

III D. IT PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

This section summarizes the recommendations of the IT Professional Development Committee¹, a task group established by the Systemwide Internal Partnership.

SCOPE AND GOALS

The ability to provide effective information technology support to students, faculty and staff and to sustain the technology infrastructure depends largely on the talent, skills and training of the personnel involved in its operation and support. The Systemwide Internal Partnership charged a task group, the IT Professional Development Committee, with recommending a professional development plan to meet these needs. The committee's goal was to design a structured program that would keep the skill sets of IT personnel associated with the CSU TII ahead of the growth in systems and applications.

The scope of this IT Professional Development Plan includes the upgrade and continual refresh of the knowledge and skills of IT professionals involved with the oversight, management and delivery of ITS-TII services. Included are such areas as software applications, hardware, network operations and technologies, customer service, team building and conflict resolutions.

CURRENT ENVIRONMENT

In 1996 the CSU implemented a new Information Technology Series (position classification structure). This was done because the existing classification system (developed in the seventies) did not reflect major changes that had occurred, and that continue to occur, in IT skill sets and organizational structures. The new classification system identifies core functions, the core skills within each, and the level of skill (within a broad range) associated with specific positions.

Adoption of the new systemwide IT classification system grew out of campus recognition of the value of a common frame of reference for setting expectations and for structuring reward systems in a professional area experiencing rapid growth and change. Unfortunately, there is no comparable systemwide framework guiding the professional development of IT personnel. There are no system policies, programs, standards or funding opportunities aimed at developing the human resources the CSU will rely upon to operate the infrastructure.

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TARGET ENVIRONMENT

All IT professionals must maintain and improve their knowledge base and skills to keep pace with the rapid changes in technology with which they will be confronted.

Based on focus group discussions held on five campuses, the task group concluded that each IT professional should receive 100 hours per year of professional development. The categories listed below were recommended for inclusion in the IT professional development program. Specific training topics and resources are included in the task group report that is available on the ITS-TII website.

Sample Categories of Professional Development

People Skills

- Team Building
- Communications
- Problem Solving
- Project Management
- Managerial Skills
- Customer Services
- Conflict Resolution

Network

- Network Planning & Implementation
 - a) Design and Configuration
 - b) Evaluation and Research
- Network Analysis & Management
 - a) Analysis/Performance Monitoring
 - b) Control/Security
- Network Administration
 - a) Network Administration
 - b) Network Maintenance/Support
 - c) Local/Area Network & Server Design and Management

Desktop

- Systems Analysis
 - a) Systems Development/Installation
 - b) Systems Modification
 - c) Systems Performance Analysis
 - d) Systems Maintenance
- Systems Integration
 - a) Physical Installation
 - b) System Configuration
 - c) System Software
 - d) Prototype Development

Physical Plant

- Physical Plant Standards
- Cabling Standards
- Cabling Techniques & Procedures

Operations and Support

- Help Desk Management
- Operations Support
 - a) Hardware Operation & Maintenance
 - b) Field Service
- Telephone Support
 - a) User Consultation
 - b) User Support
 - c) Resource Evaluation/Needs Analysis
 - d) Data Administration and Support
 - e) Training
- Unified Messaging System

Servers

- Systems Administration
 - a) Database Maintenance/Management
 - b) Security Management
 - c) Storage Administration
 - d) Prototype Development
- Site Administration
 - a) Site Operation
 - b) Site System Maintenance

RESPONSIBILITY FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The task group report proposes that responsibility for IT professional development be shared by the campuses, Chancellor's Office, and the individual employee.

The campuses and the CO should provide orientation to new positions; training on new technologies or systems; and, opportunities for employees to keep abreast of technology trends. Supervisors have responsibility for establishing and updating a group or unit work plan to guide professional development planning.

The employee is responsible for the continuous development of the broader skills pertaining to his/her position, for attending pertinent activities of professional associations, and for participating in training that will assist in maintaining his/her employability and preparations for advancement. Employees and supervisors share responsibility for establishing and updating an individual employee development plan that will guide and encourage the maintenance and enhancement of job-critical skills and knowledge.

ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

The task group recommended that overall management and evaluation of the IT professional development program be assigned to a Professional Development Committee of the IRM/CIO Council. Its members should include IRMs, CSEA representatives, faculty and students. The campus IRM/CIO should have operational authority at the campus level and be responsible for ensuring that all IT employees have an equal opportunity to participate in professional development programs. To assure effective coordination, the report recommends that funding for the program be retained under central management, responsive to recommendations made by the CIO/IRM Professional Development Committee, with a portion of the budget earmarked to support campus-based initiatives.

IMPLEMENTATION

Design and implementation of the IT Professional Development program will be a continuous effort. Components of this work include:

- Determination of the skill requirements of IT personnel;
- Assessment of the current skill levels of IT personnel;
- Analysis of the gaps between current skill levels and requirements;
- Development of individualized training plans for IT personnel;
- Procurement of systemwide site license for computer-based training modules; and,
- Implementation of training programs.