poor, like me, and*
can't afford their own computer & printer? I know my computer usage fee on my semester SFA bill is around $300 and I don't even get free print jobs. What a scam! What am I paying for?

You removed all of the dot matrixes in the library. It was crummy printing but at least it gave me a free way to evaluate research papers and reports before I paid money to have the printing neatly for the professor.

Also, what ever happened to the dot-matrix printers? Many students are forced to print stuff at the library for their classes. As school classrooms are using more technology, students are required to use computers and printers more and more. The dot-matrix printers were great for printing materials for studying (power point slides, chapter summaries). Also, as plagiarism problems increase, many professors are requiring students to turn in all sources in hardcopy form. That means a standard 10-page paper ends up costing me, the student, $10 to $15 after I print all the articles, etc. that I used. Ridiculous!

Over 1,000 SFA students depend entirely on SFA for computer access. A surprising 89% indicated that being able to check out equipment needed for academic purposes was Important or Very Important to them. These data indicate that while the vast majority of students own their own computer, many students still do not and must depend on SFA to provide access to computer technology. A majority of students (75%) also indicated that a program that provided incoming freshman with a laptop that they could continue to use and keep after graduation would have influenced their decision to attend SFASU and remain until graduation.

Behind the need for better access to computers and software, the second most strongly indicated need by students is access to wireless networking. Having wireless access provided throughout the college and departmental buildings was reported as Important or Very Important by 42% percent of students and an additional 40% of students indicated wireless access among college and departmental buildings as Essential. Students made 77 specific comments requesting wireless access. The following are examples.

I give campus tours and the most frequently asked question about computers is when the university is going to go wireless.
I think the use of laptops and wireless ports in all classrooms is the biggest need, and wireless Internet on the entire campus.

The largest academic technology [need] on this campus is without a doubt, wireless Internet access in the college/department-associated buildings AND the library.

Finally, several students mentioned the need for a discounted software program so that they might be able to load onto their personal computers the software required in their courses. Examples of such comments include the following.

UT-Arlington, UT-Austin and countless other universities across the state have a licensing program with Microsoft which allows students to purchase legal copies of Windows XP, MS Office, and other MS products for $10 - $50 a copy. SFA has no such program.

SFA should provide cheaper software for students. For example, UT Tyler students are able to purchase Microsoft Software for a fraction of the cost, its about $30 for Microsoft Office 2003. We should have the same or better deals here.

From these data, students have made it clear that significant improvements are needed regarding access to academic technology resources. Students are demanding more computers and they need for these computers to be up-to-date, loaded with current software, and be consistent across campus. Students are asking for wireless networks, free printing, improved lab hours, and discounted software. Students are comparing us to other institutions and in some cases making decisions to attend or not attend SFA based on the condition of our academic technology environment.
Faculty Access Needs

During summer 2004, a questionnaire was sent to academic department chairs across campus. The results are unsettling. A majority of departments (54%) report that their departments are currently under equipped to meet their curriculum and instructional needs.

Data from the Department Chair survey indicate that many SFA academic computing resources are considerably outdated, with at least 524 student area workstation replacements needed in the next three years. In addition, at least 124 faculty and academic support staff will need computer replacements during the same time frame.

Data from a separate faculty survey administered in November 2004 confirm the chair’s judgment. Survey responses were received from 195 faculty members with representatives from all but two departments. When asked about their overall satisfaction level regarding hardware and software available for classrooms and labs, 42% claimed they were either dissatisfied, very dissatisfied, or that hardware and software was non-existent in their classrooms. The criteria for the dissatisfied answer were that “the tools are a bit out-of-date, do not perform as well as desired, or are not very dependable”.

Over the course of the next 3 years, the predicted needs of departments are rather extensive. Although classroom needs vary, there is an overall need for multimedia equipment and Internet access in most classrooms. Departments report needing an average of 162 computers per year for the next three years to meet faculty office and classroom needs. The short list below indicates the quantities of
standard computing equipment that needs to be purchased during the next three years.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Departmental Purchase Needs</th>
<th>FY05</th>
<th>FY06</th>
<th>FY07</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Standard office computers</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>109</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workroom computers</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff computers</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office printers</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Projected departmental purchase needs for the next three years

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instructional Areas Purchase Needs</th>
<th>FY05</th>
<th>FY06</th>
<th>FY07</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Instructor’s computer</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom data/video projector</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom document camera</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rolling cart with projection system</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Projected Instructional areas purchase needs for the next three years

In addition to computing equipment, Internet, and multimedia instructional tools, department chairs indicated needed many other technology-related items, such as scanners, overhead projectors, digital cameras, video equipment, chemistry instrumentation, and instructional labs—all of which place a burden on their departmental budgets.

