Technology Master Plan 2000-2001

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Technology Master Plan was developed over a period of approximately three years. Since inception, we have seen many changes occur, not only within the Institution, but also, within technology itself. As a result of this rapid change, it became evident that to keep pace, this document would have to undergo extensive modification constantly. Therefore, this plan attempts to make broad approaches to technological change, allowing the flexibility to make adjustments from time-to-time when feasible for the College.

Computing technology is not new to Amarillo College. Student and financial records have been computerized since the early 1970’s. Beginning in the early 1980’s, the proliferation of computers throughout the Institution have made it necessary to study and lend attention to the strategic direction that Amarillo College was heading in regard to technology. From that period until now, this Institution has grown to five interconnected and networked campuses with 1600 microcomputers, 55 academic labs, 25 servers, two administrative minicomputers and hundreds of printers.

Sufficient material is provided in the document to address and describe the ITS Division’s structure. As computer technology continues to mature and develop, proper resources are necessary for the continued support. It is recognized that staffing will be, at least in the near future, the most difficult resource to maintain. Competing with the industry for qualified and properly trained staff is, at best, difficult. Employee turnover in the division has stabilized, to some degree, but this is a concern that continues to affect the level of support possible from all departments in the Division. The allocation of substantial funds in the budget for salary incentives and the continuation of technical training is a must to maintain expertise and stability in ITS.

It is recognized that the cost of managing and supporting networks is more feasible using proper management tools rather than increased staff levels. Therefore, it is imperative to invest in new, state-of-the-art network and test components to maintain security, integrity, stability and reliability.

Retirement of computer equipment from obsolescence has out paced equipment failure. In an ideal situation, computer replacement would occur every two to four years. Even though electronic components of computers have kept equipment prices low, the ITS budget would need to double to meet this demand. In the instructional divisions, this shortcoming was recognized and is being met with a “roll-down” scheme. The roll-down scheme replaces equipment with the newest technology in high demand labs and faculty teaching in those disciplines. The machines being replaced in these areas are then moved to labs or faculty with lower requirements. In some cases, replacements may track as many as four stages before retiring to an equipment pool for further allocation or disposal.
Other indirectly related computer technology: projectors, smart classrooms, multimedia, etc. has become a large expenditure for instructional support. Continued evaluation of this technology and periodic replacement as this equipment ages or fails to function will be necessary.

Currency of software in an educational institution for teaching or training purposes is of utmost importance. Creditability is sometimes questioned if hardware or software in use is allowed to become obsolete. Maintenance contracts designed to keep the newest release of software, both academic and administrative, are recommended for Amarillo College to stay abreast of current trends. Budget expenditures have allowed this to happen with contracts from vendors like Novell and Microsoft.

The implementation of a technology fee is now under heavy debate. There are strong feelings among the faculty and staff about this issue. Many feel that this will solve the on-going expense of maintaining a suitable level of technology and the required support. Others feel that it is an unfair expense that is not equitable for every student and thus adds to their financial burden. Current litigation is under way debating the applicability of this added fee to the cost of education in the state of Texas.

Acceptable usage policies are included in the appendix of this document. These policies cover equipment, application software, E-mail, Internet and purchasing equipment or software with petty cash or the lack of proper approvals. It is believed that by maintaining up to date policies as trends and philosophies change will assist in the management of technology at Amarillo College.

With the assistance of the Technology Users Committee, it is recommended that a review of this document occur on an annual basis. Ideally, a review during the early spring semester prior to the budgeting process would be most advantageous.
INTRODUCTION

Amarillo College has incorporated the use of technology, in one form or another, in virtually every phase of instruction and support. From the use of personal computers by Physical Plant to maintain drawings and plans of the College facilities, to the delivery of course materials directly to the student’s home via the Internet. Technology has become so integral to the College that it is difficult to imagine what instruction and management would be like without the use of technology.

The infusion of technology at AC primarily took place in the short time period that began in 1990 and continues today. Part of the impetus for this rapid change was the Computer Self-Study Report produced in 1989.

Through a set of college-wide surveys and interviews the College’s Computer Self-Study Committee gathered the data that generated the report. In 1989, at the time that this report was written, there were approximately 350 microcomputers in use and the College was beginning to experiment with network technology. The Computer Self-Study report identified the following areas of concern and associated goals:

- **Meeting student needs**  
  Academic areas should be provided with state-of-the-art equipment. Remote access should be available to students and employees to accommodate home computers.

- **Organizational structure**  
  Technology support should be reorganized so that the top supervisor should report directly to the President of the College. The Computer Self-Study Committee should act as advisor to the Technology Department.

- **User support/development**  
  A plan should be put in place to do the following:

  - Monitor and replace computer equipment
  - Evaluate the administrative hardware/software and replace if necessary
  - Establish a user support center to provide staff development
  - Establish a “help line” to provide assistance to current users
  - Form a users group to exchange information and ideas
  - Promote incentives to encourage the implementation of the sound use of technology
• **Accessibility**
The report urged pursuing the following initiatives:

- Provide any faculty or staff member with access to a PC/terminal
- Make access to administrative data more readily available to staff
- Provide access to email and calendar scheduling to all employees

In addition, the report called for the development of a long-range computer plan to address the above issues, and to monitor and document efforts made to accomplish the goals of the report.

In October of 1990, the College became the recipient of a five-year Title III grant awarded by the U.S. Department of Education. The funds from this grant were targeted to address the issues that came to light as a result of the *Computer Self-Study Report*.

At the conclusion of the Title III, grant in September of 1995, the number of personal computers had increased to 926. The grant also financed a local area network (LAN) on the Washington Street Campus, the West Campus, and a wide area network (WAN) and telecommunications link between the two campuses. In addition, a link to the Internet was established and used primarily for email transmission. The network incorporated router technology to manage the data traffic between the West and Washington Street campuses and between the College network and the Internet. Several Novell file servers were acquired and put into service for both the academic and administrative communities.

The Title III grant enabled Amarillo College to address many of the concerns that were identified in the *Computer Self-Study Report*. Along with the acquisition of technology, the grant also financed the creation of the Alpha Center. The center was designed to provide the following:

- Training for all Amarillo College employees including scheduled workshops and one-on-one sessions
- Software processing including maintenance of the inventory
- Training software support for the users
- Special projects to assist faculty with technology-related instructional materials

The Alpha Center proved to be a valuable resource during this period of transition. It provided training for the staff and provided guidance and direction for the placement of technology around the AC campuses.

In 1992 the College hired James Farmer as a consultant to the Computer Technology Users Committee. He wrote an additional report entitled *A Plan for Implementing New*
Information Technology. This report supported the findings of the self-study that was done in 1989. In summary, the report made the following recommendations:

- All staff workstations should be connected to the network and all computing resources should be accessible to users
- Trained personnel should support PCs and the network
- A Help Desk should be staffed to respond to typical user inquiries and problems
- The administrative computer system should be converted to an “open” system
- The College should investigate the purchase of commercially prepared administrative software

By 1993, the amount of technology already in place at the College had far outpaced the abilities of the staff assigned to support it. The number of support staff available to maintain the technology and provide support had not increased significantly since before the start of the grant in 1990. The necessary controls and guidance to assist the College in the continued use of technology were not in place. Therefore, as part of the grant-related activities, the College contracted with a consultant to prepare a report of the status of technology at Amarillo College.

