

Northwestern State Technology Enrichment Plan NSTEP

2008 – 2013



Northwestern State University of Louisiana

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Executive Summary

Changing demographics and expectations of students, along with rapid advances in information technology, are forcing universities to invest heavily in technology. Northwestern State University is determined to make these investments to the benefit of its students, its faculty, and to the State of Louisiana. To ensure the most efficacious expenditure of limited funds, the University has initiated a planning process for the procurement and use of technology. The five-year technology plan is organized into a series of organizational, access, support, and innovation initiatives.

The NSTEP policy is available for viewing by the Northwestern State University community via the web.

Preface

It is increasingly evident that the influence of technology on higher education will be more profound than any previous circumstance or resource that has impacted teaching and learning in recent history. Both the method and organization, which currently characterize universities, are being transformed. This transformation is accelerated by rapid and continuous advancements in communications technologies, changing population demographics, and the expectations of the market place. The health of Northwestern will depend largely on its ability to anticipate and accommodate these changes. The University must be prepared to compete nationally and eventually globally, for a growing nontraditional, technologically astute clientele. To do so effectively and economically will require a product-oriented organizational structure marked by cooperation, and by a dynamic plan of action, the implementation of which will help define Northwestern as an Information Age University.

Northwestern's technology plan is based on a series of initiatives, each of which is categorized according to its nature as organizational, facilitating access, improving support, or exploring innovative applications. The specifics of the interpretation of each initiative will be detailed separately and only to the extent that will ensure maximum efficiency and an observable product, without forcing a rigid, contextually- isolated translation.

Authoring Process

The first draft of Northwestern State University's current technology plan was developed in response to a request by the Board of Regents to organize a plan for the use of the SGA approved student technology fees. In response to the Board's request NSTEP, Northwestern State Technology Enrichment Plan, was composed. The initial plan included a series of technology initiatives identified with the input of the University administration, SGA representatives, technical support personnel, and selected faculty. With the first draft of the plan in place, collection of the student technology fees began in the Fall of 1997. Preparation

for a second, more detailed technology plan began with the arrival of students and faculty for the 1997 fall semester. The College Deans were provided with a copy of the technology plan and asked to solicit input from their faculty. Each of NSU's three SGAs reviewed the draft of the plan and provided feedback. In addition, copies of the plan were disseminated to interested students and an e-mail account was set up to facilitate student questions concerning, and feedback regarding the technology plan. Based on the feedback gathered from the University community the current version of NSTEP was developed.

Technology Vision Statement

Whatever the context or delivery vehicle of instruction, the innovative use of technologies to ensure its effectiveness will, in large part, determine the success of the University in the coming years. Northwestern State University will move boldly into the Information Age, building on its legacy of innovation and commitment to ensure a quality education for all students. The University will firmly establish its position as a preeminent provider of quality educational programs and will make these programs flexible enough to accommodate the individual circumstance and changing demographics of its clients. The use of advanced technologies will play a critical role in the realization of the University's mission. The delivery of educational programming as well as student services will, through the use of technology, provide a number of convenient and effective options for students. Technology-assisted instruction will be available to students in the more traditional classroom setting or at their convenience electronically, unrestricted by place or time. In either format, students will have available to them an unprecedented depth and quality of programming that is insightfully organized and presented to maximize learning.

A dynamic planning mechanism and effective implementation of timely innovations will be defining elements in the organizational infrastructure of the University. Web-based technologies will be used to ensure an efficient communications network within the University and as a link to global electronic resources. The rapid retrieval, integration, and exchange of large amounts of information will be easily accessible to all students and faculty.

Environmental Context

Northwestern State University of Louisiana was founded by the Louisiana Legislature in 1884 as the Louisiana State Normal School. Its mission then, as now, is to provide excellence in education. For over 113 years Northwestern has endeavored to make available a quality education to the broadest possible audience, as a means of advancing the social and economic well being of its students. Northwestern's success has been marked by its acknowledged leadership in the use of instructional technologies and distance education, the growth of its satellite campuses in Alexandria and Leesville, and the many accomplishments of its alumni. Northwestern is the home of the prestigious Louisiana Scholars' College, the Louisiana School for Math, Science, and the

Arts, and the National Center for Preservation, Technology, and Training. The University boasts an extensive compressed video network, and is a statewide leader in the use of Internet technologies to deliver academic coursework worldwide. In addition Northwestern has distinguished itself with program innovations designed to address the academic needs of both a traditional and a growing nontraditional student population.

