



Strategic Planning Initiative

Current State Assessment Team

Draft Interim Report

July 29, 2002 Revision

Office of the Chief Information Officer

The Ohio State University



DRAFT

Current State Assessment Interim Report

Current State Assessment Team

Draft Interim Report

Table of Contents

Introduction	v
Executive Summary	1
Recommendations	2
Information Technology Current State Support for the Academic Plan	4
Strategy: Build a World-Class Faculty	4
Strategy: Develop Academic Programs That Define Ohio State as the Nation's Leading Public Land-Grant University	5
Strategy: Enhance the Quality of the Teaching and Learning Environment	6
Strategy: Enhance and Better Serve the Student Body	10
Strategy: Create a Diverse University Community	11
Strategy: Help Build Ohio's Future	11
Conclusion	12

Appendices:

Note: Except as noted below, appendices are currently being put up online at <http://cio.ohio-state.edu/planit/>

A. Reanalysis of End User Access Assessment Project Data

Current State Assessment Interim Report

B. Reanalysis of Research Computing Advisory Committee/Office of Research

Principal Investigator Survey 2001

C. Analysis of 2002 OSU Poll Information Technology Questions

- a. **Report & Questions**
- b. **Frequencies and Cross-Tabulation Results**
- c. **Responses to Open-ended Questions**
- d. **Survey Data SPSS Save Set**

D. Analysis of PlanIT OSU User Technology Satisfaction and Needs Survey

- a. **Methodology**
- b. **Undergraduate Student Survey**
- c. **Graduate/Professional Student Survey**
- d. **Faculty Survey**
- e. **Staff Survey**
- f. **Questions**
- g. **Frequencies and Cross-Tabulation Results**
- h. **Responses to Open-ended Questions**
- i. **Survey Data SPSS Save Set**

E. Analysis of PlanIT OSU Administrator Satisfaction & Needs Survey

**F. Analysis of OSU Alumni Technology Perception and Career Effectiveness
Survey**

Current State Assessment Interim Report

G. University-wide Technology Resources

H. Analysis of PlanIT Academic Unit Technology Infrastructure Questionnaires

I. Analysis of PlanIT Administrative Unit Technology Infrastructure Questionnaires

J. Technology Facts, Office of the CIO web publication at <http://cio.ohio-state.edu/policies/ITfactsheet.html>

K. Information Technology Guide to Services, Office of Information Technology publication, web version available at <http://www.oit.ohio-state.edu/guide/02spguide.pdf>

L. Central Technology Infrastructure

a. Telecommunications

i. UNITS

ii. SONNET

b. Enterprise Server

c. PeopleSoft Systems

M. The TELR web site at <http://telr.ohio-state.edu/>

N. OSU Policy on Responsible Use of University Computing Resources at http://www.cio.ohio-state.edu/policies/use_policy.html

Current State Assessment Interim Report

Introduction

The PlanIT Current State Assessment Team is a small working group from areas of the Offices of the Chief Information Officer (CIO) and the Office of Human Resources Organization and Human Resource Development unit. The CIO areas involved are the Office of Information Technology, Technology Enhanced Learning and Research, and Emerging Technologies.

The team's goal has been to assess and characterize The Ohio State University's Information Technology environment through a discovery process. We worked to understand the Ohio State community's information technology strengths, needs, and directions in the context of the Academic Plan.

The data and analyses from this effort will serve a number of purposes during the planning process. It will:

- Provide the PlanIT Visioning, Gap Analysis, and Writing teams a basis for planning.
- Show the extent and depth of Ohio State's foundation.
- Lay out the starting point for future progress.

The results will also help the campus community to better understand its information technology environment.

