

# ACADEMIC TECHNOLOGY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

## Charge to the Committee and Descriptions of Initial Tasks

### Organizational Background<sup>1</sup>

At its July 1987 meeting, the CSU Board of Trustees formally elevated information technology as an academic and strategic priority of the campuses and system as a whole. In response to that mandate, the chancellor appointed a Commission on Instructional Technology (CIT) whose charge was to recommend policies and guidelines for the acquisition, use, and evaluation of new and emerging technologies. In March 1990, the board received CIT's final report which adopted a policy framework for the infusion of technology into the teaching and learning process.

Shortly after his arrival, Chancellor Munitz established the Commission on Learning Resources and Instructional Technology (CLRIT). It was created in late 1991 to carry on and extend the work of CIT in stimulating instructional innovation and alternative delivery of academic programs; CLRIT was also charged with adopting the work of the systemwide Commission on Libraries.

Over its first three years, 1992-94, CLRIT supported several multicampus curricular prototype projects as part of an initiative known as Project DELTA. CLRIT's seed work with Project DELTA stimulated a number of other campus-based initiatives and projects to integrate technology into the curriculum.

In 1993, CLRIT commissioned the Council of Library Directors to develop a strategic plan for the future of libraries and information resources. Over the ensuing 12 months a plan was developed and endorsed by CLRIT. The CSU Library Strategic Plan set forth a series of challenging goals, many dealing with increased collaboration and resource sharing among the campuses. This plan has recently been reviewed and updated.

About the same time in 1993, *Leveraging the Future: The Telecommunications Plan for the CSU* was developed by a task force of the Academic Information Resources Council, a systemwide group representing a broad base of faculty from all academic disciplines and information technology professionals. As the only systemwide body focused on technology, CLRIT was asked to endorse the report. This far-reaching study identified the intra- and inter-campus infrastructure needs of the CSU for the coming decade, and stimulated a great deal of discussion, including by the Executive Council and the statewide Academic Senate, about technology in the system.

As a result of these separate strategic planning activities and the multicampus projects in Project DELTA, the presidents decided to become more deeply involved in providing leadership for the planning and deployment of information technology resources.

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<sup>1</sup> Taken from *Integrated Technology Strategy: Planning and Implementation Process*, Office of the Chancellor, 1997, "Appendix A: Selected Chronology of Milestones in CSU Information Technology".

A presidential retreat on technology in December, 1993 led to the formation of four presidential-chaired task forces: Inter-Campus Networking; Intra-Campus Networking; Applications and Funding. The work of these task forces was completed and reports were submitted in August, 1994. The result was the creation of two new systemwide commissions in 1994 to complement the academic focus of CLRIT. The Commission on Institutional Management and Information Technology (CIMIT) which evolved from the work of the Applications Task Force and was to serve as the administrative analog of CLRIT. The Commission on Telecommunications Infrastructure (CTI) resulted from the two infrastructure task forces and was to oversee the construction of the electronic “highway” to support the academic and administrative applications of the other two commissions.

The Funding Task Force determined that CSU’s best course of action was to engage in a comprehensive strategic planning process which would heavily consultative and involve as many constituencies as possible. This process, and the resulting planning framework came to be known as the Integrated Technology Strategy (ITS).

A Technology Steering Committee (TSC) of the Executive Council was created to coordinate and integrate the work of the ITS through the three commissions. In July 1996, the Board of Trustees formally adopted the ITS as the long term strategic plan and planning framework for technology in the CSU. It established an Ad Hoc Committee on Technology Utilization to lend broad policy guidance and visibility to the leadership activities involving information technology.

In early 1995, CLRIT launched an initiative focused on the development of faculty in the uses of technology. A comprehensive plan was developed, funded, and implemented over a two-year period. Responding to a planning process initiated by the TSC, CLRIT also assumed leadership in forging a CSU policy to provide universal, 24-hour access to information sources via electronic networks for all students, faculty, and staff, both on and off campus. All campuses had developed universal access plans by the end of 1997.

By the end of the decade, questions were raised about the efficiency and effectiveness of the technology advisory structure in the CSU. A broad review of this structure led to a decision by Chancellor Reed in early 2000 to disband all existing systemwide technology advisory committees and establish a new technology advisory structure composed of three standing committees:

1. The **Academic Technology Advisory Committee** (ATAC) formed to advise the Executive Vice Chancellor/Chief Academic Officer on academic technology issues. ATAC assumes and centralizes the academic technology advisory function of several former groups including CLRIT, AIRC, and CEU.
2. The **Council of Library Directors** (COLD) to advise the Assistant Vice Chancellor for Information Technology Services on library technology issues

and the Executive Vice Chancellor/Chief Academic Officer on all other library matters.

3. The **Information Technology Advisory Committee (ITAC)** to advise the Assistant Vice Chancellor for Information Technology Services on networking and operations/support services.