In March of 1994, Michael Wolf delivered his report entitled An Analysis of Information Resources at Amarillo College to President Joyner. In this report, Mr. Wolf stated that technology had become pervasive throughout the Institution and was integral to all of its processes. He indicated that the College’s students are the primary beneficiaries of the use of technology, not only from a support point of view, but also as recipients of broadened educational experiences.

According to this report, technology was the correct solution for the task of dealing with “infoglut” . . .the exponentially rapid growth of information that must be dealt with daily. Wolf went on to recommend prudently selective purchasing as a means to keep the costs of the technology under control.

Mr. Wolf’s report also outlined several issues involving the support infrastructure required to maintain the existing technology in place at the College. Many of these issues were addressed in September 1995 by the creation of the Information Technology Services Division (ITS). The ITS Division was formed from technology-related personnel and resources from Instructional Services, the Computer Center, and Academic Computing.

The supervisor of the newly created Information Technology Services Division was made a dean and a member of the Executive Committee, reporting directly to the President of the Institution. Staffing of the support areas was further addressed in both the 1996/97
budget and again in the 1999-2000 budget through the funding of additional staff in the User Support Services area.

Today, the number of personal computers in use at AC has risen to 1674. The wide-area network has expanded to include the Polk Street Business and Industry Center, the Amarillo College Technical Center (formerly the Amarillo campus of Texas State Technical College), and the Moore County campus in Dumas.

There are 55 computer-equipped labs and 25 file servers connected to the network, as well as various satellite labs in the community. The use of the Internet has increased and it is now possible to remotely access the College’s network.

Portions of Mr. Wolf’s report are perhaps even more relevant today than in 1994. One of the most critical issues raised in his report was the College’s ability and commitment to provide additional and ongoing financial support for the technology put in place through the Title III funds. He stated, “...the investment in technology is part of the budget solution, not part of the problem”. Several issues identified that have major budgeting consequences are staffing, technology acquisition, equipment support, equipment retirement, and infrastructure maintenance. These are the issues that will be addressed by this report.

These important questions raise very serious issues that demand our scrutiny if the College is to continue to be a leader in the use of technology for education. Here are some of these issues:

- Can the College continue to support the increasing number of personal computers that spread so rapidly and thoroughly within the College’s campuses?
- Are there services and conveniences that the College community is willing to give up in order to fund new technology? If not, what can be done to make new technology affordable?
- Is our current technology being used efficiently, and is the newest technology being researched and applied where it is needed?

This report may not provide all of the answers to the issues raised by the acquisition and deployment of technology, but we do expect this report to be a positive beginning toward bringing control and by providing direction to technology at Amarillo College.

**Participation and Credit**

This Technology Master Plan was started by the ITS Dean in 1994 and continued until his separation from Amarillo College in December of 1997. Although a lot of time and effort went into the preparation of the document, it was never completed during that period.
In the spring of 1999 Amarillo College identified the need to adopt and implement a Technology Master Plan as a critical priority. This brought forth both a renewed interest the Technology Master Plan and gave the project greater urgency. The current Dean of ITS has been directed to complete the plan during the fiscal year 2001. Members of the Technology Users Committee have also contributed greatly to completion of this document.

The Committee envisions this Technology Master Plan as a living document – it should be constantly reviewed and updated. Members of the committee will be responsible to see that this document is congruent with both the direction of current, and appropriate technology and the goals of the Institution.

**AMARILLO COLLEGE STRATEGIC PLAN**

Amarillo College’s Strategic Plan was presented to the Board of Regents at the August 2000 Board meeting. The main purpose of this document is to measure the performance of the entire College. During one phase of this measurement - the process of internal Program Reviews - each division of the College is required to compare its mission and goals with those of the Strategic Plan. Similarly, each division’s Program Review is measured against the Strategic Plan for validation.

Several areas of the Strategic Plan address the use of technology. One of the Critical Priorities calls for the formation and maintenance of this Technology Master Plan. In addition, there are several technology-related strategies indicated as methods to attain the objectives of the Strategic Plan, and the Technology Master Plan will address those strategies. For further information, refer to the Amarillo College Strategic Plan.

Most of the strategies outlined in the College’s Strategic Plan are easily attainable with the equipment and technology currently in place at Amarillo College. World Wide Web (WWW) services and Internet access are available to the staff of the College and to the students. Expansion of WWW publishing services to the students and staff may require additional personnel to manage growth and to provide assistance and support when needed. In addition, there will be a requirement to provide disk storage on the file server and to provide web page authoring software tools for the users.

The Information Technology Services Division is currently addressing the appropriate support of technology. One necessary area of support is the need to provide continuous training for the staff of Amarillo College. Professional development activities should be provided that enhance the training offered to faculty and staff through the auspices of the Workforce Development Division.
1. INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SERVICES DIVISION

The Division of Information Technology Services supports technology at Amarillo College. With the aid of an administrative assistant, the Dean directs the activities of the Division’s eight departments. The Administrative Assistant has the responsibilities of the division’s clerical operations, the Helpdesk coordination, and provides managerial assistance to the Dean when needed. The ITS Division supports instructional labs with the assistance of lab personnel supplied by the Instruction Division.

1.1 MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Information Technology Services Division is to promote the mission of Amarillo College through existing and emerging technologies that assist the College community in attaining its objectives. The ITS Division will accomplish this by:

- Providing and maintaining appropriate technology
- Consulting with faculty and staff to anticipate and promote developing technologies to satisfy their needs
- Planning and implementing needed technology-related services
- Providing quality support of technology in a timely manner; and
- Supporting quality training and technical development for employees of Amarillo College

Information Technology Services

Figure 1 - ITS Organizational Chart
1.2 **DIVISION DESCRIPTION**

During Spring 2000, the Dean of ITS reorganized the Division. The departments of User Support, Networking, Equipment Services and Web Services were combined under the Director of Technical Support. This reorganization was an effort to join departments that worked very closely together, thereby increasing efficiency and relationships among the employees of the department. Another goal in the reorganization was to narrow the span of control and reduce the number of positions reporting directly to the Dean. Close monitoring will determine if the reorganization goals are achieved.

1.2.1 **PROGRAMMING SERVICES DEPARTMENT**

The Programming Services Department provides assistance to the College by answering any request involving systems analysis or programming skills. Their primary responsibility is to provide these services for instructional support, financial applications, human resources, and student record management. A new software program, Datatel, (also called Colleague) will include a student records system, an institutional finance system and a human resources system. Implementation of Datatel (Colleague) will occur over a period of approximately 24 months. In addition to this institutional software, the College also purchased a document imaging system from Blue Bird and a new telephone registration system from Epos.

![Programming Services Department Organizational Chart](image-url)

**Figure 2 - Programming Services Organizational Chart**
Services Provided by Programming Services

Instructional and Administrative Services Support
- Programming services
- Ad-hoc reporting
- Required government reports

User Support
- Registration
- Report printing and distribution
- Student Services
- Business Office

Client/Server development

Telephone Registration System

Document Imaging

1.2.2 EQUIPMENT SERVICES DEPARTMENT

The changes brought about by the multimedia aspects of personal computers have made it very difficult to separate the support of computers from the support of audio/visual equipment. The College has used money from a bond issue to install mediated lecture rooms and auditoriums that incorporate computer technology with audio/visual technology.

The distribution of equipment to classrooms remains the primary mission of Equipment Services. However, the importance associated with the repair and maintenance of equipment has expanded to include the repair of computer display monitors.