We gathered our information on current state issues in a number of ways. First, to conserve resources and get a head start on the process, we decided to build on the foundation developed during several recent university-wide studies. We obtained and reanalyzed the information technology infrastructure data and reports from the End User Access Assessment project, a large and lengthy project with broad campus-wide academic and administrative participation. In addition, we examined the results of the university's Y2K Risk Remediation project. We also obtained and reanalyzed responses from a recent survey of Principal Investigators conducted by the Research Computing Advisory Committee and the Office of Research.

For the past nine years the Office of the CIO and its predecessor organizations have commissioned questions as a part of the annual OSU Poll conducted by the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences' Center for Survey Research. The OSU Poll accepts



D R A F T

Current State Assessment Interim Report

questions from on and off campus clients and reports results for faculty, staff, undergraduate student, and graduate/professional student populations. We used relevant information technology portions of the poll data to help develop our current state picture.

To gauge user satisfaction with Ohio State's information technology environment, we commissioned a new survey from the Center for Survey Research using the OSU Poll methodology and population groups. This survey complemented the OSU Poll questions but at greater depth. Again, to conserve resources, we worked with the PlanIT Visioning Team to include additional questions intended to help develop a picture of the future state in this current state survey.

We also used the Zoomerang survey tool to conduct surveys of OSU administrators and OSU Alumni. Zoomerang is an easy-to-use web-based tool used by the Office of Information Technology's Partnership Management group to gather information on issues with the PeopleSoft systems. The administrator survey differed from the staff component of the PlanIT staff survey in that it was directed at a small group of highly placed administrative staff members and crafted to obtain information on an organizational rather than personal level. The alumni survey collected information from recent graduates on their perceptions of the technology environment from their student time at Ohio State and their perceptions of how the university's technology environment during their student days affects their current careers. University Development and the OSU Alumni Association assisted this effort by providing the sample of alumni for contact.

University Resource Management and Institutional Analysis and OSU Human Resources Management Information Analysis and Reporting provided the data we needed to develop a profile of campus IT resources and staffing. In addition, OIT staff provided information to characterize the central infrastructure. Finally, faculty and staff from the university's colleges, departments, centers, and offices worked to provide information on IT infrastructure, support, strategies, drivers, processes, and environments from their academic and administrative units through interviews and questionnaires.

Detailed information on each of our assessment tools and an analysis of the results obtained with the tool are available in the appendices. All appendices are online at <http://cio.ohio-state.edu/planit> with as much of the source data in analyzable format as possible. This should allow the campus community to independently reanalyze the data to drill down in areas of interest for a more refined or specific analysis. The current state data covers the Columbus campus, including the Research Foundation, and the Lima, Mansfield, Marion, Newark, and Wooster campuses. The Ohio Supercomputer Center, OARNet, and the University Medical Center are not covered except where random samples of campus community members would have included their faculty, staff, or students affiliates. The Ohio Supercomputer Center and OARNet, while administered



D R A F T

Current State Assessment Interim Report

through Ohio State, are funded by the Ohio Board of Regents to provide statewide services. The University Medical Center is engaged in its own planning activities and preferred not to participate in the PlanIT process.

At this point with the interim report, data collection from colleges, departments, centers, and offices is about half complete and is still ongoing. Data will be added as we continue and will be reflected in later revisions of this report. In addition, fiscal data for FY02 will be added after final close in fall of this year. Also, benchmarking activities to compare various components of the Ohio State's current state with comparable and leading institutions are ongoing and material will be added in later drafts.

We want to thank the dozens of university community members who assisted us in this effort as well as the thousands who responded to our questions in the OSU Poll and to the survey conducted by the Center for Survey Research on our behalf. While reviewing the report, we encourage you to examine the assessment tool analyses and source data available through the appendices, especially the analyses of the User Satisfaction and Needs Survey and the 2002 OSU Poll Technology Question Results. There is a wealth of information and what you see may well lead you toward a greater understanding of both Ohio State's amazingly diverse information technology environment and the Ohio State community's perception of that environment. Each trip through the open-ended responses to the various surveys has brought us surprises, understanding, and inspiration.