Regarding Internet access, department chairs reported classrooms are “in most need of attention” and that an additional 141 Ethernet drops are currently needed in instructional areas. It is the opinion of the committee that the $125 charge to obtain an IP address for each connection is excessive and unnecessary and that instructional areas should be wired as needed at no expense to the department. Although not nearly as strongly as did students, SFA faculty identified access to wireless networking as a definite academic need. Of faculty responding to a question about wireless network access, 25% indicated that they needed wireless to be purchased for their classroom area. Also, from a list of currently
technologies, faculty identified wireless access from instructional areas more often than any other need.

Software needs are also extensive and widely varied among academic departments. Those packages in highest demand and their needed licenses over the next three years include WordPerfect (300 licenses), Microsoft Development Tools (150), SPSS (150), DreamWeaver (82), and Photoshop (121). Other software mentioned by department chairs included ARCGIS, Adobe Illustrator, Adobe creative suite, Finale, Sequencing Software, Band in a Box, Word Perfect, and MS Development tools. Unfortunately, 63% of department chairs report they will not have adequate funding to purchase the software and licenses needed to meet their instructional needs.

Funding to meet this demand for academic technology is a major concern for department chairs. When department chairs were asked if they were satisfied with their department’s ability to upgrade or replace such academic technology items, 42% said “No”. One chair made the following comment.

It is financially impossible to replace these items on a reduced operating budget and continued refusal to award HEAF funds when requested.

Chairs overwhelmingly report that funding to meet their academic technology needs is “far from adequate” and “literally impossible” at current funding levels. In addition, most chairs report having to depend on special funding such as HEAF which is not always funding as requested. Additional comments from chairs included the following.

Funding for these items cannot come from annual departmental operating budgets, which are already stretched too thin for office supplies, student workers, faculty travel, etc. Without special funding we cannot hope to purchase any of the needed equipment.

I believe the university should upgrade ALL classrooms to include basic equipment so this does not have to come from departmental HEAF funds.
During this planning process, one Academic Technology Committee member noted the following.

*There is no such thing as one-time funding for technology. All campus wide entities have been forced to finance technology in a piecemeal fashion, often adding components as one-time funds become available. This is an insufficient process that does not keep pace with the actual need.*

In summary, these data paint a bleak picture of an academic technology environment that is in desperate need of attention and funding. Improvement in the academic technology at SFA called for not only by the vision of the Academic Technology Committee but also by the larger SFA landscape through the Strategic Plan. A high quality academic technology environment is held as important by students while a large number of faculty who are dissatisfied with the technology in their classrooms. And finally, department chairs that feel their departments are under equipped and are also under funded to effect any change.
**Proficiency and Skill in Using Academic Technology**

Of course, access to technology is meaningless unless faculty and students have the proficiency and skill necessary to use the technology effectively. For the most part, students at SFA reported that their professors have a high level of skill in using technology. Some however, suggested that faculty could benefit from more technology training.

The number of negative comments or recommendations for improvement (41) outnumbered positive comments (21) about professor skill by 2 to 1. Some example comments are included below.

*Alot of my professors use technology great but some don't even know how to turn a computer on! and we wasted alot of time waiting of them to figure out what they were doing.*

*Some teachers are very good at using technology to present information, such as power points. However, I have found a few teachers who are not trained to use equipment such as Elmos and it distracts the students when the teacher is trying hard to figure out how to use them. I think technology training should be given to the teachers. They also need to be taught to better utilize WebCT.*

*Only one of my professors has tried to use mySFA for a communication tool. The one that did, explained it wrong and I had to correct her. Instead of passing around a sheet of paper at the beginning of the semester to collect email addresses, use what is already provided. Instead of using separate web pages, use mySFA to disseminate information to the students. I would recommend that faculty be required to complete training on mySFA and be required to incorporate it into their courses. Training for mySFA is in place through OIT. SFA administration needs to direct faculty to take it. The university has invested thousands of our dollars to fund mySFA, it's time for the administration to step up and require its use.*

In the faculty survey, faculty were given an opportunity to more specifically identify their technology skill development needs. In the faculty survey, many faculty expressed a need for various types of training, yet 57% report not attending training offered by the Office of Instructional Technology within the past 12 months. As always, time constraints probably affect the number of faculty attending training. As one faculty member said,

*I'd like to take a WebCT class, but don't really have time.*
At least 75% of faculty who answered the survey reported they were already proficient in using the following technology components or skills. These subjects, therefore, need less attention and training.

