

III. E

STUDENT – PERSONAL INFORMATION RESOURCE KIT (PIRK)

This section summarizes the work, to date, of the Student Team¹, a task group established by the Systemwide Internal Partnership in July 1998. Since this is a relatively new effort, the work of the Student Team will continue for the next few months.

OVERVIEW

This section identifies the technology resource competencies that CSU students must have in order to be able to access information resources and knowledge experts as part of their CSU learning experience and other university-related tasks and activities. It gives examples of how students will use the telecommunications infrastructure while attending one of the CSU campuses.

This section also sets forth the concept of a Student-Personal Information Resource Kit (PIRK) which all CSU students will need to enhance their learning experience while attending one of the 23 CSU campuses. The CSU Student-PIRK, which the Student Team is currently planning, may consist of a personal computer together with the accompanying core software; network access to information resources from anywhere at anytime; support services, including help services from off-campus; and, access to self training packages. The Student-PIRK would be designed to ensure that its components are CSU standards compliant.

The issue of “Who Pays? Who Benefits?” is identified as a public policy issue for discussion and debate in other forums. The Student Team’s efforts are to gather facts to inform that discussion and debate.

Over the next few months a wide range of CSU students will be engaged in four activities -- a random sample survey of 3000 CSU students will be conducted; using the results of the survey, focus groups will be held; campus-sponsored educational forums will be offered to the official campus Associated Students, Inc.; and, written communications will be distributed.

There are two reasons for pursuing these four activities. First it will provide an opportunity to inform the students of the overall ITS-TII Plan. Second, it will

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provide opportunities for students to give input into the development of the Student-PIRK and to learn of and comment on its benefits to all CSU students.

THE CSU STUDENT

The California State University is the largest system of senior higher education in the United States. Its 23 campuses stretch for almost 1,000 miles, and contain a mixture of urban and rural, large and small, residential and commuter environments.

The CSU draws its students from the top one-third of California's high school graduates; almost 98 percent of CSU students are from California. In the 1997 Fall Semester, the CSU enrolled 344,000 students, including 20 percent at the graduate or post-baccalaureate levels. A total of 30,660 new first-time freshmen enrolled in the system along with 36,673 new undergraduate transfers. About 70 percent of all students were enrolled on a full-time basis. Roughly eight percent of the student population resides in campus housing facilities (principally on the Humboldt, Chico, and San Luis Obispo campuses), and another nine percent immediately off-campus. The remaining 83 percent are commuters.

The ethnic minority students enrolled at CSU campuses, currently 52 percent, are more than twice the national average for four-year public colleges. Women comprise 57 percent of the total student population. The average age of undergraduates is 24.4 years; it is 33.6 years for graduate and post-baccalaureate students.

The average CSU student fee and campus-based fees for 1997/98 total \$1,939, lower than for four-year public universities in 49 states and about a third less than the average for California. The estimated average annual costs for a full-time undergraduate living on campus was \$10,288 in 1996/97. The amount for students living off campus and away from home was \$11,141. About 52 percent of the student population receive some form of financial aid, and in Fall 1997, the average award was \$5,736 per student. The estimated mean parental income for the 53 percent of CSU students who are dependents was \$51,670 in the same year.

About 70 percent of CSU students are also employed and one-third work 30 hours per week or more. Twenty-five (25) percent have dependents. The average time to degree for a new freshman is 5.7 years, and it is 3.7 years for new transfers.

CURRENT TECHNOLOGY ENVIRONMENT FOR CSU STUDENTS

Information Competencies of Students

The driving force behind the ITS-TII is providing the best education for CSU students. Information competency skills that students must acquire to be successful in the university and in the 21st century were identified in the 1996 report, *Information Competence in the CSU*. The student requirements identified in Appendix A (Information Technology Requirements for CSU End-Users) relate to expectations for academic readiness and performance described in that report.

Student Uses of Technology

As detailed in Appendix A, CSU students engage in a variety of educational, administrative and extra-curricular activities when applying to and attending a CSU campus. Many of the specific tasks undertaken during the course of these activities can be accomplished using modern technologies. To accomplish them successfully, students need the appropriate tools, training and support as well as access to an adequate telecommunications infrastructure. Appendix A also outlines the common tasks that CSU students can perform electronically together with the corresponding technology requirements.

TARGET STUDENT PERSONAL TECHNOLOGY ACCESS

The tasks that students can accomplish electronically clearly demonstrate a need for every student to have an appropriate level of access to technology resources. The ITS-TII Plan is designed to provide this access to students while they are on campus. However, SIP, supported by growing evidence, believes that the time has arrived when every CSU student should have in his or her personal possession the resources to be able to access learning information resources from anywhere, at anytime. The current profile of the CSU student suggests they spend significantly more time off campus than on during the week.

Based on the work of SIP over the past year and the work of the Student Team since July the personal resource access requirements for CSU students include:

- A CSU standards-based, *fast, reliable personal computer system equipped with a modern operating system that supports the productivity and communication software* required for students to perform the tasks described in Appendix A;
- *CSU-wide standards-based core suite of software*. The basic productivity and communication software and tools are essential for universal collaboration, information sharing and workflow;

- Access to a *telecommunications infrastructure* that supports the communication and collaboration tools required for students to perform the tasks described in Appendix A, *from anywhere at anytime*; and,
- *Operations and support services* to maintain these sophisticated systems and to directly support students, no matter the time of the day or their location.