The PlanIT Current State Assessment Team:

Bob Kalal, Office of the Chief Information Officer
Sandi Li, Office of Information Technology
Don Chenoweth, Office of Human Resources
Cathy Bindewald, Office of the Chief Information Officer
Ed Quinn, Office of Information Technology
Nagasiva Prasad, Office of the Chief Information Officer
Diane Owens, Office of Information Technology
Catherine Gynn, Technology Enhanced Learning & Research

Current State Assessment Interim Report

Executive Summary

The current state assessment studies reveal a campus that is generally satisfied with its information technology environment and services. However, that satisfaction is often tempered with a lack of information about what is possible with today's technology and from lowered expectations based on a history of under-resourced technology support. The Ohio State University's information technology infrastructure is sound and is meeting most needs. However, it is not fully positioned or resourced to optimally support either the current state or foreseeable future states. University community members, while satisfied overall, want to become better-trained and able users of simple and easily accessible information technology. The community wants information technology to support what it is that they do on a daily basis in a transparent, reliable, and effective manner. Ohio State's most important information technology resources, the information technology support staff members across campus, form a motivated, able, and effective group. But they feel a need for better training, better tools, and more resources to meet the university community's needs.

In fiscal year 2001, the university spent almost \$110 million in general funds to support information technology, not including expenses at the University Medical Center. This amounts to about 7% of Ohio State's fiscal 2001 overall budgeted expenditures, again exclusive of the Medical Center. Just less than half of the resource was used for information technology staff compensation and benefits. Of the total, about a third was spent for central information technology support and facilities. The other two-thirds were spent by distributed academic units and administrative support units. A third of the amount spent by distributed units was spent on cost-recovery services provided by central information technology units. Of the distributed total direct college expenses amounted to almost \$35 million.

The university's information technology expenditures are made in a highly decentralized environment. Resource decisions are generally locally optimized and reasonable to support unit goals. However, the university pays a price for local optimization. Opportunities for university-wide economies of scale in areas such as hardware and software purchases, collaborative storage systems, or sharing of critical skills are missed. While there are excellent examples of cross-unit collaboration and sharing such as the Web Media Collective, the overall situation is troublesome in an environment where support staff consistently report that their efforts are under-resourced.

Much of the university's information technology support community is distributed in colleges, departments and offices about the institution. This distributed support community often feels that university technology is characterized by a division not into "haves" and "have nots", but into "have-nots" and "have-a-lot-leses." For example, in the areas of instructional technology, colleges able to charge Ohio State's major-based student technology fees feel more able to meet student needs, though they do report

Current State Assessment Interim Report

shortfalls. Colleges without technology fees and with heavy service course loads are particularly hard-pressed to meet basic student needs. Academic units in disciplines where computing needs can be included in grant funding feel more able to support researchers' needs, though they also report shortfalls. Academic units in disciplines where computing cannot be included in research funding feel quite hard-pressed to meet researchers' needs.

There are historic roots for the wide variation in both the level and sophistication of information technology support in colleges, departments, and research areas. In addition to the variations introduced by student technology fees and research funding policy, local choices have given birth to significant variance. Academic units have made locally optimized decisions to invest heavily in technology and support staff, to emphasize research support, or to emphasize instructional support. Not surprisingly, these decisions made in past years partly give rise to the situation today. But history aside, inequities and variances do exist in the current state and do form barriers to the effective use of information technology in university-wide support of research and instruction. The root causes are essentially immaterial to future progress. The existing barriers, regardless of cause, must be addressed if Ohio State is to advance.