Equipment Services

![Equipment Services Organizational Chart](image)

Figure 3 – Equipment Services Organizational Chart
Services Provided by Equipment Services

**Acquisition of Audio-Visual Equipment**
- Develop specifications for bids and budget requests
- Design of A/V applications
- Point of contact for vendors supplying / bidding equipment

**Equipment Maintenance and Repair**
- Audio-visual equipment
- Computer monitors
- Preventative maintenance for A/V equipment

**Equipment Inventory**
- Audio-visual equipment

**Audio-Visual Distribution**
- To/from classrooms
- Setups for institutional functions
- User training for A/V equipment

**Design and Operation of Mediated Lecture Halls and Classrooms**
- Business & Industry Center
- West Campus Lecture Hall
- Russell Hall Lecture Hall
- SCATE and PIN

**Audio-Visual Equipment Installation**
- Self-installed
- Vendor-installed

1.2.3 **TELECOMMUNICATIONS SERVICES**

Telecommunications Services serves as the support center for the College’s voice communication system. In addition, the department provides assistance and connectivity support for the network wiring infrastructure on all college campuses.

![Organizational Chart](image-url)
Services Provided by Telecommunications Services

- Maintain telephone switches
- Maintain data communications
- Installation of telephone and data communication
- Upgrade cabling infrastructure
- Maintain wide-area networks
- Maintain microwave equipment – West Campus
- Install and support security monitoring systems

1.2.4 **USER SUPPORT SERVICES**

User Support Services responds expeditiously to requests initiated through Helpdesk. This department acts upon all requests for the support of personal computers, peripheral equipment, and locally installed software. User Support Services also tests and evaluates new software to determine compatibility with existing hardware and software.

**User Support Services**

- Coordinator
- Team Leader
- Team Leader
- Inventory Specialist
- Technician
- Technician
- Technician Assistant (PT)
- Technician
- Technician Assistant (PT)

*Figure 5 - U.S.S. Organizational Chart*

**Services Provided by User Support Services**

**Software**
- Installation
- Upgrade installation
- Configuration
- Diagnosis

**Hardware**
- Installation
- Diagnosis
- CPU & Printer Repair
- Preventative maintenance
- User training
1.2.5 **NETWORK SERVICES**

Network Services supervises the growth and maintenance of the College’s computer network infrastructure, and provides the support and development of Internet services for the College. The department is responsible for the support of the file servers used by the College, which includes the support of the network operating systems and any application and utility software available to the users from the network. Some support is also provided for academic servers.

**Network Services**

![Network Support Organizational Chart](image)

- Coordinator
- Network Support Specialist
- Network Support Specialist
- Network Support Assistant (PT)

Figure 6 - Network Support Organizational Chart

**Services Provided by Network Services**

**File Server Support**
- Instructional and administrative support
- Internet services

**Internet Services Support**
- Maintenance of IP-addresses
- IP routing configuration
- Domain Name Service maintenance
- List service, and FTP services

**Network Infrastructure Support**
- Hub/router configuration
- Network design
- Network maintenance

**Applications Support**
- Email
- Office automation software
- Internet applications

1.2.6 **HELPDESK**

The HelpDesk operation serves as the first contact for resolution of technical problems relating to the Information Technology Services Division. When users call Helpdesk, their problem is either solved over the phone or a work order is issued. HelpDesk serves all departments in the Division by receiving and logging work order requests. Helpdesk performs the initial prioritization of these requests and distributes them, via HelpStar, (a call center software) to the appropriate department. HelpDesk also distributes statistical reports to the managers and dean of the Division.
1.2.7 WEB SERVICES

A position for a Web Master was approved in the budget for 2000. Since the position interacts with all other divisions of the College, the Web Master reports to the Director of Technical Services.

The Web Services department is responsible for the information posted on the web. It assures that links are working properly, answers all mail addressed to the Web Master, assists other departments in the implementation of their web pages, ensures that the information is timely and that the information provided by other departments adheres to standards set forth by College Relations.

**Services Provided by Web Services**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assists other departments with Web page layout and design</th>
<th>Posts current catalog, course descriptions and course schedules</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Posts current job positions</td>
<td>Reads all mail addressed to the Web Master and forwards to appropriate department</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assists with Master Calendar updates</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**HelpDesk**

**Figure 7 - HelpDesk Organizational Chart**

- **Coordinator**
- **HelpDesk Operator**
- **HelpDesk Assistant (PT)**

**Services Provided by Helpdesk**

**Answer Help Calls**
- Software
- Hardware
- Network
- Telephone

**Statistical Reports**
- Requests entered
- Requests completed
- Requests per user

**Maintain HelpDesk Database**

**Research**
1.2.8 MICROCOMPUTER APPLICATIONS SPECIALISTS

The primary role of Microcomputer Application Specialist is the technical training and professional development of the Amarillo College workforce. This employee works closely with the Workforce Development Division and the Professional Development Coordinator to identify and track the training of college personnel. Other duties assigned to this position include tracking all application licenses of the Institution and assisting other departments with special assignments requiring the use of technology.

Services Provided by the Microcomputer Applications Specialist

- Technology Training
- Assistance with other special assignments
- Applications license compliance
2. **NETWORK**

2.1 **WIDE-AREA NETWORK (WAN)**

The Amarillo College Wide-Area Network (WAN) includes five campuses: the Washington Street Campus, the West Campus, the Business and Industry Center, the Amarillo Technical Center, and the Moore County Campus in Dumas.

Internet service is provided to the College through a contract with Uunet, a subsidiary of MCI/Worldcom. The Network Services Department maintains the Internet connection. Monitoring is performed on the system for analysis of bandwidth usage and origin of traffic. Upgrades and improvements to the system will be added as necessary. The College Web site is [http://www.actx.edu](http://www.actx.edu).

![Amarillo College WAN](image)

*Figure 8 - The Amarillo College Wide-Area Network (WAN)*
3. **Administrative Technology**

3.1 **Administrative Systems**

Amarillo College has committed to the implementation of purchased software for its administrative software needs. Last year Amarillo College purchased Colleague from Datatel and other software products from other vendors to enhance and compliment the Colleague software.

A moratorium has been placed on future enhancements to the existing HP 3000 system unless mandated by state or federal requirements, or deemed essential for the continued operation of college business.

Modifications to the way the Colleague software functions will be limited and will require the approval of the Institutional Software Committee.

3.2 **Voice Communications**

Voice communications are provided to all four local campuses with NEC equipment and connected with T-1 lines. All local campuses also have a central voice mail system that was installed in December 1998 and a call accounting system that was upgraded at the same time.

The new Moore County campus also has an NEC phone switch capable of interconnecting with the other campuses, but is currently operating in a stand-alone mode because of the monthly T-1 cost. The phone switch was purchased with this capability if the decision is ever made to implement that service.

Several advantages are realized by interconnecting all campuses:

- One central voice mail system
- A uniform numbering plan
- The ability to transfer an incoming call from one campus to any other campus, and
- Better utilization of long distance circuits thereby consolidating and reducing long distance costs
The Washington Street Campus phone switch was replaced in December 1998, and has a port growth potential of almost 1500 additional ports. This switch serves as the “hub” switch for the Institution.

The West Campus phone switch was replaced in July 1995 and has limited growth capacity. It is connected to the Washington Street switch with a 23 GHZ microwave system. (This same microwave system also provides data network connectivity for the West Campus.)

