

CAMPUS TECHNOLOGY PLAN

Norco Campus
Riverside Community College District
Approved by Resources Subcommittee
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INTRODUCTION

The Riverside Community College District Norco Campus was established in 1991. Since its inception, the Norco Campus has been identified as the District's "Technology Campus". This designation is based, in part, on the location of the campus in close proximity to the growth corridor along Interstate Highways 10 and 15 and State Route 91, as well as the nature of the curriculum offered at Norco, which includes technology-intensive programs in computer science, manufacturing, logistics, architecture, engineering and construction management.

By its very nature, the "Technology Campus" moniker implies a high degree of investment and reinvestment in information infrastructure, including machinery, hardware and software, as well as the human resources necessary to design, install, monitor and maintain such technology. In order to retain and enhance its status as a technology campus, Norco must continually seek out and acquire new technology central to its mission while maintaining a high level of currency among its existing technology inventory and support personnel. Strategic planning is paramount to this imperative. On an ongoing basis, the environment must be scanned to identify new and emerging technologies with potential applicability to higher education; resources must be sought out, acquired and allocated toward maintenance of the campus' technology infrastructure and faculty and support staff must undergo continual retraining to ensure that their skill set keeps pace with rapidly changing industry standards.

This Technology Plan represents the culmination of a multi-year effort geared toward identifying and assessing the current state of Norco's instructional and non-instructional technology infrastructure, enhancing campus technology and establishing mechanisms for ensuring that technology at Norco is kept up-to-date in an institutional context of limited resource availability. Over the past several years, the Riverside Community College District has established minimum standards for instructional technology and has incorporated these standards into its new and renovated buildings and classrooms. Norco Campus has compiled an inventory of its instructional and non-instructional equipment accompanied by estimates of replacement costs and has developed a multi-year financial planning model that incorporates set-aside funds for equipment replacement. Further, using funds from state and local bond measures, Title V and a variety of other sources, the campus has invested several million dollars in new technology, including computer gaming and advanced manufacturing labs, audio recording facilities, digital art and music laboratories. Finally, based on the District's total cost of ownership model, staffing levels in support of instructional technology have been upgraded.

The purpose of this planning document is to codify the Campus' approach to technology planning in the form of goals, objectives and implementation measures geared toward fostering and enhancing Norco's mission as Riverside Community College District's "Technology Campus". The plan addresses numerous issues, including establishment and maintenance of technology standards, acquisition of new technology, maintaining and replacing the campus' technology infrastructure, identifying resources for the support of campus technology and integrating technology planning into the overall Campus and District strategic planning framework.

NORCO CAMPUS MISSION STATEMENT

Norco Campus provides educational programs, services, and learning environments for a diverse community. We equip our students with the knowledge and skills to attain their goals in higher, career/technical, and continuing education; workforce development; and personal enrichment. To meet the evolving community needs, Norco Campus emphasizes the development of technological programs. As a continuing process we listen to our community and respond to its needs while engaging in self-examination, learning outcomes assessment, ongoing dialogue, planning, and improvement.

TECHNOLOGY STANDARDS

In 2006, the Riverside Community College District established standards for instructional technology to be implemented at all of its campuses and educational centers. These standards have been incorporated into the design of all new and renovated Norco Campus buildings and classrooms. The goals and objectives below are intended to ensure that Norco continues to adhere to District technology standards while providing enhancements sufficient to retain its standing as the District's "Technology Campus".

Goal 1 – Maintain District technology standards in all instructional and instructional support facilities and provide enhancements beyond these minimum standards in keeping with Norco's designation as the District's "Technology Campus".

Objective 1.1 – Incorporate District standards augmented by campus-generated technology enhancements into all new and renovated buildings and classrooms.

Objective 1.2 – By 2015 the campus will transition from DVD to video streaming in all classrooms.

Objective 1.3 – On an ongoing basis, the campus will explore and implement online delivery mechanisms for assessment, advising, tutorial and other student support services.

Implementation Measure: Investments in instructional and instructional support technology will be focused on achieving Objectives 1.1 – 1.3 above.

ACQUISITION OF NEW TECHNOLOGY

Over the past several years, Norco Campus has been successful in acquiring technological enhancements in support of many of its instructional and instructional support programs. Examples of such acquisitions include the computer gaming and simulation laboratory and advanced manufacturing laboratory contained in the Instructional Technology Building that opened in fall 09; presentation technologies included in the new IT building as well as the Student Success Center planned for completion in fall 10; establishment of a digital audio recording studio and interactive piano laboratory, both of which opened in fall 09; acquisition of portable wireless laptop computer labs for use by student services and instructional support personnel; and planning for an integrated learning resource center equipped with the latest in instructional support technology, scheduled for completion in 2011. Collectively, these enhancements represent well over \$ 10 million in investment that has been made over the past three years. For a technology campus, however, acquisition of new technology is a continuous process necessitating the establishment and execution of goals and objectives designed to maintain the campus' competitive edge with regard to instructional and instructional support technology.

Goal 2 – Continue to acquire and install new instructional and instructional support technologies geared toward retaining Norco's status as Riverside Community College District's "Technology Campus".