Increasingly, the University's student population is typically older, more technologically astute, and often professionally engaged. More students are expecting educational programming that is conveniently accessible, that accommodates their schedules, and that is unrestricted by geographic location. Northwestern's rural location has for some time been an impetus for the use of distance technologies. As a result Northwestern has invested heavily in instructional technology. Even so, the progress made thus far has come at great expense to scarce University resources.

University Goals

Goal 1: Northwestern State University will endeavor to create and maintain a responsive, student-oriented environment.

Goal 2: Northwestern State University will provide programs, services, and operations throughout the University of high quality and effectiveness.

Goal 3 Northwestern State University will strive to enhance institutional viability through effective enrollment management.

Goal 4: Northwestern State University will promote economic development, community services, and an improved quality of life in the region.

Technology Initiatives

The University's vision for the use of technology to advance the quality and effectiveness of the teaching/learning process is operationalized in a series of initiatives presented herein. These initiatives are action-oriented and ultimately defined by their product. While they are specific in their intent and method, it is understood that they are malleable. The University technology initiatives will be elaborated and extended within the technology plans developed by the individual colleges.

Organizational Initiatives – Efforts to define and operationalize an organizational structure responsible for defining, implementing, and evaluating the University's technology plan.

The Information Technology Advisory Council will evaluate the progress of initiatives, make recommendations for new initiatives, and offer input on all major technology efforts, both academic and administrative. The make-up of

the council will reflect the organizational structure of the University and its students.

This initiative is supported by Action Plan Objective 9, 10

Access Initiatives – Those efforts that will help to ensure anytime, anyplace access to information and to the means by which to process this information.

This initiative is supported by Action Plan Objectives 1, 2, 3, 4, 5

Support Initiatives – Initiatives designed to facilitate the effective and efficient use of technology while ensuring that the technology remains as transparent to the end user as possible.

This initiative is supported by Action Plan Objectives 2, 3, 5, 9, 10

Innovation Initiatives – Efforts to examine new technologies and their application to the teaching/learning process.

This initiative is supported by Action Plan Objectives 2, 3, 4, 7, 8

NSTEP Objectives

1. To improve access to technology by students, faculty, and staff at Northwestern State University.
2. To provide classrooms with updated technology and multimedia.
3. To upgrade laboratories with modern technology.
4. To improve and proliferate the use of distance education within all colleges at NSU.
5. To upgrade and maintain the campus communication network and infrastructure.
6. To provide a system for maintenance, upgrade, user training, and support of technology that will extend into the future.
7. To encourages technology initiatives by faculty, staff, and students.
8. To encourage innovation and research.
9. To maintenance support of hardware and software upgrades, new hardware and software for specialized functions, training for technical support personnel.

10. To maintain a technology budget for the University, its colleges, and its directorates.

These objectives support Northwestern State University's goals as follows:

NSU Goal	NSTEP Objectives
1 – Northwestern State University will endeavor to create and maintain a responsive, student-oriented environment.	1. - 10.
2 – Northwestern State University will provide programs, services, and operations throughout the University of high quality and effectiveness.	1. - 10.
3 – Northwestern State University will strive to enhance institutional viability through effective enrollment management.	1-4, 8
4 – Northwestern State University will promote economic development, community services, and an improved quality of life in the region.	4, 7, 8

Action Plans

OBJECTIVE 1: To improve access to technology by students, faculty, and staff at Northwestern State University.

OBJECTIVE 1 ACTION PLANS

- Provide current technology for student use
- Provide increased access to administrative systems (housing, meal plans, etc.) through Web-Based Student Services
- Equip access labs to meet ADA standards
- Improve access to campus resources, especially on-line courses and distance education, from off-campus locations

OBJECTIVE 2: To provide classrooms with updated technology and multimedia.

OBJECTIVE 2 ACTION PLANS

- Construct multimedia classrooms (including hi-resolution projection systems, SMART boards, etc.) in conjunction with Multimedia laboratories
- Increase multimedia equipment availability for student presentations
- Continue progress to organize and staff Instructional Technology Support and Training Centers

On all campuses:

- Increase the number of classrooms and laboratories equipped with multimedia delivery systems* and Internet connectivity.
- Increase volume and currency of stand-alone multimedia equipment to faculty and students available in each college for instructional purposes annually.
- Extend Instructional Technology (IT) Support and Training to all campuses; initiate development of web-based technology application tutorials.
- Identify faculty willingness and expertise for peer tutoring related to creative technology implementation in teaching environment.
- Increase web-based course offerings.
- Review the state of the campuses' communication network and infrastructure

*Note: Multimedia delivery system includes a computer with current presentation software, keyboard, monitor, mouse, a projection unit, screen, and necessary wiring for Internet connectivity.