- Email – 96% of faculty proficient
- Word Processing – 94% of faculty proficient
- Managing computer files and folders – 90% of faculty proficient
- Using TV and VCR or DVD player – 89%
- Printers – 88%
- Making a backup of computer files – 81% of faculty proficient

In contrast, at least 75% of faculty who answered the survey reported they were in need of beginner-level training and/or more information regarding the following technology components or skills. The needs are ranked below with the greatest requests for information and/or training at the top.

- Studymate study aid software – 94% need info and training
- Flash technology – 88% need info and training
- Streaming audio or video – 81%
- Statistical analysis software – 80%
- Tablet computers – 80%
- Respondus test creation software – 78%
- Managing spyware – 75%
- Managing spam – 71%
- Managing viruses – 64%
- Photoshop or graphics software – 63%
- Creating a Web page – 61%
- Elmo/document camera – 60%
- Adjusting browser settings – 43%
- PowerPoint presentations – 27%
- Basic computer/printer troubleshooting – 28%
- Spreadsheets and charts – 26%
- Instructor’s projection system – 25% need training

Overall, a little more than half of the faculty who answered the survey reported using WebCT to post syllabi, grades, course notes, and to communicate with students. About two-thirds of faculty reported using mySFA to email students, check class rosters, and post final grades.

Based on the results of the faculty Academic Technology Survey, two needs stood out in regards to faculty technology training. First, is the challenge the faculty, departments, and colleges at SFA face with respect to learning how to effectively
use instructional technology in teaching. The second need is for a more timely and customized technical support system and is addressed in the next section. A need for convenient technology training that will enhance classroom teaching and learning has been expressed. Providing workshops to improve faculty use of academic technology will improve student morale and learning and will enhance course currency.

**Technical Support for Academic Technology**

In addition to a need for improved access and specific faculty development needs, the committee’s Needs Assessment investigated academic needs pertaining to technical support. Dependence on technical support is a reality for SFA faculty as 72% of faculty reported contacting the central technical support help desk (ext. 1212) during the past 12 months. Greater still, 89% of faculty reported contacting someone from their department or college for technical support. Of those that have reached out for technical support during the past 12 months, 77% reported being either Satisfied or Very Satisfied with the quality of support they received. Conversely, almost 1 in 4 report being Dissatisfied or Very Dissatisfied with the quality of support they received.

Several faculty voiced complaints about inadequate support for Macintosh computers. However, the nature of the negative comments received regarding all technical support overwhelmingly indicated that response time in getting technical support is unacceptably slow. Faculty comments such as the ones below were typical.

*Prompt service would be nice! Waiting 3 weeks is absurd. A faculty member needs a functional computer every day. If this means hiring more technicians, they need to be hired. It's difficult to create exams and other class materials when you are without a computer for 3-4 weeks!*

*[There is] no one to fix my computer in a timely manner. It was 9 weeks before I had a computer. I was told over and over there just weren't enough people to help all of those needing help.*

*No support is available. When you call for help no-one calls back or responds. They always are too "swamped" or busy to help*

Department chairs also spoke out about the need to improve technical support. Several comments were similar to the example below.
The technical support staff is overworked. We need a larger technical support facility and additional staff. Colleges should be assigned a full-time technical support person, which would then allow instructional technology specialists within departments to focus on instruction.

Currently, technology support personnel for faculty and staff consists of an uneven mixture of full-time central personnel (the techshop) and individual faculty or staff within some colleges and departments. Often, especially at the departmental level, technical support duties are an addition to an individual’s normal faculty load. This system creates two problems. First, faculty members with some technical expertise are finding it more and more burdensome to carry the normal teaching, research and service load plus provide support to all other faculty in his or her department. Secondly, specific technical support issues vary across departments and colleges, making it more difficult for central personnel to meet more specialized needs. Over-arching both of these difficulties is the significant rise in adware, spyware and virus infections that place more and more demands on support personnel.