The Polk Street phone switch was installed following the bond renovations of 1995. This campus has grossly outgrown this switch’s capacity and it should be replaced in the very near future. In budget year 2000 this switch was identified as a “priority two” in the budgeting process. Since “equipment savings” in FY 2000 was not used to purchase the switch, it was included in the FY 2001 budget. The equipment has been ordered, and will be installed prior to December 31, 2000.

The Amarillo Technical Center Campus (ATC) phone switch was replaced in December 1998 along with the Washington Street upgrade and replacement, and it has an approximate growth potential of 700 ports. During the same time, that campus was connected to the hub switch via T-1. This provided four digit dialing from the other campuses to all offices on the ATC campus. The operators are now able to transfer callers to the ATC campus without telling callers to hang up and redial a different number.

### 3.3 Remote Access Server

In March of 1998 a new Remote Access Server (RAS) was purchased from Hayes to allow remote dial-up access to the AC network. This system consists of 32 ports of 33.6K modems. Today, only 24 ports are populated, but current plans are to expand the system to its maximum capacity.

With the new expansion, the system will be configured with 16 student access ports, nine faculty access ports, five support staff ports and two ports reserved for out-of-town registration. Since the purchase of this system, Hayes has filed for bankruptcy and no longer supports the system. Before upgrading this system further, the ITS Division will investigate the feasibility of continuing with the Hayes RAS. If it is deemed necessary and integral, ITS will research another vendor.
4. ACADEMIC COMPUTING TECHNOLOGY

4.1 MINICOMPUTER SYSTEMS

IBM AS400
The Computer Information Systems (CIS) department has an IBM AS400 RISC computer system installed in a lab. It is used specifically for training and educational purposes. This equipment is currently attached to the college network and can be accessed from any connected PC that has Client Access software installed.

4.2 NETWORK FILE SERVERS

Software applications required for course work are accessed from one of the many discipline-specific file servers on the Amarillo College campuses. Maintenance is provided through Network Services and User Support Services.

4.3 INSTRUCTIONAL LABS

Amarillo College maintains a total of 55 labs located across all its campuses. It is the consensus of the Technology Users Committee that these labs be kept updated with reliable and current technology. This will be accomplished, when financially feasible, by installing the newest technology in the most demanding labs and moving the replaced equipment to less demanding labs or distributing it to faculty and staff.

4.4 DISTANCE EDUCATION

The ITS Division supports the technology required to deliver Distance Education over various media. Today that technology includes Internet or web based and web enhanced education, two way Interactive Video and smart classrooms. Other means of distance education such as Instructional Television and Broadcast or Cable instruction are supported by KACV-TV.
5. **STAFF TRAINING**

5.1 **STAFF TRAINING**

To enhance the ability of ITS to achieve its divisional goals, the area of Technology Support was revamped and given primary responsibilities for the following:

- Training for all college personnel on microcomputer applications
- Developing and maintaining a database for tracking all software purchased with College funds, and
- Providing assistance to divisions/departments with specialized uses of microcomputer applications

For faculty training or instructional design assistance and training, please refer to the FIRST center currently located on the first floor of the Lynn Library on the Washington Street Campus. The FIRST center is a new initiative and funding is provided for its operation in the FY 2001 Amarillo College budget. This center will assist with the design, re-design or enhancement of instructional classes. The FIRST center, or The Faculty Innovation & Resource Services for Technology center, will provide the technical support as well as the graphical support necessary for on-line courses.
6. TECHNOLOGY REPLACEMENT

6.1 REPLACEMENT OF PERSONAL COMPUTERS

Previously the College used a Personal Computer Request form that allowed staff members to request a new or replacement computer through the budget process. However, in budget year 2001, use of this form was dropped in favor of recommendations by the ITS Division for “standard” PC’s and peripherals.

Guidelines have been established for prioritizing computer requests during the budgeting process. The following are the College’s priorities for how the allocation of PC’s will be considered:

- Computer instruction classrooms and labs
- Faculty and staff in high technology areas
- Computer assisted instruction classrooms and labs
- Faculty using computers to develop interactive and distance educations
- Staff and faculty with justified needs

A committee chaired by the Dean of ITS will determine other special circumstances and the disposition of equipment displaced by the acquisition of new equipment.

6.2 OTHER TECHNOLOGY REPLACEMENT

As new technology emerges with additional enhancements or capabilities, the ITS Division will evaluate the uses, new capabilities, appropriateness and feasibility of procurement or replacement of the current technology, and make recommendations accordingly.
7. TECHNOLOGY SURVEY

7.1 TECHNOLOGY SURVEY

In the past the ITS Division conducted surveys semi-annually to determine the level of satisfaction, the expectations, and the needs of the Amarillo College community. The results of these surveys were used to justify staffing needs and to point out perceived inefficiencies within the ITS Division.

The Technology Users Committee, however, came to the conclusion from its research that these surveys were principally being used as a forum for criticism and negative attack on the ITS Division rather than as a channel for constructive criticism. Therefore, the committee has recommended that ITS conduct periodic surveys in lieu of regularly scheduled surveys. These will be used to determine the Amarillo College faculty and staff satisfaction with the responsiveness from each of the ITS Division’s departments.
8. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

8.1 **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SERVICES**

Technology is moving at an ever accelerating pace. Therefore, it would be almost impossible to speculate on specific items of equipment or software, or a specific direction that should be pursued by Amarillo College. Technological obsolescence prior to the implementation of a new concept, idea or direction is common.

Moreover, as new technologies are explored or developed, it will become increasingly difficult to know the future acceptance and further development or direction that these technologies might take. Including specific concepts in this document will greatly limit the ITS Division’s ability to adjust the direction of its technological course given all of the external forces that impact this industry. Therefore, general statements of recommendation are included in the following sections with a planned annual review to allow the flexibility needed to efficiently provide the technical support necessary for allowing growth and progress for Amarillo College.

Although ITS has improved customer relations and communications, there is always room for additional improvement. The Division’s self-study emphasized this by pointing out the need for cross training within the departments, better documentation, and improved internal and external communications. It is important that ITS technicians take whatever measures necessary to notify their clients that the clients’ requests for help have been acted upon. The Division’s Program Review was submitted to an Institutional Program Review Committee for evaluation and recommendations. The Division should follow the advice of this program review and should attempt to satisfy the findings of the Institutional Program Review Committee.

8.2 **THE TECHNOLOGY USERS COMMITTEE**

The purpose of the Technology Users Committee is to serve in an advisory capacity to the ITS Division. As such, the committee is expected to bring user concerns to the Division and to help in the development of policies and procedures related to the implementation and use of technology at Amarillo College.

Currently, regular monthly meetings are conducted with good attendance. The chair of the committee is the Dean of ITS. Members include one representative from each of the College’s three employee groups (Classified Employee Council, Administrators’ Association, and Faculty Senate), one representative from Workforce Development, and three administrative representatives from the Executive Committee. The division chairs and employees of all ITS departments attend to provide technical assistance and act as
non-voting members. Members will serve three-year terms with one third of the membership appointed each year.

Prior to the budgeting process, the Technology Users Committee will:

- Evaluate the technology needs of Amarillo College
- Review the Technology Master Plan, and
- Make recommendations based on institutional technology needs

### 8.3 STAFFING

Historically, adequate staffing has been a tremendous problem and concern for the ITS Division. Departments in the Division have experienced increasing turnover due to issues of selection, training, morale, workload, work conditions, and compensation.

