SACS Core Requirement 3.4.12

3.4.12 - Technology Use

The institution’s use of technology enhances student learning and is appropriate for meeting the objectives of its programs. Students have access to and training in the use of technology.

Judgment of Compliance

☑ In Compliance

Rationale for Judgment of Compliance

I. Enhancing Student Learning

Chipola College is committed to enhancing student learning through the use of technology. Visual and auditory learning are enhanced through the use of instructional multi-media technology. LCD projectors, computers, sound systems, and DVD/VCR combos are installed in over 55 instructional facilities ([1]). Instructors’ office computers are loaded with the same core software found on each of the multi-media computers. In addition, shared network drives and instructors’ home folders are accessible at each station. On the Graduating Student Questionnaire for 2005-2006 (question #27) ([2]), 98% of the respondents indicated classroom multimedia presentations were helpful to some degree. Eighty-six percent (86%) of employees responding to the 2005-2006 Chipola College Employee Survey ([3]) either agreed or strongly agreed that computers and other technology are improving instruction and lab support for students (item #50). Two percent (2%) disagreed, and 12% responded with not applicable/don’t know.

Visual, auditory, and kinesthetic learning are also enhanced through computer labs located throughout the Chipola College campus ([4]). Individual computer labs are customized with hardware and software appropriate to the curriculum offered within each specific department. The Information Technology Center, located within the college library, offers a broad range of commonly-used software in an open-lab setting.

In addition to local computer resources, many online resources are available to enhance student learning. Ninety-six (96) online databases are accessible via the Library Information Network for Community Colleges (LINCCWeb) ([5]). Syllabi,
supplemental worksheets, quizzes, and classroom presentations are available via faculty web pages. Desire2Learn, an online course management system, is scheduled to go online in the summer of 2007. In addition, many textbook publishers provide online resources that are accessible via the World Wide Web. Chipola provides 15 mbps of Internet bandwidth to support online access. Average Internet daily usage rarely exceeds 8mbps (6).

II. Appropriateness for Meeting Objectives of Programs

In order to begin meeting program objectives, appropriate technology must be provided to those who are responsible for delivering the curriculum to the students. Ninety-two percent (92%) of employees responding to the 2005-2006 Chipola College Employee Survey (item #48) (3) indicated they agreed or strongly agreed that appropriate technology is provided for them to do their jobs. Only eight percent (8%) disagreed.

Another indicator of appropriateness is student opinion. Ninety-four percent (94%) of students responding to Section Eight of the 2005-2006 Graduating Student Questionnaire were either very satisfied or satisfied with the quality of classrooms and labs at Chipola. Likewise, 91% of respondents were either very satisfied or satisfied with the quality of equipment used for instruction (2).

To continue meeting program objectives, appropriate funding for technology must be provided. In 2005-2006, Chipola College reported over $700,000 in technology-related expenditures (7). Of the 91 microcomputers purchased in 2005-2006, 80 were classified instructional (8).

Obviously, spending alone does not guarantee appropriateness. Two college committees are tasked with addressing technology and appropriate resources for programs. The Computing and Telecommunications Committee (CTC) serves as the planning committee for technology on campus (9). The Instructional Resources Committee exists to coordinate and evaluate services structured to enhance the students’ learning experience (10). Membership on both committees is representative of the college constituency.

Chipola College labs are each configured to meet the needs of the instructional curriculum which they support. As stated previously, individual computer labs are customized with hardware and software appropriate to the curriculum offered within each specific department (4).

Technology can only be considered appropriate if it is functional. Some key elements employed to ensure system functionality are listed below.

- Up-to-date antivirus software is installed on all networked computers.
- Critical systems are covered by warranty or maintenance contracts.
- Internal network is protected by an industry-standard firewall appliance.
- Student and employee data files are backed-up daily.
• Help Desk support is available via phone and e-mail.
• Experienced/trained technicians are on staff.
• Disk images of all lab computers are kept on file.
• Network traffic is monitored daily for anomalies/abuse.
• Uninterruptible power systems and surge protection are in use.
• Employees participate in appropriate software licensing programs such as the Microsoft Campus Agreement and the MSDN Academic Alliance Program.

All employees are required to read and sign IMM #29, Chipola College Network, Internet and Lab Use Acceptable Use Procedure ([11]). Likewise, when students log onto the campus network, they are presented with an electronic version of IMM#29. The students must electronically “accept” the procedure before he or she is allowed to continue.

III. Ensuring Student Access and Training

Technology is woven into the fabric of most course offerings. According to the September, 2006 Edition of the Chipola FACTS (area 6, item #1) ([12]), “Course syllabi show that 80% of General Education core courses include technology components.” In order to facilitate access to technology, all students enrolling at Chipola automatically receive a student network account and personal network home folder.

Students lacking entry-level computer skills may enroll in CGS 1060, Introduction to Microcomputer Use. Multiple sections are offered each fall and spring semester ([13a]; [13b]). CGS 1060 or its equivalent may be required for entry into several instructional programs. In addition, some state universities also require completion of a computer literacy prerequisite prior to transfer.

Students are exposed to technology and associated training through many different campus venues. First, incoming freshmen are instructed in the use of FACTS.org during orientation. In order to view semester grades, students must use the online transcript feature of FACTS.org. FACTS.org provides many other helpful features for Florida students ([14]) including degree audits and career counseling. Second, instructors may require their classes to attend library research training offered in the campus library. Attending students receive instruction on the use of library resources, including a vast array of online databases. Third, students and employees have access to the college Help Desk via phone, e-mail or walk-in ([15]). Several informational brochures are available via the Help Desk for students and employees alike. In addition, two of the college’s busiest labs, the Information Technology Center and the Math Lab, are staffed with student assistants during operating hours.

One indicator of students’ exposure to technology can be found in the Evaluation of Technology section of the 2005-2006 Graduating Student Questionnaire (items #25 and
When asked to assess their computer literacy level at the point they first entered Chipola, 82% of the respondents indicated they were very computer literate or fairly computer literate. Twelve percent (12%) indicated they possessed beginning skills, while six percent (6%) indicated they were not familiar/comfortable with computers at all. Conversely, when asked to assess their computer literacy level at the point they left Chipola, 97% indicated they were either very computer literate or fairly computer literate. Three percent (3%) indicated they possessed beginning skills.

Documentation:

[1] Projectors-Summary


[4] Lab Inventory

[5] Databases to Which Chipola Currently has LINCCWEB Access


[7] ERPM Comparison Chart


[9] Computing and Telecommunications Committee (Membership, Purpose, Tasks)

[10] Instructional Resources Committee (Membership, Purpose, Tasks)


[13b] Chipola College website - Schedules
Florida Academic Counseling & Tracking of Students - FACTS

Chipola College website - Information Systems Help Desk