Recommendations

Ohio State's information technology environment has many strengths we can leverage to our advantage as we implement the initiatives identified through later phases of the planning process. These core strengths include:

- The talented and committed information technology staff members in both central and distributed units throughout the university
- A solid telecommunications infrastructure with excellent Internet and Internet2 connectivity
- A university community that wants information technology to work and appreciates university efforts to provide and support technology resources
- A commitment to information technology by university administration as evidenced by the key role it plays in the Academic Plan

The current state assessment focused on Ohio State's current information technology environment so as to provide a basis for judging what is needed to move to Ohio State's desired future state. However, while examining the current state, we could not escape identifying a number of barriers and deficiencies affecting Ohio State's ability to support current efforts in an optimal way. These needs and deficiencies speak to both our ability to do what we do now and to our ability to move into the future.

Current State Assessment Interim Report

The needs often expressed and emphasized include:

- A need to complete extending the modern integrated campus-wide high-speed network infrastructure both inside all Ohio State campus facilities and to remote Ohio State facilities to ensure ubiquitous high-speed access
- A need for better, more complete, and more accessible information on campus technology resources and for broader help desk availability
- A need for better campus training resources and opportunities both for the broad university community and for information technology staff
- A need for better coordination between distributed and central IT efforts and staff
- A need for more and better technology resources and support in the university's classrooms

Later phases of the planning process will identify the gaps that must be filled to lead us to Ohio State's desired technology future. However, to provide a solid foundation we recommend that the university address these issues in the near term. Progress on addressing these overall technology, human resource, and organizational issues is needed to ensure basic support for initiatives identified through the PlanIT Future and Gap Analysis processes.

Current State Assessment Interim Report

The Current State and The Academic Plan

Ohio State's Academic Plan provides a roadmap for the university's journey to excellence. It puts forth a vision of Ohio State as among the world's truly great universities advancing the well being of the people of Ohio and the global community through the creation and dissemination of knowledge. And it articulates six strategies with supporting initiatives to move the university toward that vision. The Academic Plan is much broader in scope than the information technology strategic plan. However, information technology plays a critical role in many of the Plan's strategies and initiatives. The information technology strategic plan must support the Academic Plan in all ways relevant to information technology. As such this report emphasizes those aspects of the current state of information technology relevant to the strategies and initiatives of the Academic Plan.

Strategy: Build a World-Class Faculty

The Academic Plan notes that attracting and keeping exceptional faculty members will help us become a great university more than any other single factor. A world-class faculty needs world-class information technology tools and infrastructure. Recruitment and retention of world-class faculty members can be affected by the university's information technology environment. Excellent tools help to draw an excellent workforce.

The assessment tools show that most faculty members rate themselves as average to expert computer users, most feel they are familiar with information technology at Ohio State, and most are satisfied with the information technology resources at the university. Though almost eight out of ten faculty members are satisfied with Ohio State's information technology, faculty as a group are less satisfied than students or staff by five to ten percentage points. While most faculty members report that information technology is important in their work, the majority also report that Ohio State's information technology was not a factor in their coming to the university and is not a factor in their staying. Faculty members do feel that they can effectively use information technology to contribute to their professional development and to collaborate with colleagues and students.

However, beneath the professed overall satisfaction, the tools reveal inconsistent undercurrents. For example only a few faculty would describe Ohio State information technology as "ahead" or "cutting edge" to faculty from another institution. The more likely reply would be "OK", "adequate", "up-to-date" or "pretty good". While these faculty members would like to tell their colleagues in three years that the technology had become easily accessible and easy to use with ample support, some do not see these developments as likely.



D R A F T

Current State Assessment Interim Report

Overall it would appear that the current state of Ohio State information technology is adequate to support and retain current faculty. But it appears to be insufficiently distinctive to entice, develop, or retain substantial numbers of new world-class faculty, particularly as reliance on information technology moves more heavily into instruction and research beyond traditional fields.

For more detail and insight on overall faculty attitudes and concerns consult Appendix C: *Analysis of 2002 OSU Poll Information Technology Questions* and Appendix D: *Analysis of PlanIT OSU User Technology Satisfaction and Needs Survey*.

