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.

IIIC1. 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.

DESCRIPTIVE SUMMARY

District Technical Support
The LACCD Office of Information Technology maintains administrative systems and the District wide network, Web page, and Web-based services for students, faculty, and staff. The District also provides the Student Information System as well as the Human Resource and financial systems. On-campus computer systems are autonomous with no direct District oversight, and the College provides all resources for teaching within the classroom as well as the administrative systems for use on the campus itself.

The general policies are set by the chancellor and the Board of Trustees in Board Rules B27 and B28. The Technology Planning and Policy Council (TPPC) is an advisory body, representing administrative, academic and technology interests. The Council sets District wide policy and makes recommendations to the chancellor regarding budget decisions. The District Technology Council (DTC) is made up of IT managers from every campus, the Chief Information Office (CIO), District technology managers, and some of the senior computer network support specialists and data communications specialists. The Council sets District wide standards that are followed by all campuses and makes policy recommendations to the TPPC. As part of general oversight, the District also establishes master contracts to allow all campuses within the District to purchase software and equipment services more easily and less expensively than if purchased by individual campuses.

Measure J bond monies have funded several District wide programs. These include a single sign-on for all systems throughout the District, a secure internal high-speed communications link for every campus throughout the District, District wide email archiving, a new Student Information System, a District wide student email system, and the proposed creation of centralized data centers to ensure critical systems are available through redundancy. Additionally, Harbor College is one of two pilot campuses to use District wide student email.
Other construction bond monies have also allowed for the minimum standardization of all campus network systems, new infrastructure for the Harbor campus, and a second independent data center that will be built on campus as back-up for critical functions.

The largest IT costs (aside from personnel) are maintaining campus wide software licenses and maintenance contracts for servers and network equipment.

**College Technical Support**

Technology continues to be an integral part of the campus wide building program initiated with Prop A/AA/J funds. For the newly constructed facilities on the campus, there are numerous sensors throughout, and the climate control system is accessed through the network. The access control system (card-key) is also controlled through the network which is maintained by the College IT department. All AV systems in new buildings are centrally managed through the network, and all new phones are voice-over IP (VOIP), which are network devices as well. Video conferencing systems are also run through the network. Security systems, cameras, and security controls are currently mostly network devices soon to be completely controlled through the network with a server that centrally manages all of them. In addition, there are a number of administrative systems which are either standardized by various groups (e.g. Financial Aid or stand-alone systems to assist administrative groups in their work).

A number of sources contribute to the identification and planning for campus technology needs. Foremost is the Academic Technology Advisory Committee (ATAC). In response to a 2006 Self Study planning item and a campus wide commitment to work toward a “virtual” Harbor, the advisory committee has been activated (and reorganized from the former Information Technology Advisory Committee-ITAC) to provide academic input into the technology planning process.

ATAC is designed to address what is seen by many on campus as a gap between technology’s educational potential and the reality of what goes on in the classroom. This divide has become greater as a result of the increased availability of hardware on campus as funded by Propositions A/AA/J. New computer facilities have raised expectations in terms of technological capability, but these expectations are often frustrated by a lack of integrated planning and a lack of funding and support staff. Even as the IT staff has decreased, the necessity for service from IT has increased vastly in
the amount of equipment serviced, the scope of support, and the general use of technology. As the liaison between the technological and academic sides, ATAC has worked to address this issue with the development of the Technology Master Plan. The plan articulates the College’s technology vision, statement of purpose, and further integrates technology into the planning process. To a lesser degree, the Division Council also contributes to the dialogue, as do departments and individual instructors who are implementing technology to enhance learning.

**Distance Learning**

Although the campus has several open-access computers that may be utilized by students for distance learning, it is generally assumed that students enrolled in online classes have their own personal computers that will allow them to access the courses from home. The College contracts with Etudes for its CMS, but the IT department is not responsible for technology related to the distance learning program.

**SELF EVALUATION**

Institutional planning and assessment needs to consider several issues that involve technology. First, student skills and computer resources are often limited, so the College must ensure that students have the opportunity to learn computer skills and to practice them. This is particularly true in terms of the community’s changing demographics, specifically the aging of the area population served by the College. The technology needs of returning students must be recognized and addressed. The College should also promote a greater awareness of and interaction with community technology resources such as the Adult School, Career One-Stop, and the Southern California Regional Occupational Center. Personal Development classes could also be expanded to include a technology skills component.

In terms of ensuring student accessibility to computers, the completion of the new Library/ Learning Resource Center means the College must alert students to the expanded availability of computers for their use. At the same time, the new Welcome Center in the new Student Union building will have 18 open computer stations whereas the current Welcome Center has four. In addition, the use of mobile devices and their planned interface with the campus network and resources must be more completely developed.