THE STUDENT PIRK

As a result of extensive planning by SIP, the Student Team has been able to map out an initial Student-PIRK. Before the PIRK is finalized, the Student Team feels there needs to be input and extensive discussion with students across the 23 campuses. Using surveys, focus groups and educational forums, the Student Team's goal is to have a CSU Student-PIRK that can begin to be implemented systemwide starting Fall, 1999.

The following represents the initial thinking as to the components that might be included in the Student-PIRK:

Personal Computer System

It is believed every CSU student should own or have 24-hour access to a personal computer that is CSU standards compliant. CSU standard basic personal computers include:

- W98/NT
- MAC

As students progress in their academic pursuits in certain academic disciplines they may find it necessary to access high-end W98/NT or UNIX-based computers. In these instances, students will either purchase their own or have access via special laboratories provided by the academic unit.

For those students who cannot afford to purchase or lease their own personal desktop computer, the ITS-TII Plan calls for all CSU campuses to provide 24-hour access via on-campus general computing laboratories. The ITS-TII plan targets providing one computer per 25 students in these labs.

In addition, the ITS-TII Plan has a student loaner program. Currently, the Plan calls for approximately 3400 computers to loan, or enough for one percent of the CSU student enrollment. The loaner program would be for students who can clearly demonstrate they can not afford to purchase a personal computer and they cannot get to campus to use the on-campus facilities.

The basic desktop computer system for institutional uses is estimated to cost between \$1500-1800. The Student Team believes the goal should be to enable CSU students to acquire a basic desktop system for personal ownership for less than \$1000 outright purchase or \$365 per year for a three-year lease/purchase.

Core Software Suite

Every CSU student should have the CSU standard core suite of software installed on his/her own personal computer. As updates to this core software suite are made available for institution-owned machines, students should also receive the new version. This will insure that students are always able to access the learning and information resources important to their learning experience in the CSU.

Currently, the CSU standard core software suite is comprised of:

- Microsoft Suite
- Web browser-Internet Explorer or Netscape
- Other software (to be determined)

This core software suite is estimated to cost between \$500-1000 outright purchase per unit, at academic prices.

Network Access

In addition to on-campus access to networked resources, an increasing percentage of CSU students already require 24-hour access to these resources from off-campus. SIP believes that all students need such access, given that the vast majority do not live on or near campus. Remote access provides students the opportunity to carry out a portion of their learning experience via the network. Thus, the Student Team thinks the Student-PIRK should include the provision for dial-in service to access on-campus and Internet information resources.

Currently, some of the campuses provide their students limited dial-in access from off-campus. These costs are borne by the campus IT budgets. In addition, some campuses have arranged for a commercial Internet Service Provider (ISP) to provide students access for \$12-\$20 per month or \$200 per academic year.

The Student Team's initial goal is to have these services provided at a basic level at the lowest possible cost.

Support Services and Training

SIP and the Student Team agree that CSU students need access to help desk, related support services and training. Again, the nature of the CSU students requires that these services be available from remote locations on a 24-hour basis. The initial

Student-PIRK includes providing the CSU students with access to call center/help desk from anywhere, at anytime.

The commercial cost of providing such services might be as high as \$240 per year.

WHO PAYS? WHO BENEFITS?

To be developed later this year

IMPLEMENTATION PLANNING

The Student Team recognized that they have been speaking for themselves only and as a team of hired consultants and did not represent any group, campus, or the CSU student population generally. They therefore recommended that a scientific, representative sample of students be chosen as respondents in a systemwide survey, which would address all aspects of computing and network resources for students.

The Social and Behavioral Research Institute (SBRI) at CSU San Marcos was chosen to develop and administer the study with advice and input from the Student Team. The SBRI is staffed with professional sociologists, statisticians, programmers and interviewers, and has conducted scores of such surveys over the past several years.

A four-phase approach is planned for this academic year:

Phase One

The developmental phase includes questionnaire design and testing and creation of rigorous sampling procedures. The Student Team has been an active participant in submitting and revising items for the questionnaire, and campus Institutional Research Directors will be asked to assist in the process of drawing the sample. Sample sizes will be large enough to permit drawing statistical inferences within acceptable error ranges. Over-sampling may be done for certain campuses to test more accurately for sub-population variations.

Phase Two

Phase Two is the actual administration of the survey by telephone to approximately 3,000 randomly selected CSU students. All campuses and all student levels will be included. The phone interviews will last approximately 10-15 minutes, depending on the length and complexity of the final questionnaire.

Questionnaire items will probe student knowledge of, attitudes toward, and uses of information technology, including but not limited to: the proposed Personal

Information Resources Kit (PIRK); hardware, software and network access; user training and support services; and, a potential student technology fee.

Phase Three

Phase three involves data analysis, report writing, and presentation of the findings to systemwide constituencies.

Phase Four

Phase four is optional at this point. Depending on the nature and interpretation of the survey results, it may be necessary to convene student focus groups to lend greater detail to certain findings or even anomalies in the data. These would be purposive samples, one day in length, and held in regional sites around the state.

In addition to these sources of student input, the Student Team has recommended that a series of "education forums" be offered to the Associated Students on all the campuses. The results of these forums would be made available to student groups throughout the system.