Clearly, there is visible sentiment for shoring up college and departmental level technical support in order to improve response time and customized servicing. This need was previously identified in Action Item 55 of the Strategic Plan which calls for SFA to, “Increase and simplify the technology support structure for faculty and staff”.
Academic Support Functions – Library, Enrollment Management, Instructional Technology, Graduate Offices and the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs

In addition to the Colleges, Academic Affairs also includes the academic support functions of Graduate School and Office of Research and Sponsored Programs, the Ralph W. Steen Library, Enrollment Management, and the Office of Instructional Technology. A brief summary of the needs identified by each of these support functions is included below.

Ralph W. Steen Library

The mission of the Library is to offer an array of informational, educational and research support services intended to further the University’s mission of academic excellence. The Library provides educational and research support services to students and faculty in all disciplines. The Library provides information support services needed for the effective conduct of university business by students, faculty and staff in all areas of the university. These services include workshops, university records management and archival programs as well as the design and management of a Campus Wide Information System intended to facilitate information access and to promote the University to prospective students and other external groups.

The Library has developed and maintains a virtual library available to anyone, anytime, anywhere through the selection, acquisition, organization, and maintenance of information resources in all formats. It assists students, faculty and staff with their information technology needs through the maintenance of up-to-date computing lab and classroom facilities within the Library. It provides tutoring services and information literacy instruction, tutorials and workshops, reference services and computer help desk assistance. The library manages the Campus Wide Information System and university records through consulting services and workshops.

SFA lags behind most universities in delivering wireless services. Wireless connectivity and a campus-wide directory service are utmost priorities. Implementation will require appropriate attention to the inherent security issues.

SFA’s e-mail system also needs to be further secured including pre-screening mail for viruses and to block “spam.”

A teaching excellence center with an instructional technology component would provide an excellent environment for faculty growth and development.

A 3-year replacement cycle for PC’s campus-wide would take care of desktop obsolescence.
Enrollment Management

The Enrollment Management team relies on the SCT Student Information System – Plus for communicating with prospective, admitted and enrolled students. This system is used for registration, advising and tracking of students. Although this system does an adequate job regarding admission, registration and tracking, it does a poor job in the area of prospective student communication. It does not allow for a smooth and efficient communication flow regarding prospects. Two staff persons have overcome this problem by utilizing all available screens and flags on the system, but to compete with other universities, a more efficient and comprehensive system is needed. At this time, the SCT Student Information System – Banner seems to do a better job dealing with effective communication with prospects.

Streamlining the advising process and encouraging advisors to use the degree audit capacities of the system would make the advising process more efficient. Currently, the Registrar’s Office conducts training for use of the degree audit for advisors.

There is a need for an organized and efficient campus-wide computer replacement policy. This would allow for substantial financial savings on equipment and ensure that departments have the more efficient equipment to service the needs of students.

It is important to have a fully staffed university-wide technology service department (help desk) to assist students with technology needs. Many students who reside in the university residence halls need help with setting up computers or various problems that arise during the semester. Currently the library does an outstanding job servicing a help desk but needs to be expanded.

To have a positive web presence, the Web Development Office needs to be given the authority to fully direct website projects and ensure compliance with university regulations regarding the website. The overall site needs to be seen as a marketing tool that needs constant and immediate attention.

Offering the most up-to-date technology teaching tools will benefit retention efforts. Being informed on student learning styles, how they relate to technology and providing faculty with instruction on incorporating technology into their teaching will attract students. Providing this type of technology in the classroom will enhance the learning process. Today’s college freshmen expect cutting-edge technology in the classroom, in their residence halls and in computer labs.
Office of Instructional Technology

The mission of the Office of Instructional Technology is to promote student success by supporting the faculty and students of Stephen F. Austin State University in the effective application of appropriate instructional technologies to the teaching and learning process. OIT offers a variety of services to help coordinate, oversee, and support distance education, faculty development, and the integration of technology to enhance teaching and learning.

For some time, OIT has needed better facilities and a better location on campus. Currently the office is located in a remote corner of the campus making it somewhat difficult for faculty to access. Secondly, the design of the OIT facilities makes staff teamwork and customer service challenging. Facilities that are better designed and better located would enhance the service delivery from OIT.

Currently OIT is well equipped with the technical tools necessary to fulfill its mission. Upgrades to lab and support staff equipment will not be needed for another 24-36 months and will most likely be covered by the existing budget. However, within 24 - 48 months, it will probably become necessary to upgrade some server equipment for WebCT at an anticipated cost of $75,000. The operating budget of OIT is expected to need an increase in FY 05 of approximately $8,000 per year to cover the increased expense of the WebCT campus license.