It is worth noting that currently most departments are reporting increased employee stability. Overall morale has been much more positive, workloads have improved because of efficient time usage, and increased staffing levels have helped to meet the current demands. Training is now considered a primary need for every position.

### 8.4 POLICIES

Policies developed by the Technology Users Committee were adopted and approved by the Executive Committee. These policies include:

- Internet Policy - adopted January 1999
- Email Policy - adopted January 1999
- Supported Applications Policy - adopted January 1999
- Equipment Use Policy - adopted January 1999
- Software Purchase Policy - adopted September 1999

Copies of these policies are contained in the appendix of this document.

These policies should be reviewed annually and revisions should be submitted for review and adoption. In addition, there is a Computer Lab Policy that should be refined and adopted by the supervisors of the College’s instructional labs. This policy was developed as a result of several meetings of the lab supervisors during the 1995/96 fiscal year. The intention of the policy was to provide a set of standard rules that would apply to all
students regardless of the lab. It is recognized that there may be additional rules or practices that are unique to each lab.

8.5 **PLATFORMS AND SOFTWARE**

Since AC is an educational institution, it is imperative that it remains current on the industry’s standard hardware and software usage where feasible. Since technological changes are constant, it is the committee’s recommendation that the College conduct an annual review and study of its platforms and software.

Amarillo College has entered into an agreement with Microsoft to provide application software to all users. This agreement is called the Microsoft Campus Agreement. It provides for the use or installation of approximately 80% of the Microsoft application products on all computers owned by Amarillo College. This agreement will be evaluated annually to ensure that the agreement remains in the best interest of the College.

8.6 **TRAINING**

The technology training needs for all college employees are identified through an overview of the institutional software policy and the standard of PC classification scheme. To maximize resources, employees should acquire the skills necessary to make the best use of the technology provided for their use. Therefore, it is suggested that training be mandatory. Employee education will be coordinated by ITS, the Workforce Development Division and the Professional Development Department, and should employ whatever skilled personnel are considered necessary to carry out that instruction.

A lack of training for special applications, for both hardware and software, has also been experienced in some cases. Therefore, when a department or division requests a special application, it is the recommendation of the committee that funds should be set aside to train the technicians that will maintain these applications and provide support. This should be part of the regular budgeting process.

8.7 **NETWORK**

Two years ago the network infrastructure was in extremely poor condition. Several servers in use to support the network were in need of replacement. Old Hewlett Packard hubs that were purchased over ten years ago were still in use. Wiring was substandard and could not support the newer 100-megabit capability. Reliability was a major concern.

Since 1998 substantial effort and financial commitment has been directed toward improving network reliability. On the Washington Street campus, a plan for fiber distribution to the buildings was implemented. This was possible and necessary, in part, due to other building renovations being made at that time.
Wireing and fiber distribution on all other campuses was studied and upgraded as deemed necessary and feasible. Many servers were replaced and/or phased out with newer more reliable, redundant servers. The wire and fiber distribution in all buildings was upgraded and documented. Software to allow automatic scheduling of routine tasks was also implemented.

Toward the end of 1999, Internet access and reliability became an important concern. The PIN network, our Internet provider at that time, was restructuring. After exploring a commercial Internet provider, the decision was made to switch to Uunet. Uunet could provide a full T-1 bandwidth, rather than a shared facility, for Amarillo College.

This move increased our Internet connectivity costs substantially. However, when the College added Internet courses to its offerings, reliability became a factor that greatly outweighed cost.

An on-going effort to maintain an acceptable level of reliability will be a significant emphasis of the ITS Division. Most of the Amarillo College network infrastructure is operating at 100mbit. Current studies and tests are being made to determine usage levels and requirements for increasing that bandwidth. The direction and standardization of ATM, Gigabit, and other network protocols is constantly being monitored.

8.8 **Administrative Technology**

The focus on the College’s Administrative Software System has been on converting from a totally in-house developed software package to a commercial software package.

In January 1999 a contract was signed with Datatel to provide our new administrative system. Since that time, substantial efforts have been conducted to switch to the new software and this will drastically change the way Amarillo College does business.

The first phase of the conversion should be completed by summer 2001. Additional phases will follow to implement web access for student, faculty and staff use of the system. With web access, students will be able to register, check the status of their financial aid, their grades, and other information from virtually anywhere in the world.

Several committees have been formed to make the decisions necessary to complete the implementation and to further evaluate the need for additional changes and enhancements. It is currently recognized that the new software system should provide student access to personal information such as:

- Course schedules
- Grades and transcripts
• College statistics and recruiting materials that are deemed appropriate by the Institutional Research Department and the Office of Enrollment Management

This should be provided through secure web access either via the Internet or through the College’s own network. Other enhancements will be evaluated as the need or demand arises.

8.9 Academic Computing Technology

Technology replacement and desktop computing technology is a major concern of the ITS Division and the Technology Users Committee. ITS recommends that all instructional classroom and lab equipment be replaced with new technology over a three to four-year cycle. The replaced equipment will then be distributed to offices identified by the budget process and by User Support Services recommendations.

A PC inventory has identified that approximately 50% of the College’s PCs are functioning as classroom and lab workstations. There is an inherent flaw in this approach because the true turnover cycle for equipment on the College’s campuses will be eight years and not four.

At today’s prices a well-equipped multi-media Intel based workstation costs approximately $1,500. The total inventory exceeds 1,600 units. The replacement of all of the workstations over a four year period will cost the College approximately $487,500 per fiscal year and this already exceeds the amount currently being invested in desktop equipment each year.

The Institution can do one of three things:

• Devote more financial resources to the purchase of desktop technology

• Decrease the number of units that need replacement

• Use a “roll-down” approach to technology replacement

By rolling down desk top computers to users that have lower requirements, Amarillo College can maintain current technology in the labs and classrooms while still providing equipment to faculty and staff that will meet their needs.

Without any supporting documentation, the sheer number of computer labs supported by the College plus the total number of PCs dedicated to classroom use, it is very tempting to draw the conclusion that Amarillo College could realize a substantial economic gain by reducing the number of academic labs.
It is recommended that the above steps be implemented and that a plan for replacement and consolidation be developed before the start of the budget planning cycle for the 2001/2002 fiscal year. The replacement and consolidation plan should have the support of the Executive Committee and the supervisory staff of the Institution.

8.10 TECHNOLOGY FEE

Whether or not to assess a technology fee has been a center of controversy at Amarillo College for several years due primarily to a resistance to establishing additional fees. This reluctance to impose a fee for technology has been based upon several real concerns:

- **Student expectations**
  Amarillo College students expect that only the best in technology should be provided for their course related work.

- **Staff expectations**
  Some college personnel may view technology fees as supplemental funds above and beyond the normal budget expenditures for equipment. Others may view technology fees as a means to offset the expense of personnel dedicated to the support of technology.

- **Lab fees vs. technology fees**
  Students may consider this technology fee a double assessment of fees, This will be especially true of students enrolled in computer related courses that already assess a lab fee.

- **Use of the Funds**
  There is controversy concerning the use of technology fees. Are these funds from technology fees to be used for:

  1) Technology support personnel,
  2) Additional equipment, or
  3) A portion of the current equipment budget?

  There is no consensus on this issue.

Dallas Community College was sued recently for initiating a technology fee. This action has brought additional reluctance to creating a technology fee at Amarillo College.

