Executive Summary

The What and Why of CU-Boulder’s IT Strategic Planning

The IT Strategic Planning process examines plans and priorities for the use and support of information technology in support of the mission of the University of Colorado at Boulder. Like its predecessor, the campus’s 2002 IT Strategic Plan combines high level strategic planning with some degree of tactical planning. The campus has undertaken this strategic planning process for several reasons:

- To establish plans and priorities for the use of IT on campus.
- To create greater cross-campus understanding of and involvement in IT issues.
- To fulfill requirements established by the Colorado Commission on Higher Education.

The campus last engaged in an IT strategic planning process in 1998. The resulting plan led directly to action and significant changes to the campus’s IT environment, including the establishment of:

- A four-tier model for campus IT support and the Distributed Academic and Campus Technology Coordinators (DACTCs);
- The Faculty Computer Purchase Program and a student computer recommendation;
- The Network Task Force and the ResNet project;
- The position of CIO (Chief Information Officer, as part of the Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic and Campus Technology position) and of the IT Council.

Since that time, the campus’s IT infrastructure has matured greatly, and the campus’s needs have also changed, which is reflected in the two plans:

| 1998: emphasis on IT resources and infrastructure |
| 2002: emphasis on academic and administrative IT services |

Recommendations of the 2002 IT Strategic Plan

The ITSP process is notable for considerable information gathering, including interviews, focus groups, and surveys of a wide range of faculty, staff, students, and campus leaders; and for work completed by 25 committees composed of over 100 IT staff, faculty, and other campus representatives. This process has defined the focal points of the plan:

- Developing and enhancing programs and support for educational technology, including hardware, software and staff support, technology-enhanced facilities, and information and information technology literacy programs for students;
- Improving and greatly expanding web-based student services;
- Maintaining and further developing the middleware layer of the campus’s infrastructure, including security, access and authorization, and directory services;
Improving **coordination, communication, and governance** of campus IT resources.

Of the specific recommendations presented in the plan, several were deemed to be of highest priority. They are listed here in unranked order.

**Educational Technology**
- Establish a well-communicated and coordinated **educational technology support model** for instructional design and advanced technological and pedagogical innovation, as well as for course content and course management and organization.
- Establish campus-wide goals and programs for **information and information technology (I/IT) literacy** for students, and facilitate the creation of goals for discipline-specific I/IT fluency.
- Provide coordinated and broad support and services for **digital media** and videoconferencing as well as develop a **digital asset management strategy** for storing and accessing campus-generated research and learning materials.
- Develop an effective scheduling process for, improve support to, and upgrade existing **technology-enhanced instructional facilities**.
- Develop a robust, unified, and supportable web-based **learning management system infrastructure** capable of supporting every course at CU-Boulder.

**Web-based Student Services**
- Provide excellent, unified **web-based student services** that are tailored to individuals based on their affiliation with CU-Boulder, in short, a **campus student portal**.

**Support and Services**
- Continue to develop the **Enterprise Directory** and Directory Services, and create the underlying campus-wide **IT service provisioning infrastructure** to address account maintenance processes, naming protocols, identity, authentication and authorization.
- Address **IT security issues** including network and data integrity and reliability, and proactive IT security management.
- Provide enhanced and new **email services** to all faculty, staff, and students.

**Coordination and Communication**
- **Centrally coordinate** specific aspects of IT to achieve efficiency and decrease duplication (e.g., wireless, security); **centrally manage** other aspects to achieve reliability and stability of the campus IT infrastructure (e.g., Enterprise Directory, software licensing); continue to **distribute responsibility** for some departmental-specific IT services (e.g., desktop support, departmental-specific applications).
- **Communicate** IT resources availability, policies and guidelines, and the roles and responsibilities of the Office of the Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic and Campus Technology and of IT advisory bodies to the entire campus.

**Governance Structures**
- **Re-configure the existing IT leadership and advisory body** (IT Council) to reflect the complexity of the campus’s IT environment, and the need for increased participation by and communication with a wide array of campus constituents by establishing faculty, administrative, and student advisory committees for IT.

Some other important recommendations include: expanding wireless access on campus, continuing to develop the four-tier IT support model, improving access to assistive technologies, developing a campus-level file systems solution, and providing web-based faculty and staff services.
Evaluating the Impact of the Strategic Plan

An integral element of the implementation of the IT Strategic Plan will be the evaluation of its impact on the campus and its IT infrastructure. The intended impact of each of the recommendations listed above is articulated in the plan’s evaluation section, as are the methods that will be used to assess each of the intended outcomes.

The total cost of all the priorities listed in this executive summary almost certainly will exceed what the campus will be able to invest in new IT initiatives over the upcoming four year period. Therefore, campus discussion will be needed to prioritize the initiatives further. This discussion will necessarily include the consideration of which initiatives are essential to fulfilling the campus mission at an acceptable level of quality, and which could be deferred even though this may entail a reduced, or unimproved, level of service. This campus discussion also will consider multiple funding sources that are possible for these initiatives, including campus general fund support, support from fees, and departmental contributions in cases where services currently provided by departments are shifted to being provided centrally. The campus may need to realign priorities in the event of mandates—funded or unfunded—from the System, State, or federal government.