Objective 2.1 – Led by the Technology Work Group of the Strategic Planning Resources Subcommittee, the campus will engage in continuous environmental scanning in an effort to identify the latest technological innovations that have application for its academic and career-transfer programs.

Objective 2.2 – As existing technology reaches the end of its usable life-cycle, replace it with new technology to ensure that the campus' students have access to current applications being utilized in transfer institutions and the workplace.

Objective 2.3 – Ensure that faculty and support staff receive adequate training and professional development in order that they retain currency in their fields of technological expertise.

Implementation Measure: Incorporate Objectives 2.1 – 2.3 above into planning for new and renovated facilities and the preparation of annual and multi-year budgets.

MAINTENANCE/REPLACEMENT OF INSTRUCTIONAL AND INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT TECHNOLOGY

In August, 2009, Norco Campus completed a comprehensive inventory of its instructional and non-instructional equipment. As part of this process, the campus categorized technology users in accordance with computer replacement guidelines that were established in fall 2007. In essence, computer users at Norco were classified as either “standard users” or “performance users”. Equipment utilized by standard users (approximately 90 percent of the campus inventory) was placed on a four-year replacement cycle while performance user equipment was placed on a three-year cycle. Based on these classifications and on the age and condition of equipment contained in the technology inventory, annual replacement costs from 2008/09 to 2019/20 were estimated. Total replacement costs for this 12-year period were estimated at approximately \$ 5.8 million, representing an annual reinvestment in the order of \$ 483,000. These costs include computers (55 percent of all equipment), audio-visual equipment (14 percent), copiers and fax machines (4 percent) and miscellaneous (27 percent).

Norco’s goal and objectives with regard to technology maintenance and replacement are designed to facilitate timely and systematic replacement of instructional and non-instructional technology. By proceeding in this manner the campus can minimize the potential for its technology inventory to deteriorate as a result of underinvestment or deferred maintenance and replacement. Given the magnitude of the investment required to maintain the existing campus technology infrastructure while continuing to acquire new technology in accordance with Goal 2, it is essential that the campus plan for significant annual investments in technology.

Goal 3 – Endeavor to ensure that the Campus’ technology inventory is maintained by replacing equipment in accordance with the equipment inventory and computer replacement guidelines.

Objective 3.1 – Maintain an updated inventory of campus technology by revising the inventory report on a biennial basis.

Objective 3.2 – Upon replacing equipment utilized by performance users, re-allocate replaced equipment to standard users employing technology whose useful life has expired.

Objective 3.3 – When planning new or renovated instructional and instructional support facilities, assess the impact of new technology acquisition on the campus’ overall technology inventory and the feasibility of replacing technology in accordance with established estimates of usable life.

Implementation Measure – The Technology Work Group of the campus Strategic Planning Technology Subcommittee, assisted by support staff in Information Services and the Instructional Media Center, is charged with overseeing implementation of Objectives 3.1 – 3.3.

RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT IN SUPPORT OF CAMPUS TECHNOLOGY PLAN

The most vexing challenge associated with implementation of the campus technology plan centers on the identification and acquisition of sufficient human and financial resources to maintain the campus' technology inventory while continually adopting new technologies. Because of structural characteristics inherent to the manner in which California community colleges are financed, all of these institutions are faced with the challenge of keeping their technology up-to-date; this dilemma is enhanced for campuses such as Norco, that have technology as a central emphasis.

In general, California community colleges derive the vast majority of their finances from state apportionment revenue, which tends to fluctuate in inverse proportion to the state economy, i.e., potential resource availability is highest when the economy is strong and, conversely, community college enrollments are weak. Since the vast majority of new resources available from the state are contingent upon enrollment growth, colleges often leave potential new revenue "on the table" due to their inability to increase enrollments during peaks in the economic cycle. During economic downturns, by contrast, community college enrollments are exceedingly high while state funding availability is receding. Even in the best of times, funds available to community colleges for instructional and non-instructional equipment are insufficient to meet their needs for timely replacement of technology. At best, Norco can count on no more than \$ 150,000 annually from the state instructional equipment block grant and even less for non-instructional equipment. Thus, by necessity, significant investment from the general fund is required. Even campuses that augment their equipment funding with general fund dollars can find themselves well short of the amount necessary to maintain their existing equipment inventory, let alone to allow for investment in new technologies.

Consequently, California community colleges that fail to plan adequately for technology replacement and to identify and acquire financial support from non-state sources find themselves in a continual state of "catch-up" with regard to technology. Thus, eternal vigilance is demanded in an ongoing quest for technology funding support. In addition to sources such as the state instructional equipment block grant and the district general fund, Norco has drawn from the following sources to develop financial support for technology enhancement:

State and Local Bond Funding: Norco's new Industrial Technology building was funded through a combination of state and local (Measure C) bond funding. Similarly, Measure C funds will be utilized for instructional and instructional support technology included in the Student Success Center and the Secondary Effects Projects associated with completion of the Industrial Technology and Student Success buildings. While bond funding is an essential source for technology enhancement, its utility is limited in that it can only be used for new equipment associated with the construction of a new building or the renovation of existing facilities. Investments of this nature, while essential to enabling the college to acquire new technologies (Goal 2), nonetheless have the effect of *adding to* the campus' overall equipment inventory, thereby *increasing* replacement costs and exacerbating the institution's challenges with regard

to maintenance of technology (Goal 3). It is essential, therefore, that the campus remain cognizant of this dynamic and that efforts are made to ensure that the impact of technology acquisition associated with the construction of new facilities or the renovation of existing ones on the campus' overall equipment inventory is taken into consideration. Ideally, existing technology that becomes redundant or underutilized as a result of new facilities construction or renovation should be taken offline in an effort to mitigate the impact of these facilities enhancements on long-term equipment replacement budgets (Objective 3.3).