Strategy: Develop Academic Programs that Define Ohio State as the Nation's Leading Public Land-Grant University

The Academic Plan is designed to move Ohio State into the top tier of America's public research universities. A major strategy will provide enhanced research facilities, develop and support nationally prominent institutes and multidisciplinary centers, and improve research support. This encouragement of frontline research will help to foster academic excellence and will build both the quality and reputation of Ohio State's academic programs.

Modern leading academic programs rely heavily on information technology tools and infrastructure to support cutting edge research and collaborative activities and to enhance research competitiveness. Ohio State's data network, close ties to the Ohio Supercomputer Center, and technology support staff are among the critical information technology components needed to support these programs.

In a survey of sponsored researchers, faculty were concerned about university and college funding and support for their computing activities. They felt the Ohio State environment could be improved by better training, better coordination with the Ohio Supercomputer Center, development of data mining capabilities and expertise, emphasis on virtual reality and visualization, more access to qualified support personnel, more access to information about technology, and more available software, especially for data analysis.

For more detail and insight on faculty attitudes and concerns relevant to support for academic programs and research consult Appendix B: *Analysis of Research Computing Advisory Committee/Office of Research Principal Investigator Survey 2001*, Appendix C: *Analysis of 2002 OSU Poll Information Technology Questions*, and Appendix D: *Analysis of PlanIT OSU User Technology Satisfaction and Needs Survey*. For details on OSU's data network, consult Appendix J: *Central Technology Infrastructure*.

Current State Assessment Interim Report

Strategy: Enhance the Quality of the Teaching and Learning Environment

The quality of the teaching and learning environment is affected by many basic factors such as comfortable and attractive surroundings. It also depends heavily on the availability and accessibility of technology tools, a robust and reliable technology infrastructure, student and faculty support for the use of technology, and easily used administrative academic support systems.

The university's instructional technology infrastructure is quite broad with many diverse components. Technology appropriate for instruction also varies widely by field. This section focuses on several widely applicable resources: technology classrooms, computing lab seats, support for distance and technology-enhanced education, and administrative student information systems. More detail is available through the appendices, especially the user surveys and central and distributed infrastructure descriptions.

Classroom Technology

While all of Ohio State's 325 shared university pool classrooms are connected to the Internet, only 77, with a total of 8,369 seats, are equipped for technology-enhanced instruction. In general these are larger lecture halls and classrooms and are equipped with multimedia projectors, computers, video playback equipment, and audio equipment. A pool of portable equipment scheduled in advance and then picked-up or delivered on instructor request serves technology needs in the remaining 248 central classrooms. Central classroom equipment is generally up-to-date and is regularly replaced and upgraded from university allocations of Ohio Board of Regents Instructional Equipment funds. In addition to the central pool classrooms, college and departments provide and maintain 125 classrooms around campus. The technology environment and network connectivity in these classrooms varies widely depending on available funding and college or department priorities. Equipment, maintenance, and replacement strategies vary by unit but, except in the colleges with student technology fees, most are supported by irregular grant programs and scarce operational funding.

The Office of Information Technology provides an online service with information about shared pool classrooms. The database includes directions to classrooms, rooms, pictures of rooms from the student and instructor view, available technology, and room characteristics. This service helps faculty members prepare to teach in their assigned rooms and to decide what additional technology might be needed. Faculty members can then bring in equipment or schedule it from central, college, or department inventories of

Current State Assessment Interim Report

portable resources. The combination of online information and advance scheduling of portable equipment has provided a cost effective way to support technology in a large pool of classrooms while working with constrained resources. However, faculty members and graduate teaching associates find the process cumbersome and time-consuming. This is especially the case when instructors identify newly available media resources such as late-breaking news video relevant to course content. Both teaching staff and support personnel are continuously concerned about their ability to set up and test portable technology during the brief 12 minute interval between classes. They would much prefer to teach with permanent technology and full network connectivity in all classrooms.