In addition, the **CMS Project Advisory Committee** would continue to advise the Executive Vice Chancellor/Chief Financial Officer on the CMS project and will disband at the end of that project. The **Technology Steering Committee** of the Executive Council should continue to advise the chancellor and the executive vice chancellors on broad technology policy issues.

### Policy Context

Despite a high degree of organizational energy and activity, CSU system policy on academic technology can be characterized as *laissez faire* leaving a good deal of operational decision-making to the campuses. Moreover, that policy has not been codified in a succinct statement. However, CSU system decisions and operations with regard to academic technology have been consistent, largely based upon a set of principles which can be extrapolated from documents developed within the CSU during the past few years. Some are system policy emanating from the Cornerstones strategic planning process<sup>2</sup>, the Commission on Learning Resources and Instruction Technology<sup>3</sup>, and the Integrated Technology Strategy/Technology Infrastructure Initiative<sup>4</sup>, and others are derived from recommendations of the Academic Senate CSU<sup>5</sup>. These principles have never been assembled as a set and approved, endorsed, or otherwise blessed by any official body in the CSU. However, individually, they do represent policy or the view of some significant CSU constituency and collectively, they reflect the mission and culture of the CSU vis-à-vis academic technology.

#### Principles:

1. The CSU promotes or supports the use of technology mediated instruction<sup>6</sup> insofar as it improves or maintains the quality of teaching and learning possible through the use of traditional pedagogies alone<sup>7</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup> *The Cornerstones Report*, 1998.

<sup>3</sup> *Removing Obstacles to the Use of Instructional Technology*, (August 1995); and *Strategic Goals*, 1998.

<sup>4</sup> *Status and Directions*, October 1998.

<sup>5</sup> *Baccalaureate Education in the California State University*, May 1996; *Principles Regarding Technology Mediated Instruction in the CSU*, May 1996; and *Recommendations Regarding Technology Mediated Instruction in the CSU*, May 1996.

<sup>6</sup> As used in this document, *technology mediated instruction* refers to all forms of instruction that are enhanced by or utilize electronic and/or computer-based technology. It specifically includes synchronous and asynchronous video instruction, instructional modules delivered via mass media, and computer-assisted or computer-based instruction.

<sup>7</sup> See ASCSU, *Baccalaureate Education in the California State University*, P. 9; *The Cornerstones Report*, P. 2, fundamental commitment #1; ASCSU, *Principles Regarding Technology Mediated Instruction in the CSU*, principle #2.

2. Technology mediated instruction offers the possibility of improving access to higher education both for groups previously unable to attend a CSU campus and for the current population of students<sup>8</sup> This includes improving access to instruction and improving access to student academic support services.
3. CSU faculty have the responsibility for determining the pedagogies and instructional methods they wish to use to achieve the learning outcomes they have defined. As such, the faculty must determine the appropriate use of technology mediated instruction in their instructional modules, courses, and academic programs.<sup>9</sup> Thus campuses should have significant autonomy in developing their own technology support programs.<sup>10</sup>
4. Technology mediated instruction augments and enhances traditional pedagogies; it does not replace them.<sup>11</sup> Opportunities for faculty and student interaction should be an integral part of all instructional modules, courses, and academic programs that utilize technology mediated instruction.<sup>12</sup>
5. The effective use of technology mediated instruction must be fully supported by faculty professional development programs, technical support programs, equipment acquisition, library resources, and the construction of appropriate instructional facilities.<sup>13</sup>
6. CSU faculty personnel processes should value and reward all course and curricular development, and professional development activities that result in improved instruction including those focusing upon technology mediated instruction.<sup>14</sup>
7. CSU faculty must be informed in a systematic and continuous fashion of their rights and responsibilities regarding the ownership and fair use of intellectual property.<sup>15</sup> The CSU should promulgate policies regarding the ownership of intellectual property that encourage the development of applications of technology mediated instruction<sup>16</sup>.

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<sup>8</sup> See *The Cornerstones Report*, P. 2, fundamental commitment #1; CLRIT, *Removing Obstacles to the Use of Instructional Technology*, joint finding of the Work Group on Academic Issues and the Work Group on Administrative and Fiscal Issues.

<sup>9</sup> See ASCSU, *Baccalaureate Education in the California State University*, P.9; ASCSU, *Principles Regarding Technology Mediated Instruction in the CSU*, principle #1.

<sup>10</sup> See *The Cornerstones Report*, P. 19, Principle #10.

<sup>11</sup> See ASCSU, *Baccalaureate Education in the California State University*, P.9.

<sup>12</sup> See CLRIT, *Removing Obstacles to the Use of Instructional Technology*, recommendations of the Work Group on Academic Issues.

<sup>13</sup> See ASCSU, *Principles Regarding Technology Mediated Instruction in the CSU*, principles #4 and #5; CLRIT, *Removing Obstacles to the Use of Instruction Technologies*, recommendations of the Work Group on Academic Issues and recommendations of the Work Group on Administrative and Fiscal Issues.