Policies directly affecting the activity in OIT include the Distance Education Compensation policy, the Intellectual Property for Distance Education policy, and the Out-of-State Tuition for Distance Education. These policies should be reviewed and updated as necessary.
Graduate School and Office of Research and Sponsored Programs

The Office of Research and Sponsored Programs (ORSP) provides several support services to faculty and staff. With the assistance of technology, ORSP will be able to streamline the proposal review process, encourage and document compliance, and expand our reach for the delivery of professional development and technical assistance. These technology applications include:

Proposal Review Process
- Electronic signature process for proposal clearance forms, current year award forms, and project revision forms.
- University site license for latest version of FileMaker Pro to permit interface between electronic copies of proposals, electronic signature records, and the ORSP proposal database.

Encourage and Document Compliance
- Form development software for on-line Time and Effort, IRB, and similar forms.
- Electronic signature process and electronic submission of Time and Effort documentation (of faculty and staff on federal and state grants and contracts) to ORSP for review and filing.

Professional Development and Technical Assistance
- Workshops taped and converted to digital format for future access via ORSP web site.
- Live workshops available through streaming video.

To improve its ability to enroll more graduate students and to make the application process simpler and easier for prospective students, the Graduate School is interested in acquiring the technology and expertise necessary to initiate an electronic application process. Although the state has a common application that is electronic, the application is complicated and unnecessarily complex for students interested in SFA, especially those who just want to take one course. We would like to have an application available on-line which is transmitted and received in the Graduate Office electronically. Ideally, the electronic application would be matched to the student information system so much of the data (e.g., name, address, demographic information, etc.) could be automatically entered with just a stroke of a keyboard key.

Secondly, the Graduate School would encourage and support all efforts at making the campus internet system wireless at the earliest possible date. Graduate students naturally expect a modern university to have such resources available when they enroll.
Other technology needs would include electronic signatures process for thesis, exhibition and dissertation forms, state-of-the-art web development software and hardware in order to maintain and constantly improve our presence on the Internet, 3-year replacement cycle for PCs to avoid down-time due to obsolete or worn computer equipment, and an upgrade on our Student Information System as soon as possible to stay up with other universities' systems.

End of Needs Assessment
Goals

In order to meet the needs expressed by the SFA academic community and to realize the vision set forth by the Academic Technology Committee, this Plan sets forth eleven Goals enumerated below. The numbered items are not intended to convey any ranking of order.

1. Establish a funding and purchasing plan to regularly replace academic computers and subject specific classroom and lab equipment.

2. Provide adequate quantities of networked computers and projection systems in instructional areas.

3. Improve student access to computers, software, and printing in academic areas.

4. Establish wireless networking capability throughout campus.

5. Provide appropriately updated and powerful computers in faculty offices and work areas to support productivity, research, and teaching.

6. Provide adequate software licenses for faculty computers in offices and instructional areas to support productivity, research, and teaching.

7. Appropriately address identified faculty development needs regarding technology.

8. Provide technical support for faculty at an acceptable level of quality and response time.

9. Update WebCT system.

10. Allow a more decentralized model of decision-making for academic technology and software acquisition.

11. Implement appropriate technical solution to support Graduate Office

Numbered Action Items support achieving each Goal and are enumerated in the following tables.
**Goal 1 – Funding Strategy**

Establish a funding and purchasing plan to regularly replace academic computers and subject specific classroom and lab equipment.

**Rationale**

Investing in technology will continue to be a recurring and increasing expense. Students and departments should be able to depend on a fair and reliable method of funding to support academic technology tools and applications.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action Steps</th>
<th>Responsible Party</th>
<th>Target Date</th>
<th>Required Resources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.1. Investigate funding options that are independent of HEAF and grants.</td>
<td>OIT</td>
<td>FY 06</td>
<td>$0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2. Establish a funding method.</td>
<td>Provost</td>
<td>FY 07</td>
<td>$0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3. Establish a purchase cycle.</td>
<td>Provost</td>
<td>FY 07</td>
<td>$0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.4 Seek underwriting and grant backing for technology acquisition in addition to the funding method.</td>
<td>ORSP</td>
<td>FY06 - 08</td>
<td>$0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Assessment Plan**

Assess whether or not a dependable funding cycle and purchasing cycle has been established. Monitor satisfaction through surveys.
**Goal 2 – Classroom Computers**

Provide adequate quantities of networked computers and projection systems in instructional areas.