In the spring of 1996, Amarillo College’s ITS Division conducted a survey of community colleges in Texas. Fifty-six colleges were contacted and forty-six responded. The results were informative.

- Seventy-five percent of the responding colleges were charging a technology fee and thirteen percent were considering charging a fee in the near future

- Half of those charging a fee used a flat fee for each semester and half charged a fee based on credit hours
• Flat fee charges ranged from five to twenty dollars per semester
• The average was $9.95 with the majority charging $10 per semester
• The average per credit fee was $2.26 per credit hour with eight schools reporting $2 per credit and eight at $3 per credit hour

This survey indicates that Amarillo College is one of the few community colleges in Texas that is not charging a technology fee in one form or another. As evidenced by this survey, there is sufficient documentation of the prevalence of the fee in the state of Texas for Amarillo College to adopt a technology fee. However, caution is called for due to ongoing litigation that is currently challenging the legality of these technology fees. The survey did not request information on the use of the revenues collected at the institutions surveyed.

Until pending action by the courts and/or the Legislature is complete, it will be advantageous for Amarillo College to take a wait and see attitude concerning a technology fee.

Possible uses of a technology fee:
• Since the Administrative Software Committee has chosen Colleague and implementation of the package is underway, a technology fee, if adopted, could be used to offset the expense associated with the ongoing support of the Colleague system.

• The technology fee revenues might also be used to offset the expenses associated with the support of the equipment already in place on the campus or to purchase additional or newer equipment.

The Executive Committee and the Board of Regents will ultimately decide whether or not to implement a technology fee.

8.11 Distance Learning

Distance learning has taken many forms over the past two to three years.

8.11.1 Telecourses

Amarillo College has been successfully involved in telecourses for several years through cooperation with the College affiliated public broadcasting station, KACV TV. These courses are prerecorded and broadcast as non-interactive courses (one way video and audio) with proctored assignments and exams.

Amarillo College first used television to deliver instruction in 1958 (Business English). The early courses were taught live in a "sunrise semester" format on KFDA-TV and KGNC (now KAMR)-TV.
In the early 1970s, the College moved to videotape technology and recorded programs over the summer that were aired the following fall and spring. In 1978, the College licensed its first telecourse, “Government of the United States”, from Dallas TeleLearning. In 1981, the College began airing telecourses from the PBS Adult Learning Service. By that time, the College was limited to a cable station and enrollment never exceeded 300 students in a term.

In 1988, AC received a broadcast license from the FCC for KACV-TV. The first program broadcast on KACV-TV, Channel 2, was the telecourse "American Government." Since that time, AC has provided 13-15 pre-recorded telecourses per fall and spring semesters and 8 telecourses in the summer. The enrollment in telecourses has grown continuously since 1988 and the College sees nearly 2,000 enrollments each year in AC telecourses.

Blossoming from those early beginnings, Amarillo College now offers telecourses in business, geology, geography, government, health, history, nutrition, psychology, and sociology.

**8.11.2 Distance Learning Classrooms**

Through a National Science Foundation grant, the College acquired the equipment to create a two-way audio/video classroom. The Southwest Consortium for Advancement of Technology in Education (SCATE) distance learning classroom is used to share instruction between Amarillo College, Texas Tech University in Lubbock, and other partners in higher education.

In the summer of 1999, through a grant provided by the Telecommunications Infrastructure Fund (TIF) grant, a second interactive classroom, the TIF distance learning classroom, was installed. This classroom was connected to the Panhandle Information Network (PIN). PIN was a closed network covering the 26 counties of the Texas panhandle. NOTE: As of July 1, 2000, Region 16 assumed PIN’s operation and equipment. Further evaluation and monitoring will be necessary to determine if it is in the best interest of Amarillo College to continue the relationship with PIN.

**8.11.3 Internet Supported Instruction**

Over the past two years, Amarillo College has gone from minimal Internet or web based courses to a number of courses offered by the English, Biology, Nursing, CIS and other departments.

Amarillo College faculty members have put forth tremendous effort to develop and offer these courses. An instruction development support center called the FIRST Center, located in the Lynn Library, has been under development since mid 1999.
Funding to support the FIRST Center is being provided by the Amarillo College budget, beginning FY 2001. The faculty is encouraged to continue to develop courses and the College should place major importance on this effort. The College should provide both instructional design and the necessary electronic technology to enhance the delivery and support of these courses.

8.11.4 Digital TV

KACV-TV is licensed to the Amarillo Junior College District and the Board of Regents holds final fiduciary and operational responsibility for the station. In the Amarillo College structure, the KACV-TV General Manager reports to the College President. Day-to-day management decisions are delegated to the professional staff of the station.

KACV-TV operates 24-hours per day, 365 days a year with an approximate FY 1999-00 $1.3 million budget. The station combines PBS network and regional programming with syndicated shows and locally produced material. Significant local efforts are given to children’s, public affairs, and cultural programming. KACV-TV’s commitment to community service includes extensive outreach activities. The station has targeted preschool literacy as a primary initiative, but also provides outreach activities related to national programming and local activities.

KACV-TV is currently equipped with three studio cameras, two field cameras, two editing suites and a master control area. KACV-TV is licensed as full power Channel 2. The station leases tower space from a local commercial operator and is able to utilize both the C and KU reception bands. The station operates translators in Canadian, Childress, Clarendon, Follett, Memphis, Quitaque and Perryton and is carried on 39 cable systems.

In April 1997, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) issued a Report and Order mandating that all televisions convert to a digital transmission format. This document set forth the required timeline for implementation of the digital conversion for both commercial and non-commercial stations. KACV-TV digital must be operational by May 1, 2003. Failure to meet this mandated conversion date would result in the forfeiture of KACV-TV’s license.

Initial estimates for digital conversion of KACV-TV are $4.5 million. KACV-TV will be required to operate in both digital and analog formats until at least May 1, 2006. Operational budgets during the dual operation period are expected to increase by $125,000 - $150,000 annually. Additional costs will be incurred for tower space rental for the digital antenna. Maintenance and programming costs associated with the digital signal are expected to add 10% to the general operations budget of KACV-TV.

The Technology Users Committee has no specific recommendations for KACV-TV. (The committee would support the achievement of Institutional goals as the conversion efforts are met.)
9. APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

Supported Applications Policy

The purpose of this policy is to define the services provided and responsibilities assumed by the Information Technology Services (ITS) Division in the support of operating system software and application software. The standardized application software provided to college employees will be determined by Administration, Faculty, and Staff with the ITS Division’s consultation and recommendation.

For clarification purposes, three categories of software will be used:

- Server-based Institutional Applications
- Non-Server based Institutional Applications
- Non-Institutional Applications

Server-based Institutional Applications

Amarillo College provides server based applications for the benefit of the College. All software installed on a file server must be owned by Amarillo College. A copy of the license must be sent to Technology Support Services.

ITS will install software on any file server that is to be shared by two or more people. All software must be reviewed by Network Services prior to purchase if it is intended for file server access. The license agreement and original source media will be filed and stored in Network Services. If requested, a copy of the license agreement and original manuals will be sent to the department purchasing the software.

ITS will install all applications on file servers and give appropriate rights to the end users. Applications that are not intended for all users will be assigned to specific groups, and access will be given only to the users who need rights to these groups.