In general, while Ohio State's faculty members use classroom technology and find it effective, they want more technology in more classrooms with more accessibility and more support. Faculty members from colleges with student technology fees report that they feel the lack of ready technology when they teach in facilities outside their colleges. Detail on the faculty and graduate student uses and barriers to use of technology in the classroom is available in the Appendix D: *Analysis of PlanIT OSU User Technology Satisfaction and Needs Survey* and Appendix C: *Analysis of 2002 OSU Poll Information Technology Questions*.

Student Computing Centers and Labs

While the number of both classrooms and computer lab seats varies during most years due to factors such as building renovation and temporary moves, Ohio State has approximately 3,400 computer lab seats for student use. This is over twice the public university average reported in the annual Campus Computing Project survey of 600 institutions. About a quarter of Ohio State's seats are in 20 Student Computer Centers operated by the Office of Information Technology and open to all university community members. The equipment at these seats is replaced every three to four years and is thus reasonably current. The university has regularly provided funding from Ohio State Technology Tuition Set-Aside funds and Ohio Board of Regents Instructional Equipment funds to support a reasonable, if not aggressive, replacement and upgrade schedule. About a third of the computer lab seats are located in student labs run by the two colleges with the highest student technology fees and a total student major enrollment of about 11,000. Equipment in these seats is regularly replaced and upgraded on a more aggressive schedule funded by revenues from the student technology fees. The remaining seats are located in student labs run by the other 21 colleges and regional campuses with a total student major population of 44,000. Depending on the fiscal situation in the operating unit, these seats are replaced and upgraded when finances allow, generally with grant funding or allocations from operating funds.

Current State Assessment Interim Report

Overall, students were satisfied with the student computing centers. Undergraduates were more likely to be satisfied than graduate and professional students. While most students used the labs and centers for 10 or less hours per week, both groups felt a need for more seats and longer hours.

More detail on the student computing center and lab use is available in the Appendix D: *Analysis of PlanIT OSU User Technology Satisfaction and Needs Survey* and Appendix C: *Analysis of 2002 OSU Poll Information Technology Questions*.

Distance and Technology-Enhanced Learning

In addition to technology classrooms and labs, the university's teaching and learning environment includes facilities and support for distance and technology-enhanced learning. In Ohio State's current state these include:

- Central, college, and department WebCT web-based course management servers
- Other instructional support servers
- Support staff to build and maintain technology courseware in collaboration with resources to train faculty and support staff
- Help desks to field student problems and assist users
- The campus data network

Courses enhanced by technology can reach students any time and anywhere at their convenience, can open educational opportunities to a broader student body, can ease problems with large enrollment prerequisite courses, and can provide better access to a broader range of instructional resources.

During Winter Quarter 2002, faculty taught more than 120 courses using the central campus WebCT server to deliver web-based courses to more than 10,000 students. The College of Mathematical and Physical Sciences runs a WebCT server with similar capacity, while several other colleges and regional campuses run smaller servers. The College of Nursing has developed an alternate approach and runs its own server with different software. The university supports faculty efforts with a small central instructional design and production staff including web designers, video experts, and others. Many colleges have also hired staff experts to work with faculty producing instructional technology materials and to provide operational support.

The university has moved quickly to build this infrastructure and now offers one full online degree program, the PharmD or Doctor of Pharmacy, in addition to hundreds of

Current State Assessment Interim Report

individual online or web-enhanced courses. Other online programs available or in development include a bachelor's degree in Business, a web-based master's in Welding Engineering, a Gerontology certification program, and over 20 nursing courses, including all core courses for Nursing masters' degrees. The university has also aggressively pursued opportunities to enhance its position with efforts such as the recent successful pursuit of a Pew Foundation grant to redesign an entry-level statistics course for technology delivery.