**Rationale**

To invigorate teaching, as called for in our vision, and to enable students and faculty to gather, analyze, create and present new information, our classrooms must be equipped with appropriate multimedia computer systems. These systems must have effective projection capabilities with appropriate lighting and sound, be connected to the Internet, and be readily available in all departments and instructional environments.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action Steps</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.1 Equip the first 30 of 90 total additional classrooms and labs with Internet access, computer, and data projectors.</td>
<td>OIT</td>
<td>FY 06</td>
<td>$300,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2 Equip the second 30 of 90 total additional classrooms and labs with Internet access, computer, and data projectors.</td>
<td>OIT</td>
<td>FY 07</td>
<td>$300,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3 Equip the final 30 of 90 total additional classrooms and labs with Internet access, computer, and data projectors.</td>
<td>OIT</td>
<td>FY 08</td>
<td>$300,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4 Purchase the first 20 of 60 rolling multimedia carts.</td>
<td>OIT</td>
<td>FY 06</td>
<td>$200,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.5 Purchase the second 20 of 60 rolling multimedia carts.</td>
<td>OIT</td>
<td>FY 07</td>
<td>$200,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.6 Purchase the final 20 of 60 rolling multimedia carts.</td>
<td>OIT</td>
<td>FY 08</td>
<td>$200,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TOTAL Expense**

$1,500,000

**Assessment Plan**

Physical inventory of campus classrooms and labs newly equipped with Internet access, computer, and data projectors. Physical inventory of new carts.
Goal 3 – Student Computers

Improve student access to computers, software, and printing in academic areas.

Rationale

Many students depend heavily on SFA for access to the computer and software tools needed to meet their academic requirements. Students need adequate and consistent access in classroom, lab, and instructional support areas.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.1. Upgrade computer equipment in student labs by replacing the first 300 of 900 total stations. Labs reported to be in most critical condition are the LINC, Education Doctoral Lab, Kinesiology, Biology, Hues GIS, Art, MIDI lab and the Theatre design lab.</td>
<td>LINC/Departments</td>
<td>FY 06</td>
<td>$360,000 @ $1,200 per computer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2. Upgrade computer equipment in student labs by replacing the second 300 of 900 total stations.</td>
<td>Departments</td>
<td>FY 07</td>
<td>$360,000 @ $1,200 per computer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3. Upgrade computer equipment in student labs by replacing the final 300 of 900 total stations.</td>
<td>LINC/Departments</td>
<td>FY 08</td>
<td>$360,000 @ $1,200 per computer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4. Increase number of workstations in open student labs that have subject-specific software. Such as workstations in the library or UC equipped for Art, Business, etc.</td>
<td>LINC/Departments</td>
<td>FY 06</td>
<td>$30,000 for software licenses and workstations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.5. Establish a system to allow free or reduced-cost printing for students.</td>
<td>LINC</td>
<td>FY 07</td>
<td>Yet unidentified</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TOTAL Expense $1,110,000

Assessment Plan

Measure overall increase in quantity of computers in student labs. Measure student perception and department chair perception through surveys.
Goal 4 – Wireless Networking

Establish wireless networking capability throughout campus.

Rationale

Over 80% of SFA students identified this as an important need on campus and 25% of faculty requested wireless access in their teaching areas. Access to wireless networking with prove valuable as a recruiting tool and may serve to relieve overcrowding in computer labs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Target Date</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4.1. Support campus plan to provide wireless connectivity for the entire campus.</td>
<td>ITS</td>
<td>FY 06 – FY 08</td>
<td>$900,000 or $300,000/yr</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TOTAL Expense

$900,000*

Assessment Plan

Percentage of campus coverage providing wireless access.

*Note: This amount for wireless networking is not included in the Summary of Budget Implications below nor added into the figure mentioned in the Executive Summary due to the fact that funding for wireless has already been requested by Information Technology Services. However, the cost of wireless is mentioned in the Plan so that the Provost might be aware of the investment required and support the expenditure at the cabinet level.
### Goal 5 – Faculty Computers

Provide appropriately updated and powerful computers in faculty offices and work areas to support productivity, research, and teaching.