Continued campus wide dialogue and further policy adjustments to determine allocation of technology resources is essential.

Clarify and advertise the technology options to students, such as the
ACTIONABLE IMPROVEMENT PLAN

process of obtaining a student LACCD email address, and publicize the benefits.

IIIC1a. Technology services, professional support, facilities, hardware, and software are designed to enhance the operation and effectiveness of the institution.

DESCRIPTIVE SUMMARY

Technology services of the College are used to improve campus operations and overall institutional effectiveness. Harbor College’s services are part of a broader effort by LACCD to plan and use technology more effectively. The Technology Master Plan for the LACCD was approved by the Board of Trustees on February 11, 2011. The Master Plan establishes policies for IT groups throughout the District. District wide system policies determine the Systems Applications Procedures (SAP) system, student record access, District standards, and other operations. The District Technology Council (DTC) meets monthly and is attended by IT staff from each LAACD campus. The DTC discusses current and future technology needs and reviews decisions that require funding and have District wide policy ramifications.

The Campus Technology Master Plan (originally created by IT) is reviewed and revised by ATAC yearly. Campus technology standards are reviewed and updated by ATAC every six months as well. Some technology needs are identified through division unit plans or within Division Council meetings, which are also brought to IT staff meetings. Recognition of changing technology requires updating and upgrading of data systems and infrastructure as well as ongoing maintenance. In addition, management must be provided for the growing systems that are currently in place. Instructors planning to use computer labs complete questionnaires to help ensure the labs will be able to accommodate their requests.

The College itself makes decisions about its need for technology services, facilities, hardware, and software. Software decisions are primarily made by instructors and District or College standards. Most hardware and service decisions are made by the IT director, but also may be determined by District policy or specific requirements. A decision may also result from research on the hardware or service involved, including the costs, effectiveness, standards, support equipment, and management or maintenance needs. Any hardware, software, or services to be implemented campus wide are approved through the College planning process and in conjunction with the Technology Master Plan.

Los Angeles Harbor College’s technology services are provided locally with multiple levels of backups and redundant systems for many
services. Ongoing projects are adding better monitoring and messaging to improve reliability and ensure privacy and security. Administrative systems are kept on a separate network from student systems; both networks are shielded from any public systems with limited access to internal systems from the outside. Access to student and staff records must go to District servers through a secure separate network so as not to expose any personal information on public networks. Firewalls protect the network along with a security appliance. Finally, campus computers run a number of specialized programs to protect themselves from intrusion.

**SELF EVALUATION**

Since the previous self study period, coordination between the DTC and the individual campuses has improved, in part because DTC now focuses on standards and dealing with common issues as well as District issues.

Technology service and support at Harbor College are in much greater demand due to the construction of new high-tech buildings, both academic and student service related, including smart classrooms and computer labs. In the 2009 Student Survey, one student voiced the opinion: “I love the technology in the new buildings!” In terms of evaluating effectiveness, when the 2008 Student Survey asked students to respond to the availability of computer labs for student use, 21.8 percent replied “usually” and 50.1 percent responded “always.” While on the one hand, the new facilities have brought the College into the 21st century, they also have increasingly strained the work of the IT staff. As a result, although the operation and effectiveness of the institution is improving, a stronger coordination between ATAC and IT is needed to further enhance progress. Increased participation by Student Services on ATAC is also essential.

**ACTIONABLE IMPROVEMENT PLAN**

Establish the role of ATAC as a ‘clearance’ committee in the College planning process, guaranteeing that IT-related planning and budget decisions made by planning committees are properly informed and coordinated.

**IIC1b. The institution provides quality training in the effective application of its information technology to students and personnel.**

**DESCRIPTIVE SUMMARY**

**Students**

Individuals responsible for student IT training are dispersed across the campus. Some IT-specific disciplines (CAOT, CIS, CT, LS) provide student training that is essential to the discipline. Other training is provided by individual faculty where technology is specific to the needs of the course. These areas include music, art, architecture, and other non-IT specific disciplines. Faculty who teach hybrid courses utilizing
Etudes in their face-to-face courses provide orientation in their respective classes. The link to the Etudes online orientation is also available at the College Web site for all students using Etudes. The students themselves are also responsible for knowing what they need and enrolling in the appropriate classes.