Faculty use of instructional technology varies widely. For example, while almost 60% have used computer-projected presentations, only about 30% have used web-based text and graphics, only 10% have used web-based audio or video, and only 2% have used video-conferencing. While most faculty are satisfied with the quality of the support for distance and technology-enhanced learning, most also see barriers to employing these technologies. These barriers include lack of adequate classroom technology, lack of connectivity in non-pool classrooms, lack of training and training opportunities, not enough support, and too little funding.

Further detail on faculty perspective on distance and technology-enhanced learning at OSU can be found in Appendix C: *Analysis of 2002 OSU Poll Information Technology Questions* and Appendix D: *Analysis of PlanIT OSU User Technology Satisfaction and Needs Survey*, and Appendix M: *The TELR Web Site*.

Administrative Systems

In the current state, the university's administrative systems that most directly touch students are older legacy systems. Many have been updated with separately developed web-based end user access enhancements or other post-legacy interfaces. While students can apply for admissions, register, check grades and reserve library books on the Web, much administrative work requires moving from system to system in an electronic analogue of walking from office to office around the university. Students, faculty, and staff want simple, easy to use, accessible systems with a unified interface so that they can conduct their business more conveniently and quickly with fewer missteps.

A recent comprehensive study of the university's web-enabled administrative systems identified several steps that would help in developing these sorts of integrated systems. These included providing staff training in common software development tools; developing IT guidelines, standards, processes, and practices; and providing better IT technical information to help guide developers and managers.

Current State Assessment Interim Report

Further information on administrative systems is available in Appendix A: *Review of End User Access Assessment Project Data* and Appendix J: *Central Technology Infrastructure*.

Strategy: Enhance and Better Serve the Student Body

A key Academic Plan tenet is that to be an academically excellent institution, we must recruit and retain to graduation an excellent and diverse student body. Instructional technology can help the university to quickly and effectively respond to academic program choices in emerging areas and to create a rich educational environment. Information technology in general can enrich student lives and improve services to students.

Most current students are satisfied with Ohio State's information technology environment and are confident that the university can meet their information technology needs. A majority feel that they are average, competent, or better computer users and most feel familiar with Ohio State's information technology resources. However, many do not regularly take advantage of available resources. Though current data does not support analysis in more depth, team members speculate that this could be due to a lack of resource fit to needs, inconvenient locations, or a lack of information. Students do, by a great majority, feel that the university's technology support staff is helpful and responsive.

Undergraduate students would describe OSU information technology to others as easy to access, up-to-date, and staffed by helpful people. Graduate students are more critical and would use words such as "decent", "adequate", and "all right". With graduate students' greater experience, these responses indicate that the current state at Ohio State would probably not be an effective tool for student recruitment or retention. Suggested improvements or enhancements beyond improved computer labs as noted above would include greater help desk availability, more information and training, and more classroom technology. In addition, many students want to be able to use Ohio State's central e-mail from any web browser so that it is more accessible remotely and so that they do not need to carry a storage disk to Student Computing Centers and college or department computing labs.

For more detail on student satisfaction and needs, consult the Undergraduate Student and Graduate/Professional Student sections of Appendix D: *Analysis of PlanIT OSU User Technology Satisfaction and Needs Survey* and Appendix C: *Analysis of 2002 OSU Poll Information Technology Questions*.

Current State Assessment Interim Report

Strategy: Create a Diverse University Community

The Academic Plan notes that a growing body of research links diversity and academic excellence. Information technology can help attract and retain to graduation a diverse student body. It can also help to open diverse world communities to students on campus.

While the current state assessment did not explicitly measure indicators directly related to diversity, we can state with some confidence that an information technology environment attractive to high-performing students in general will also be attractive to a diverse community of high-performing students. In addition, an information technology environment that helps to attract and retain a world-class faculty will also attract and retain a diverse faculty and staff.