#### Rationale

Because of being under funded in the past, departments have been limited in their ability to provide faculty with computers that are up-to-date and functional. Achieving this goal will ensure that faculty are able to efficiently run the latest in operating systems, productivity and research software, and browsers that support SFA’s emerging Web environments. Providing this planned funding in addition to traditional funding, will help departments catch up on purchases of other peripherals and technology-related equipment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Responsible Party</th>
<th>Target Date</th>
<th>Required Resources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5.1 Replace first 200 of 600 faculty computers.</td>
<td>Departments</td>
<td>FY 06</td>
<td>$300,000 @ $1,500 each</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.2 Replace second 200 of 600 faculty computers.</td>
<td>Departments</td>
<td>FY 06</td>
<td>$300,000 @ $1,500 each</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.3 Replace final 200 of 600 faculty computers.</td>
<td>Departments</td>
<td>FY 06</td>
<td>$300,000 @ $1,500 each</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TOTAL Expense**

$900,000

#### Assessment Plan

Inventory assessment of quantities of faculty computers purchased per year.
Goal 6 – Faculty Software

Provide adequate software licenses for faculty computers in offices and instructional areas to support productivity, research, and teaching.

Rationale
Hardware is only part of the solution. Faculty also need software tools to conduct research, prepare instructional materials and communicate effectively with students and fellow scholars.

<table>
<thead>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6.1 Provide a pool of additional funding specifically for departmental requests for software.</td>
<td>Provost</td>
<td>FY 06</td>
<td>$50,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.2 Provide a pool of additional funding specifically for departmental requests for software.</td>
<td>Provost</td>
<td>FY 07</td>
<td>$50,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.3 Provide a pool of additional funding specifically for departmental requests for software.</td>
<td>Provost</td>
<td>FY 08</td>
<td>$50,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.4 Investigate campus licenses for most purchased titles and implement where appropriate.</td>
<td>OIT</td>
<td>FY 06-08</td>
<td>$0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TOTAL Expense $150,000

Assessment Plan
Use faculty and department chair surveys to assess effectiveness of additional pool. Incorporate into the funding model.
Goal 7 – Faculty Development

Appropriately address identified faculty development needs regarding technology.

**Rationale**
To maximize productivity and effectiveness in using technology in research and teaching, faculty must continually update their awareness and skills.

<table>
<thead>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7.1 incentive, on-site, trainers, alternative formats,</td>
<td>OIT, departmental chairs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.1 Continue to offer technology workshops addressing needs identified in the plan</td>
<td>OIT</td>
<td>FY 06</td>
<td>$0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.2 Offer increased options for faculty to participate in development efforts through flexible online tools</td>
<td>OIT</td>
<td>FY 06</td>
<td>$0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.3 Create plan for departments and training agents to take customized workshops to faculty in the various academic departments across campus</td>
<td>OIT</td>
<td>FY 06</td>
<td>$0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.4 Each department will host at least one customized technology workshop during the fall and spring semesters beginning in Spring, 2006, and continuing through Spring, 2008.</td>
<td>Department Chairs</td>
<td>FY 06 – 08</td>
<td>$20,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TOTAL Expense** $20,000

**Assessment Plan**
Faculty satisfaction level determined through surveys.
**Goal 8 – Technical Support**

Provide technical support for faculty at an acceptable level of quality and response time.

**Rationale**
Personnel must be available to assist with technical problems during all class times, including weekends; a technician is needed in each building to troubleshoot problems that emerge during classes. Nothing will deter faculty from using technology more quickly than technical problems.

Technical support is a necessary part of the academic environment. Funding for this support, including funding for training of support staff, is part of the total cost of ownership of electronic equipment, and it is essential if the university expects to make technology a viable tool for teaching and learning.

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Target Date</th>
<th>Required Resources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8.1 Each college will identify technical support staffing needs for member departments</td>
<td>Deans and Chairs</td>
<td>FY 06</td>
<td>$0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.2 Each college will begin to phase in employment of additional technical support employees as needed and/or provide additional compensation and load relief for faculty already providing technical support.</td>
<td>Deans</td>
<td>FY 07</td>
<td>$80,000 annually increasing next year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.3 Each college will begin to phase in employment of additional technical support employees as needed and/or provide additional compensation and load relief for faculty already providing technical support.</td>
<td>Deans</td>
<td>FY 08</td>
<td>$120,000 annually</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL Expense</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>$200,000</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Assessment Plan**

A support needs plan will be offered as evidence that Action Step 8.1 has been accomplished. Assessment of Action Step 8.2 and 8.3 will consist of evidence that support personnel has been hired and/or that supporting faculty have received additional compensation and load reduction.
Goal 9 – WebCT

Update the WebCT software and server system as appropriate.