**Personnel**

For personnel, the District Office of Information Technology provides system training to District employees. Los Angeles Harbor College’s training is provided through the Human Resources office. Formal training on non-personnel systems, however, is sporadic. In spring 2010, the College opened The Teaching Learning Center located on the second floor of the library. The Center opened as a direct response to a 2006 Planning Item. The Center is staffed by two faculty members who offer technology workshops as well as provide one-on-one training for faculty. Staff Development monies have been significantly reduced, but each semester the committee continues to notify all faculty of technology training that is available through @One. These online courses are available for FLEX credit, as are on campus workshops that are devoted to technological upgrades and integration. A portion of Title V monies has also been devoted to the development of faculty expertise in the use of technology. The LACCD has also created the Faculty Teaching and Learning Academy which provides a semester-length course in integrating technology and pedagogy. The Academy trains faculty participants and prompts a sharing of expertise among faculty and staff. Several Harbor College instructors have significantly benefitted from this instruction.

LACCD is increasingly moving many faculty responsibilities (class rosters, exclusion of students from classes, assignment of grades) into an online format that requires all faculty to have basic online skills in order to fulfill their instructional responsibilities. Instructors who teach online are required to complete two training courses: a specific class on Etudes and an online pedagogy course. As the campus moves more classes online, the demand for training and greater expertise will continue to grow. Meeting such demands must remain a priority of the College.

**SELF EVALUATION**

To utilize on-campus technology fully and further develop online offerings means that the College must prioritize technology as a vital component of student success. It would fulfill one of the College’s goals in the *Educational Master Plan*, to make Harbor College a “virtual” destination. This priority entails ensuring that all new College hires evidence familiarity with instructional technology and demonstrate an ability to use these skills actively in the classroom.

Current faculty also need to be encouraged to integrate technological
components into their course materials when appropriate and to take advantage of Web-based course materials offered through publishers and online sources. Such planning needs to be discipline specific and to be integrated into all unit plans. There is a need for consistent training in the use of technology in the classroom, particularly with a large number of adjunct faculty, as well as an ongoing need for evaluation and assessment of the College’s use of technology and its impact on student success. Although many students coming to Harbor College are accustomed to and comfortable with the use of instructional technology, some are not. The College must be prepared to address both ends of this 21st century spectrum.

**ACTIONABLE IMPROVEMENT PLAN**

Ensure that there are technical resource training workshops that are relevant and applicable to specific disciplines and classrooms offered during the first week of FLEX activities and throughout the school year.

**IIIC1c. The institution systematically plans, acquires, maintains, and upgrades or replaces technology infrastructure and equipment to meet institutional needs.**

**DESCRIPTIVE SUMMARY**

The District Office of Information Technology plans, acquires, and maintains the technology infrastructure and equipment to address District wide needs. The College maintains its own IT department charged with the acquisition, management, maintenance, and operation of the campus infrastructure and equipment. The IT department employs five full-time staff in addition to the IT Director.

Most individual technology resources are purchased by departments with their own funds and are distributed to meet departmental need. Purchases from block grants and Title V funds are discussed and evaluated in the groups which oversee those funds.

With the passage of Propositions A/AA/J, the College has committed sufficient funds for technology to update its infrastructure and ensure its reliability. In addition to following District policy regarding technology, the College has charged the IT department with ensuring that its infrastructure is up-to-date and continues to support the IT group with staffing and funding. Numerous systems are in place to ensure reliability and emergency backup. Complete backups are done via two separate systems with provisions being made for offsite storage of data.

**IIIC1d. The distribution and utilization of technology resources support the development, maintenance, and enhancement of its programs and services.**
DESCRIPTIVE SUMMARY

Technological resources are dispersed across the campus. The Learning Assistance Center (LAC) provides a variety of programs that support the regular instructional programs. Technology resources available in the Library/LAC include the Computer Lab, the Literacy Center, the Math Lab, the Writing Center, and the High Tech Center. In addition to the computer labs in the LAC, there are other computer labs on campus. In the Northeast Academic Building (NEA) and the Technology Building, computers support a variety of programs. The two 40-person labs in NEA (124 and 126) are primarily used by the Social and Behavioral Sciences to teach research and statistics. The labs in the Technology Building are more specifically dedicated to art, architecture, business, and engineering. Also, in the Student Services and Administration building, an open computer is available for new students, and labs for student use are in the Welcome Center, the Transfer Center, and EOPS. After the labs are closed, students can access the computers placed in the common area. Full-time and adjunct faculty are also given access to office computers, either recently upgraded or new. For faculty and staff, an online work order request system is in place for technology support. Campus wide communication, which affects programs and services, has improved with greater use of email. All faculty (full-time and adjunct) have been assigned an email address, and instructors are encouraged to include email information on their syllabi. The 2011 Campus Climate Survey noted that respondents received College information via their LAHC email accounts.

