Academic Technology Initiatives Update

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There has been a great deal of activity regarding the CSU Academic Technology Initiatives. For the past several months most of the activity on the Initiatives has focused on the following four:

- Online Modules and Associated Support Services for Foundation Skills
- The Academic Technology Shared-Services Environment (or E-Learning Framework)
- The CSU Digital Marketplace
- Supporting Student Success in the CSU

A couple of projects deserve particular attention:

1. Under the Foundational Skills Initiative, a great deal of progress has been made with the Math Success Website (www.csumathssuccess.org). The website is an effort to help high school students to make good decisions so as to enable them to complete their entry level math (ELM) requirements in as timely and efficient a manner as possible. In addition to offering students personalized “roadmaps” to success in fulfilling their ELM requirements, the site offers students access to online tutoring to help provide remediation if they need it. Similar sites addressing the entry-level English requirements and support for EAP Coordinators are currently under development.

2. Under the Digital Marketplace Initiative, we have established a committee to coordinate the System Wide Acquisition of Technology (SWAT) so that as a system we can collaborate and coordinate our technology purchases to maximize efficiency and value for money. Sam Scalise, Chief Information Officer of Sonoma State University, will chair the Coordinating Committee. Its task will be to establish procedures to identify and prioritize technologies, and to set up working groups comprised of members of interested and affected constituencies to research technologies and, where appropriate, make purchase recommendations. CATS members will be involved in the Working Groups where they have a particular expertise in the technology being considered.

3. Also falling under the Digital Marketplace Initiative, we are in the second phase of an RFP on Digital Marketplace Services. This product or suite of products will ultimately enable the CSU to effectively, efficiently, and securely distribute academic technology products and services. Four vendors have been selected to participate in the second round of the RFP. The vendors will present product demonstrations and we will begin to develop the detailed requirements for such a service.

4. Finally, falling under both the Digital Marketplace and E-Learning framework Initiatives we are in the midst of renegotiating the system-wide contracts for Blackboard and WebCT. The current contracts expire at the end of December. Once the new contracts are in place, we will begin a longer-term process of studying where Learner Management
Systems are headed and how we can best collaborate to achieve campus goals and priorities in their use.

In addition, under the leadership of the Academic Technology Advisory Committee (ATAC) and the Provosts Technology Steering Committee (PTSC), attention has also begun to focus on the initiatives dealing with professional development for faculty and staff around academic technology and support for research and System support for academic technology development teams. We will be developing projects that address those initiatives, as well as folding concerns and activities about professional and faculty development and sharing of best practices into the other Initiatives already underway. Given their role in faculty development around academic technology, CATS members will naturally be heavily involved in many of these new projects.