<sup>14</sup> ASCSU, *Principles Regarding Technology Mediated Instruction in the CSU*, principle #7.

<sup>15</sup> ASCSU, *Recommendations Regarding Technology Mediation Instruction in the CSU*, recommendation #7.

<sup>16</sup> CLRIT and the Commission on the Extended University, Proposed Copyright Policy for Projects funded by CLRIT and CEU, 1999, pending approval.

8. CSU faculty and administrators should be informed in a systematic and continuous fashion of the benefits and costs of developing and using technology mediated instruction so that they can make informed decisions about learning outcomes and alternative instructional methods<sup>17</sup>.
9. The CSU should encourage and support the use of technology mediated instruction to facilitate the dissemination and sharing of instructional modules, courses, and academic programs throughout and beyond the CSU system.<sup>18</sup>
10. Academic and student services in support of technology mediated instruction must be comparable to those provided for traditional pedagogies.<sup>19</sup> Technology should be promoted not only for instructional purposes, but to improve student services such as advising, degree audit, transcript viewing, admissions, registration, and course enrollment.<sup>20</sup>

### Charge to the Committee

The Academic Technology Advisory Committee (ATAC) will advise the Executive Vice Chancellor/Chief Academic Officer regarding the effective use of technological resources to enhance the quality of teaching and learning, the student experience, and student access.

### Initial Tasks

The CSU has been engaged in new academic technologies at the organizational, policy, and operational levels for well over a decade. However, through this period, the system has not had a formal plan for the use of technology in teaching, learning, and scholarship. Thus the immediate tasks for the committee are to

1. guide and advise the development of an academic technology plan for the CSU,
2. recommend priorities for the implementation of the academic technology plan, and
3. ensure that systemwide applications of academic technology are evaluated.

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<sup>17</sup> *The Cornerstones Report*, P. 15, recommendation 7h.

<sup>18</sup> ASCSU, *Recommendations Regarding Technology Mediation Instruction in the CSU*, recommendation #2; CLRIT, *Removing Obstacles to the Use of Instructional Technology*, joint recommendation of the Work Group on Academic Issues and the Work Group on Administrative and Fiscal Issues.

<sup>19</sup> ASCSU, *Principles Regarding Technology Mediated Instruction in the CSU*, principle #3; CLRIT, *Removing Obstacles to the Use of Instruction Technology*, recommendations of the Work Group on Academic Issues.

<sup>20</sup> CLRIT, *Strategic Goals*, goal #3.

In completing these tasks, the committee must remain sensitive to the CSU history and experience that includes the aforementioned principles regarding the use of academic technology. As a result of this experience and the rapidity of change, there exists a set of expectations about how the CSU will approach academic technology in the future which are expressed in the following set of assumptions.

*Assumptions:*

1. CSU system policy has matured beyond the experimental stage. Over the years, CLRIT funded several dozen different projects. Some failed, some were limited successes, and a few, such as the Center for Distributed Learning and the MERLOT project, are enduring successes. Our next steps need greater unity of purpose and focus.
2. The CSU needs to stimulate new thinking about academic technology that will build upon our positive experiences and insure responsible use of limited fiscal resources.
3. An academic technology plan needs to be dynamic; able to respond to rapid changes in technology while avoiding approaches that lead to dead-end obsolescence.

The development of an academic technology plan requires the resolution of several significant issues. These issues revolve around the fundamental charge to the committee of providing advice as to how the CSU can best use technology to enhance the quality of teaching and learning, the student experience, and student access. Above all, it must be remembered that the fundamental goal is the improvement of teaching and learning not the use of technology. Only when and where technology serves that fundamental goal is it useful.

*Issues:*

1. On which of the following functions (or others to be identified), should the CSU focus policy attention given the assumption of limited system resources?
  - a) Faculty development programs for using technology mediated instruction.
  - b) The establishment and support of regional or an enhanced central academic technology development center.
  - c) Support for faculty development of modules or courses using technology mediated instruction.

- d) The development and administration of assessment and evaluation programs for course materials or complete courses delivered through technology mediated instruction.
- e) The establishment of dissemination and scaling programs for course materials or complete courses developed within the system using technology mediated instruction.
- f) Support for research into the circumstances of discipline, course content, pedagogy, and student learning style that can be facilitated through technology mediated instruction (and conversely the circumstances where traditional methods are most appropriate).
- g) Support for research into the costs and benefits of technology mediated instruction from both the quality of learning and student access perspectives.
- h) Identification and dissemination of best practices in the development and use of technology to enhance instruction or broaden access.

1. In an effort to use resources effectively and promote dissemination of results, should the CSU adopt systemwide standards or preferences for specific technologies, application development environments, and/or specific products (site licenses)?
2. What should be the relationship between the CSU Chancellor's Office and the individual campuses in developing academic technology policy and programs?
3. To what extent and in what ways should the CSU seek to collaborate with other segments of higher education in California or across the nation?