Application software should not be installed on a user’s personal network drive, departmental shared drive, or College-wide (public) drive. This act seriously affects the size and performance of the network drive that it is installed on. If an application is necessary, ITS will review the application for applicability for file server access.
Non-Server based Institutional Applications

ITS will be responsible for acquisition, licensing, storage, installation, maintenance, and training of the operating systems for the variety of computer equipment owned by the College.

Individual departments will be responsible for acquisition, licensing, storage, and training of application software unique to their division/department. ITS will be responsible for the installation, maintenance, and limited support of application software unique to their division/department.

The division/department must provide original source media and proof of purchase prior to installation by the ITS Division.
APPENDIX B

SOFTWARE PURCHASING POLICY

All software must be purchased using a requisition and approved by the Dean of ITS. There will be no reimbursement for software purchases using petty cash vouchers unless it is an emergency situation and has the approval of the Dean of ITS.

SOFTWARE TRACKING AND DELIVERY

To avoid liability on the part of Amarillo College due to the legal environment regarding software licensing the following procedure will be followed:

1. All software will be delivered to User Support Services.

2. A copy will be made of the requisition, the purchase order, the licensing agreement, number of software copies received, the number of licenses purchased and the key code. This information will be entered into a software-tracking database.

3. No software will be delivered or installed by User Support or Network Services without the approval of the database manager (Technology Support Services).

4. If software was purchased in an emergency situation, a copy of the petty cash voucher, license agreement, and a complete Software Purchase Information form must be sent to Technology Support Services within three business days.
APPENDIX C

E-mail Use Policy

Electronic mail is available to facilitate the professional and business work of persons employed at Amarillo College. It provides a way to communicate with individuals and with designated groups. Amarillo College encourages appropriate use of E-mail to enhance productivity through the efficient exchange of information in furtherance of education, public service, and the expression of ideas. Use of this resource must be consistent with these concepts. As responsible members of the college community, employees are expected to act in accordance with the following general guidelines. These guidelines are not meant to be all-inclusive. Generally accepted practices of common sense, decency, civility, and legality should be taken in to account when E-mail is used.

The Information Technology Service (ITS) staff is charged with maintaining the hardware, software, and network for maximum efficiency of the E-mail system. Lack of adherence to these guidelines will adversely impact the capabilities of campus-wide servers. ITS staff will counsel with individuals whose practices infringe on the capabilities of the services and assist them in reducing their drain on resources.

Guidelines

Messages sent as electronic mail should meet the same standards for distribution or display as if they were tangible documents. The user should identify himself or herself clearly and accurately in all electronic communications. A user’s concealing or misrepresenting identity or affiliation is not appropriate. Alteration of the source of electronic mail or its message is unethical and possibly illegal.

In the management and administration of the email policy, AC will apply and adhere to all current laws relative to copyright and personal property. No attempt to access another’s electronic mail by unauthorized individuals will be allowed. ITS employees may, from time to time, have a need to access a user’s E-mail for routine purposes of repair, upgrades, etc. Concerning the issue of federal law governing privacy, network system administrators will not intentionally access the content of E-mail messages and if content is accidentally accessed, it will be treated as confidential.

The user is asked to be sensitive to the inherent limitations of shared network resources. No computer security system can absolutely prevent unauthorized access to its files. The College will be unable to guarantee absolute privacy and confidentiality of electronic documents. Password security and confidentiality are the responsibility of the user. ITS will provide guidelines for the frequency of change and the nature of passwords. In keeping with good judgement users should create electronic documents as if they were to be made available to the public.
Abusive, threatening, or harassing E-mail is prohibited. While debate on controversial issues is inevitable and essential at an educational institution, that E-mail of a debate nature should advance the cause of learning and mutual understanding.

The user is expected to promote efficient use of network resources consistent with the instructional, research, public service, and administrative goals of the College. The user is expected to refrain from any use that would interfere with another’s work or disrupt network resources. The user should avoid wasteful and disruptive practices such as allowing large amounts of E-mail to go unattended, spreading “chain letters,” or sending other unsolicited material. Restraint in the use of the “Everyone” feature of the E-mail software is expected of the user.

E-mail and other network resources may not be used for commercial purposes or for personal financial gain. This does not preclude the user from investigating the relative advantages or disadvantages of a potential college-purchased product.

Standards of conduct expected of students, faculty, and staff in regard to the use of telephones, libraries, and other institutional resources apply to E-mail. Users will be held accountable for their actions just as they would be when using other forms of communication.

**Examples of Acceptable Uses of E-mail**

The distribution of minutes of various committees as well as other notices of general interest to all faculty and staff.

The use of “personal groups” is appropriate in circumstances, such as updating mailing lists, announcing committee assignments, and distributing facts about pending legislation.

**Examples of Inappropriate Uses of E-mail**

The announcement of the sale of personal property or the solicitation of support for a particular political position is considered inappropriate. However, “point-to-point” communication with governmental representatives is acceptable.

The user is urged to consider before sending, recipes, jokes/humor, or requests for placement of a pet, etc.

User subscription to “listserves” is an acceptable method of keeping current on many issues. The user is expected to confine subscriptions to a limited number and not “backlog” the E-mail system with large number of unattended items. Subscription to “listserves” that are not related to an employee’s job responsibility should not be permitted if substantial resources are required.

The sending of large attachments such as personal photographic images is strongly discouraged.
The user is expected to be honest, legal, ethical, and consider what he or she is sending before sending it. Abuse of computing privileges and any violations of these guidelines and policies established by the College will be treated as a serious matter. By using the College’s E-mail system, the user agrees to abide by these policies. These policies are subject to change as technology advances, legal outcomes, or other unforeseen events may occur.
APPENDIX D

Internet Use Policy

This policy applies to all Amarillo College employees, computers, or networks users. Policies related to instructional labs for student use are addressed in those labs. If you have any questions about the policy, please contact Information Technology Services personnel for more information.

Purpose

To fulfill our mission, Amarillo College provides access to a broad range of information resources, including those available through the Internet. We make this service available as part of our mission to offer a broadly defined program of informational, educational, recreational, and cultural enrichment opportunities for the members of the College and community of Amarillo.

The College only assumes responsibility for the information provided on the home page and the supporting web pages resident on this server. Amarillo College does not monitor and has no control over the information accessed through the Internet. The Internet offers access to many valuable local, national, and international sources of information. However, not all sources on the Internet provide accurate, complete, or current information. A good information consumer evaluates the validity of information found.

Responsibilities of Users

The user will engage in no activity that abuses any resource of the Amarillo College network whereby the network is restricted in use or is damaged in any manner. The Information Technology Services staff constantly monitors the AC network to insure the proper operation of the service. The ITS staff will counsel with individuals whose practices impinge on the capabilities of services and assist those individuals in eliminating any abusive practices.

College patrons use the Internet at their own risk. The College cannot censor access to materials or protect users from materials they may find offensive. The user alone is responsible for the information accessed through the Internet. The College reserves the right to choose sources to link to our home page. In doing so, the College will provide links only to those sites that conform to the College’s mission and goals. Beyond this, we do not monitor or control information accessible through the Internet and do not accept responsibility for its content. We are not responsible for changes in content of the sources to which we link, nor for the content of sources accessed through secondary links. The College expressly disclaims any liability or responsibility arising from access to or use of information obtained through its electronic information systems, or any consequences thereof.
APPENDIX E

Audiovisual Equipment Acquisition and Use Policy

Equipment Services maintains a large inventory of multimedia equipment for instructional support. Equipment will be delivered for use on a one-time or regularly scheduled basis. Equipment that is in adequate supply can be reserved for semester use. These items will be picked-up for servicing at the end of the semester and will be returned upon request. Items checked-out on a semester basis may be placed into hourly use by Equipment Services in the event of equipment shortage.