SELF EVALUATION

Since the 2006 Self-Study, technical support for the College has improved significantly. Campus wide communication, as well as instruction and service to students, has benefitted from the increased availability and use of technology. In order to further enhance programs and services, targeted faculty will be given additional rights to facilitate solving local technology issues, including installing and testing educational software. The College continues to work toward encouraging technology use across the campus to promote student success. The online work order system, however, needs to be improved, and the request process needs to be formalized to ensure greater efficiency.

IIIC2. 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.

DESCRIPTIVE SUMMARY

In the College planning model, technology planning is to be directly linked to College wide planning. Independent requests for instructional technology equipment originate in instructional and classified units and are then merged into cluster plans and finally into the College
DESCRIPTIVE SUMMARY

At the same time, IT must consider College wide needs, taking its proposals to the appropriate cluster for incorporation into the cluster plan and the eventual College wide prioritization by the College Planning Council.

Ongoing discussions with faculty and staff, both individually and through various campus groups, shape IT recommendations. Inquiries to faculty about computer lab use, along with questionnaires sent to Division Council members, also influence recommendations. Again, a comparison of operations at other campuses, through groups like the District Technology Council (DTC) and Chief Information Systems Officers Association (CISOA), help evaluate the College’s effectiveness in meeting its technology needs.

Methods for measuring the effectiveness of technology vary depending on how the technology is used. For student labs, a survey is sent to students to see how they feel about the usefulness and effectiveness of the labs. The amount of time students spend using computer labs is also tracked. Assessment of technology tends to focus on specific issues that need to be resolved. For example, examination of the computer labs found them to be cluttered with cables which were making it difficult for students to sit at the computer stations. The chair and faculty were consulted and shown examples of compact all-in-one or all-in-two computers. This consultation resulted in the selection of a more compact all-in-one system that was implemented and will be used in other locations on the campus in the future. The use of monitors attached to swing-arms was decided through a similar process.

Discussions in ATAC focus on the effectiveness of current technology. Division Council meetings also discuss the effective use of technology uses, particularly the allocation of block grant monies. Discussions in groups with other colleges, including the DTC and CISOA meetings, help determine the effectiveness of technology by comparing what other colleges do to what Harbor College does.

SELF EVALUATION

The organization of the ATAC and its mission to coordinate academics and technology is a positive step toward greater coordination and planning between the two areas. In fall 2011, a Web-standards working group has also been organized to address issues of navigating, updating, and maintaining the College Web site. The Web-standards working group will coordinate with ATAC. Overall, the shared governance model has been effective in allowing committee members to prioritize needs in line with the goals of the College. While all needs are not met, the prioritization is effective, and the funds that are available are put to good use.
SELF EVALUATION (continued)  

An internal evaluation identified two issues related to technology planning. First, because technology planning and decision-making are based largely on District wide and College recommendations and cannot be properly determined on a department-by-department basis, a more systematic campus wide refresh policy for technology must be decided at the executive level and built into the campus budget. Second, although some departments have funds and are able to invest in new or replacement technology, others languish. This disparity fails to serve the overall needs of the campus.

A lack of data has also been identified in terms of current and future technology use by faculty and students. A survey of both groups could shed light on the needs of various faculty and departments and could clarify short and long-term goals.

ACTIONABLE IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Outline a systematic campus wide refresh policy for technology that is built into the campus budget.

Create a technology reserve to ensure that the cost of maintenance (ten percent of a lab purchase) is built into the initial funding of technology investments and remains until the refresh occurs.

1 www.laccd.edu/admin_regs/documents/BRegs/B-27.doc
www.laccd.edu/admin_regs/documents/BRegs/B-28.doc

2 http://www.lahc.edu/studentservices/ssoportal.html


4 http://www.lahc.edu/govplanning/governance/atac/atac.html

5 http://www.lahc.edu/research/SoBayAge1l.pdf

6 LACCD Technology Master Plan

7 LAHC Information Technology Master Plan http://www.lahc.edu/govplanning/index.html (Information Technology Component of Educational Master Plan)

8 ATAC Technology Master Plan: http://www.lahc.edu/govplanning/accreditation/evidence_IIC.html

9 http://www.lahc.cc.ca.us/classes/onlinehelp.html

10 http://www.lahc.edu/facultystaff/tea/index.html

11 Educational Master Plan, page 7 http://www.lahc.edu/govplanning/EMP_11-12_adopted_FINAL.pdf

12 http://www.lahc.edu/govplanning/PlanPolProcedMan_2010.pdf

13 Library survey of computer labs: http://www.lahc.edu/govplanning/accreditation/evidence_IIC.html