OBJECTIVE 3: To upgrade laboratories with modern technology.

OBJECTIVE 3 ACTION PLANS

- Upgrade laboratory classrooms (hardware, software)

OBJECTIVE 4: To improve and proliferate the use of distance education within all colleges at NSU.

OBJECTIVE 4 ACTION PLANS

- Enhance the Compressed Video Network
- Provide each college with convenient access to distance learning technologies
- Provide convenient access to library electronic resources and tutorials
- Provide servers for online courses
- Develop partnerships with business/industry for delivery of electronic instruction to the workplace

OBJECTIVE 5: To upgrade and maintain the campus communication network and infrastructure.

OBJECTIVE 5 ACTION PLANS

- Plan, program, and install additional intranet services
- Increase web-based student services
- Support and upgrade wireless access
- Implement emergency notification system

OBJECTIVE 6: To provide a system for maintenance, upgrade, user training, and support of technology that will extend into the future.

OBJECTIVE 6 ACTION PLANS

- Provide for network administration with flexibility to change consistently with University technology infrastructure expansion
- Provide workshops to students on use of technology
- Provide workshops to faculty and staff on use of technology
- Provide support for maintenance of new and existing programs

OBJECTIVE 7: To encourage technology initiatives by faculty, staff, and students.

OBJECTIVE 7 ACTION PLANS

- Establish community partnerships and internships
- Provide invitational workshops to highlight faculty/student work

- Promote technology initiatives through a Student Technology grants program

OBJECTIVE 8: To encourage innovation and research.

OBJECTIVE 8 ACTION PLANS

- Maintain Innovation Grant process
 - a. Establish seed grants
 - b. Encourage grantsmanship among all faculty
 - c. Promote cross-discipline research and grants writing among faculty
 - d. Encourage grants writing among all faculty for external funding sources
- Increase library holdings in print and electronic formats
- Provide peer recognition opportunities
- Publish faculty research/presentation abstracts annually
- Develop a University Web site to showcase faculty/student research, publications, and presentations

OBJECTIVE 9: To maintain support of:

- a. hardware and software maintenance and upgrades
- b. new hardware and software for specialized functions
- c. user training
- d. training for technical support personnel

OBJECTIVE 9 ACTION PLANS

- Review technology and training needs annually
- Provide hardware and software maintenance and upgrades
- Provide new hardware and software for specialized functions
- Provide user training
- Provide training for technical support personnel

OBJECTIVE 10: To maintain a technology budget for the University, its colleges, and its directorates.

OBJECTIVE 10 ACTION PLANS

- Maintain a process that will ensure that all NSU campuses have equivalent technology resources including access, hardware, software, and training.
- Maintain a plan for replacement of technology purchased with Student Technology Fee funds.

Reporting and Evaluation

Northwestern's technology plan will be available for input from the University community on an annual basis according to the schedule below. The steward of the plan will make it widely available to the University community, and will solicit input from all faculty, staff, students, and the administration.

Each college is strongly encouraged to develop its own technology plan.

An ongoing evaluation process will ensure the appropriate direction and continued evolution of the technology plan and associated initiatives. Based on the evaluation results, initiatives may be continued, modified, or suspended. The development of new initiatives is an on-going process guided by the University's vision and facilitated through the efforts of an empowered faculty and student body.

Funding

Over the past ten years, the University has spent several million dollars on technology and technology-related initiatives. While some of this money has come from grants, most has come directly from the University's budget. The University is committed to remaining a leader in the state in the early use of advanced instructional technologies. Funding of technology initiatives over the next five years will require:

- Sufficient and consistent funding
- Continuous acquisition of grant funding from private and governmental agencies.
- Acquisition of capital outlay funds.
- Effective stewardship of the student technology funds. [Student technology fee expenditure guidelines](#)

Timeline for Annual Revision

March - April April	Complete data collection for review by ITAC Progress report presented to ITAC and the Administration ITAC recommends revisions Make document available for review and solicit input from faculty, staff, students, and the administration Student Technology Support Specialist compiles suggestions and presents to ITAC for approval
May	Final document presented to ITAC for approval
September/October	Review by STAT Provide to Business Affairs for Student Technology Fee expenditures