Priority for Equipment Checkout

Equipment will be distributed for use according to the following priorities:

- X Classroom and official college programs
- X Miscellaneous administrative use
- X Faculty use for instructional preparation
- X Support of student activities
- X Other campus use

Equipment Services does not provide equipment for non-college sponsored activities.

Equipment Delivery/Sign Out Procedure

**On Campus Use**: Equipment will be delivered to a secure location, set up before the time requested, and retrieved by Equipment Services personnel. Requests must be received 24 hours in advance of the time at which the equipment is needed. If video or computer projection is required, the request must be received 48 hours in advance.

**Off Campus Use**: A request must be received 72 hours (not including weekends) prior to the time that the equipment is needed. Equipment Services cannot guarantee the availability of the desired equipment. The person making the request will be notified at that time if the equipment is not available. The person making the request must pick up, sign for, and return the equipment to Equipment Services Distribution, Russell Hall-121. For College-sponsored activities, Equipment Services personnel can be available for delivery, set-up, and retrieval of the requested equipment.

**Equipment Deliveries for Off Campus, College Sponsored Functions**: All functions must be scheduled where equipment can be delivered to a secure location and pick-up can be made during normal working hours. The request must be received and approved a minimum of 3 working days in advance of the setup.

**Late Requests for Equipment**: Equipment Services cannot guarantee availability and/or delivery of equipment requested less than 24 hours in advance of the need. Faculty and staff making late requests may have to pick up equipment, subject to
availability, from Equipment Services in Russell Hall 121. This equipment must be returned by the user unless prior arrangements have been made.

**Eligibility for Equipment Checkout**

**AC Employees:** College-owned equipment may be reserved for use, subject to availability, by any employee of Amarillo College for use at a college-sponsored activity, provided that proper checkout procedures have been followed. Amarillo College reserves the right to deny use of equipment if deemed not to be in the interest of the College. Equipment may be checked-out for off campus use overnight and over weekends for instructional preparation or presentation and is subject to availability.

**Students:** Students may only checkout equipment for instructional/class projects, not for personal use. A valid student I.D., written authorization from the instructor, and the type of equipment requested is required. The student’s instructor assumes responsibility for the use and security of the equipment. Students will follow the same procedures as Instructors/Employees for off campus equipment checkout.

**Equipment Available for Class Use and Checkout**

**Video**
- 3/4 inch
- 1/2 inch V.H.S. units
- Laser disc players
- Monitor/TV --19/20” and 26/27”
- DVD players

**Projectors**
- LCD-Data, Video
- 35mm slide
- Opaque
- Overhead
- Video
- Filmstrip
- 16mm film
- LCD PC panels
- Synchronized 35mm slide/cassette tape
- Synchronized film strip/cassette tape

**Computer**
- Laptops: can be checked out for 24 to 48 hours. Laptops cannot be requested for semester use.

**Audio**
- Microphones/wireless and hand-held
- CD players
- Amplifiers/mixers
- Speakers
- Cassette tape players/recorders

**Misc.**
- Screens
- Laser pointers
- Easels
- Flip charts/ portable dry erase boards
- Markers

**Equipment Purchase**

Departments should contact Equipment Services to obtain equipment specifications and representative prices for departmental equipment needs. These acquisitions should be discussed and planned for during the departmental budgeting process.

Future equipment acquisitions by Equipment Services on behalf of the Institution are based on the repetitive use of a piece of equipment at one location, the obsolescence of the equipment, and/or the serviceability of the equipment.
Equipment Repair

Equipment Services maintains qualified personnel and facilities to repair most types of equipment. Call either the Helpdesk or Equipment Services to request assistance with the repair of any malfunctioning equipment. In a request for repair, please specify the type of equipment, the location, when the malfunction occurred, and the nature of the problem.
Executive Summary

The Technology Master Plan was developed over a period of approximately three years. Since inception, we have seen many changes occur, not only within the Institution, but also, within technology itself. As a result of this rapid change, it became evident that to keep pace, this document would have to undergo extensive modification constantly. Therefore, this plan attempts to make broad approaches to technological change, allowing the flexibility to make adjustments from time-to-time when feasible for the College.

Computing technology is not new to Amarillo College. Student and financial records have been computerized since the early 1970’s. Beginning in the early 1980’s, the proliferation of computers throughout the Institution have made it necessary to study and lend attention to the strategic direction that Amarillo College was heading in regard to technology. From that period until now, this Institution has grown to five interconnected and networked campuses with 1600 microcomputers, 55 academic labs, 15 servers, two administrative minicomputers and hundreds of printers.

Sufficient material is provided in the document to address and describe the ITS Division’s structure. As computer technology continues to mature and develop, proper resources are necessary for the continued support. It is recognized that staffing will be, at least in the near future, the most difficult resource to maintain. Competing with the industry for qualified and properly trained staff is, at best, difficult. Employee turnover in the division has stabilized, to some degree, but this is a concern that continues to affect the level of support possible from all departments in the Division. The allocation of substantial funds in the budget for salary incentives and the continuation of technical training is a must to maintain expertise and stability in ITS.

It is recognized that the cost of managing and supporting networks is more feasible using proper management tools rather than increased staff levels. Therefore, it is imperative to invest in new, state-of-the-art network and test components to maintain security, integrity, stability and reliability.

Retirement of computer equipment from obsolescence has out paced equipment failure. In an ideal situation, computer replacement would occur every two to four years. Even though electronic components of computers have kept equipment prices low, the ITS budget would need to double to meet this demand. In the instructional divisions, this shortcoming was recognized and is being met with a “roll-down” scheme. The roll-down scheme replaces equipment with the newest technology in high demand labs and faculty teaching in those disciplines. The machines being replaced in these areas are then moved to labs or faculty with lower requirements. In some cases, replacements may track as many as four stages before retiring to an equipment pool for further allocation or disposal.
Other indirectly related computer technology: projectors, smart classrooms, multimedia, etc. has become a large expenditure for instructional support. Continued evaluation of this technology and periodic replacement as this equipment ages or fails to function will be necessary.

Currency of software in an educational institution for teaching or training purposes is of utmost importance. Creditability is sometimes questioned if hardware or software in use is allowed to become obsolete. Maintenance contracts designed to keep the newest release of software, both academic and administrative, is recommended for Amarillo College to stay abreast of current trends. Budget expenditures have allowed this to happen with contracts from vendors like Novell and Microsoft.

The implementation of a technology fee is now under heavy debate. There are strong feelings among the faculty and staff about this issue. Many feel that this will solve the on-going expense of maintaining a suitable level of technology and the required support. Others feel that it is an unfair expense that is not equitable for every student and thus adds to their financial burden. Current litigation is under way debating the applicability of this added fee to the cost of education in the state of Texas. Ultimately, this decision is in the hands of the Board of Regents at Amarillo College.

Acceptable usage policies are included in the appendix of this document. These policies cover equipment, application software, E-mail, Internet and purchasing equipment or software with petty cash or the lack of proper approvals. It is believed that by maintaining up to date policies as trends and philosophies change will assist in the management of technology at Amarillo College.