Federal and State Grants and Initiatives: The federal Title V program and the state Basic Skills Initiative have provided significant financial support toward the enhancement of technology at Norco in recent years. Funds from the Title V Cooperative Grant were allocated toward the creation of the new digital audio recording studio and have been earmarked for the purchase of digital video technology. A newly acquired Title V grant provides substantial resources for the enhancement of technology and the professional development of faculty and staff in the computer gaming and simulation and other career-technical programs. Funds from the state Basic Skills Initiative were allocated toward purchase of mobile laptop computer carts for the reading and writing lab. Collectively, these sources have contributed several hundred thousand dollars to technology enhancement at Norco over the past three-to-five years.

Contract Education: Although the Riverside Community College District's contract education program is operated as a district program, for the past several months Norco has been working to establish partnerships by which the campus would provide contract training for employers while securing financial support for technology acquisition in return. While these efforts have yet to yield tangible, measurable results, they are illustrative of the type of entrepreneurial thinking that must be employed by community colleges in order to address the challenge of keeping their technology up-to-date.

Foundation Grants and Private Contributions: Another avenue currently being pursued by Norco Campus is the identification and solicitation of funding support from applicable private and public foundations, individuals and corporate contributors. In 2007, the campus received a \$ 100,000 donation from the Griffin Construction Company to be used toward establishment of a construction technology demonstration program. The campus has grant application requests pending with the California Arts Council, Bank of America, and the National Endowment for the Arts and is researching other entities as potential sources of support for campus technology.

Goal 4 – Utilize mid- and long-range budget planning and resource development to provide adequate support for technology maintenance, replacement and enhancement.

Objective 4.1 – Set aside \$ 150,000 annually from the anticipated \$ 1.4 million ongoing budget augmentation associated with achieving accreditation as a college for replacement of equipment and software.

Objective 4.2 – Led by the Financial Resources Working Group of the campus Strategic Planning Resources Subcommittee assisted by the Associate Dean for Student Success and the District Grants Office, the campus will identify and pursue sources of funding support for technology acquisition, replacement and enhancement.

Implementation Measure: Through a combination of state block grant funding, general fund resources, state and federal grants, campus-based contract education initiatives and solicitation of foundation and private party support, the campus will endeavor to generate \$ 500,000 annually for maintenance and replacement of existing technology and acquisition of new technology.

TECHNOLOGY PLANNING

Norco has incorporated technology planning into its strategic planning structures and processes in a number of ways. Preparation of the campus technology plan and oversight of technology plan implementation is assigned to the Technology Work Group of the Strategic Planning Resources Subcommittee. Thus, from an organizational standpoint, technology planning is integrated into the campus strategic planning framework. Further, information gleaned from the campus equipment inventory is taken into consideration in the formulation of annual budgets and, more importantly, the campus' mid-range financial plan, which forecasts expenditures for staffing, equipment and the like over a five-year period. Finally, just as planning and budgeting for instructional and non-instructional staffing and operational costs occurs as part of a continuous cycle, technology planning is also ongoing, with inventories, cost estimates and strategic objectives updated on a regular basis.

Goal 5: Engage in a continuous cycle of technology planning that it is integrated with the campus' overall strategic planning and budgeting structures and processes.

Objective 5.1 – Continue to employ total cost of ownership principles in planning for new facilities construction and replacement/renovation of existing facilities to ensure that sufficient resources are available for staffing support and replacement and upgrading of technology.

Objective 5.2 – Revise the campus technology plan on a three-year cycle.

CONCLUSION

Achieving and maintaining the status of a “Technology Campus” takes more than a mere declaration. Although the Norco Campus has carried this moniker almost since its inception it has only been in recent years that the campus has fully comprehended and embraced the degree of planning, and the commitment of time, energy and resources necessary to earn and retain the title. As a result of these efforts, Norco can now proudly point to its new Industrial Technology building, its recently established instructional programs in the technologically intensive fields of computer gaming and simulation and commercial music, the steps that have been taken toward technology enhancement in the area of supplemental instruction and student support and the substantial investment that has been made in replacing antiquated technology with new hardware, software and equipment.

The Norco Campus recognizes that in order to continue and to build upon the efforts that have been made thus far a sustained, integrated approach including strategic planning, environmental scanning, inventory assessment, budget forecasting and resource development is essential. This plan sets forth the conceptual framework within which these efforts are expected to occur.