In the current state, Ohio State's excellent network connectivity helps to bring a diverse world into the Ohio State campus. Ohio State community members, regardless of their culture or country of origin, have network access to a full range of cultural and national resources in residence halls, family housing, offices, and labs. As an example, the College of Humanities will rely on the university's information technology infrastructure to bring resources from around the globe to students in the new World Media and Culture Center. Ohio State's information infrastructure also provides support for diverse student communities with opportunities for cultural and national mailing lists. Personal privacy is often a key component in supporting a diverse community with differing cultures and life-styles. With Ohio State's Appropriate Use Policy, available in Appendix N: *OSU Policy on Responsible Use of University Computing Resources*, a model for many other institutions, the university is a leader in information privacy and academic freedom issues that support a diverse community.

Strategy: Help Build Ohio's Future

As a land-grant institution, Ohio State serves Ohio and its people. The university touches and educates the learning community throughout the state and applies its knowledge base and skills to economic and societal needs. Outreach and engagement initiatives combine teaching, scholarship, and research and connect these activities to community needs and to the global market. Information technology will play an ever-increasing role in Ohio State's outreach activities by enabling activities such as distance education, web publication of extension information, remote video medical and veterinary consultation, and research activities supporting the transformation and growth of Ohio's economy.

One important component of the Ohio's community is the population of Ohio State alumni, most of who stay in Ohio for their productive careers. Ohio State alumni surveyed thought that Ohio State's information technology helped them complete their degrees and increased their productivity as students. As with faculty, staff, and student

Current State Assessment Interim Report

populations, in general alumni were satisfied with information technology while at the university, though at a lower level.

However, only a third of the alumni surveyed thought that information technology at Ohio State helped to prepare them for the workplace. Looking back at their student experience, alumni wanted more computer seats, better support at these seats, more open hours, and better training in technology they would find in the workplace while they were at the university. In a current example of meeting that need, the College of Nursing, with a student technology fee, has equipped their clinical lab with the current medical technology nurses will find in the workplace after graduation.

A number of alumni felt that coursework in information technology should be required in all fields. Alumni also felt that colleges with technology fees such as Business and Engineering offered, as in one characterization, "...a more smiling technology face..." to their students. Alumni would also like Ohio State to offer them distance education opportunities today for master's degrees, training in technical specialties, communications, business, and teaching and other professional certifications.

More detail on alumni perceptions is available in Appendix F: *Analysis of OSU Alumni Technology Perception and Career Effectiveness Survey*.

Another component of building Ohio's future is outreach to the entire state. For example, the College of Food, Agriculture, and Environmental Sciences through OSU Extension reaches much of the population with its programs. Ohio State's network infrastructure supports that effort with a reliable data path for video to major locations. However, the extension outreach effort continues to be hampered by lack of general high-speed connectivity to all Ohio counties. In a similar manner, Ohio State's regional campuses at Marion, Mansfield, Lima, and Newark find it difficult to share distance education classes due to a lack of high-speed network connectivity to the Columbus campus.

Conclusion

Ohio State's information technology environment has solid core strengths we can build on as we implement the initiatives identified through later phases of the planning process. These strengths are noted above in the in the Recommendations section. They include the information technology staff, the telecommunications infrastructure, a university community hungry for information and training and ready and willing to use information technology, and a university leadership committed to the key role information technology plays in the institution's progress.

Current State Assessment Interim Report

The current state assessment clearly shows that much work is needed to develop an Ohio State information technology future state that fully supports and enables the strategies of Academic Plan. In addition while examining the current state to provide a basis for the move to that future state, we identified basic barriers and deficiencies that hurt Ohio State's ability to support even current efforts in an optimal way. These needs include the need to complete extending the modern integrated campus-wide high-speed network infrastructure, the need for better, more complete, and more accessible technology information and help, the need for better campus training resources and opportunities, the need for better coordination between distributed and central information technology efforts, and the need for more and better classroom technology resources and support.

These needs must be addressed to ensure basic support for initiatives identified through the PlanIT Future and Gap Analysis processes.