Rationale
WebCT has become a mainstreamed enterprise application for SFA. Continued financial commitment is necessary in order to stay current with software revisions and performance expectations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Target Date</th>
<th>Required Resources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9.1 Investigate and plan appropriate upgrades</td>
<td>OIT</td>
<td>FY 06</td>
<td>$0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.2 Implement appropriate upgrades</td>
<td>OIT</td>
<td>FY 07</td>
<td>$75,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Expense</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$75,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Assessment Plan

Documentation that the upgraded WebCT system meets then current software revisions and performance expectations.
**Goal 10 – Decision Making**

Establish a more decentralized model of decision-making for academic technology and software acquisition to include appropriate input from the academic community.

**Rationale**

Faculty and staff have unique needs across the university. Currently, faculty and staff are told what technology they can use by central support. Many faculty and staff across the university have special needs and requirements in teaching and research. Faculty and staff need to be and should be considered when decisions are made about what technology and software the university will acquire, and what initiatives are undertaken.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10.1 Create a procedure specifying that ITS, in a timely fashion, submit to the Academic Technology Committee, for comment, any proposal for campus-wide hardware or software purchases, and any plans for implementation of services or support that affect the academic community.</td>
<td>ITS in cooperation with Deans, Chairs.</td>
<td>FY 06</td>
<td>$0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Assessment Plan**

Attainment of the goal will be confirmed by the adoption of a procedure that stipulates the Academic Technology Committee will be provided an opportunity to comment on any proposals for campus-wide technology acquisitions and services or support initiatives.
Goal 11 – Graduate Office and OSRP

Implement appropriate technical solutions to support Graduate Office.

Rationale

The application of technology solutions to the processes of the Graduate Office and ORSP will serve to streamline the process for admitting graduate students and promote research efforts of SFA faculty.

<table>
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<tr>
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<th>Target Date</th>
<th>Required Resources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11.1 Investigate and plan process of electronic signature approval for forms and proposals</td>
<td>ORSP</td>
<td>FY 06</td>
<td>$0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.2 Creation of electronic process for approval of forms and proposals</td>
<td>ORSP</td>
<td>FY 07</td>
<td>$10,000 estimated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.3 Taping and posting of digital workshops</td>
<td>ORSP</td>
<td>FY 06</td>
<td>$ 5,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Expense</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$15,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Assessment Plan

Documentation of working electronic approval system. Documentation of streaming clips.

End of Action Plan
### Summary of Budget Implications by Fiscal Year

#### 2005 - 2006

- Action Item 2.1 – 30 classroom presentation station: $300,000
- Action Item 2.4 – 20 multimedia carts: $200,000
- Action Item 3.1 – Student computers in labs: $360,000
- Action Item 3.4 – Subject specific workstations: $30,000
- Action Item 5.1 – 200 faculty workstations: $300,000
- Action Item 6.1 – Faculty software: $50,000
- Action Item 11.3 – ORSP digital workshops: $5,000

Sub Total for FY 05 – 06: $1,245,000

#### 2006 - 2007

- Action Item 2.2 – 30 classroom presentation station: $300,000
- Action Item 2.5 – 20 multimedia carts: $200,000
- Action Item 3.2 – Student computers in labs: $360,000
- Action Item 5.2 – 200 faculty workstations: $300,000
- Action Item 6.2 – Faculty software: $50,000
- Action Item 7.1 – Departmental workshops: $20,000
- Action Item 8.2 – Technical support personnel: $80,000
- Action Item 9.2 – Upgrade WebCT system: $75,000
- Action Item 11.2 – ORSP electronic forms: $10,000

Sub Total for FY 06 – 07: $1,395,000

#### 2007 - 2008

- Action Item 2.3 – 30 classroom presentation station: $300,000
- Action Item 2.6 – 20 multimedia carts: $200,000
- Action Item 3.3 – Student computers in labs: $360,000
- Action Item 5.3 – 200 faculty workstations: $300,000
- Action Item 6.3 – Faculty software: $50,000
- Action Item 8.3 – Technical support personnel: $120,000

Sub Total for FY 06 – 07: $1,330,000

#### Grand Total FY 06 – FY 08

Grand Total (not including wireless): $3,970,000*
*Note: The amount for wireless networking is not included in the Summary of Budget Implications above or in the figure mentioned in the Executive Summary, due to the fact that funding for wireless has already been requested by Information Technology Services. However, the cost of wireless is mentioned in the Plan so that the Provost might be aware of the investment required and support the expenditure at the cabinet level.