Current Situation (Trends)

Introduction

Leading global, higher education, and campus technology trends helped shape the 2002 IT strategic planning processes. These IT trends contributed to discussions regarding the role technology could play in almost every aspect of the CU-Boulder campus, whether in the classroom, residence hall, or research lab.

General technology trends

- **Ubiquitous web presence**—technology increasingly provides access from almost anywhere to the Internet, creating a virtual conduit for the individual to connect to a wide range of information as well as to different communities. Additionally, individuals expect access to high-quality, just-in-time information from expert sources.

- **Rapid connectivity**—high-speed networks, remote access, and wireless increasingly provide seamless access.

- **Increasing freedom with mobile devices**—increasingly, people are choosing portable, small, and wireless devices for their computing needs, which helps them realize unprecedented mobility in information and network access. Additionally, these devices provide more capacity and functionality in a single device.

- **24/7 Service Expectations**—individuals anticipate service and support assistance to be 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

- **Electronic Commerce**—consumers expect the convenience of numerous products and services to be available via secure online purchase and transaction systems.

- **Sophisticated applications**—greater use of more mature, common-platform applications, and easier-to-use multimedia tools, has a great impact on educational technology in areas including course management systems and video editing software.

Specific higher education IT concerns

In 2002, the third annual Educause survey identified current IT issues affecting higher education. Participants of the survey were asked four key questions: 1) What is the most important IT issue to resolve for the institution’s strategic success; 2) What IT issue has the potential to become more significant; 3) What IT issue do IT leaders spend their time on; and 4) What IT issue represents the biggest expenditure of institutional resources?

The top IT concerns of higher education institutions, especially large, public universities, taken across all four questions, include:

- Security management

- Faculty development, support, and training

- Administrative Systems/Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP)
• Online Student Services/Enterprise Portals
• Maintaining network infrastructure
• Distance Education
• IT funding strategies

Specific CU-Boulder Trends

CU-Boulder continues to have an explosive growth in demands on computing and network resources. Specific data, which reinforces this growth, includes:

• PLUS is now used by 99% of CU-Boulder undergraduate students and has the highest use and satisfaction rating of any student service on campus. During the first week in the fall semester of 2002, with approximately 26,000 students, PLUS was accessed over 180,000 times.

• In 1997-98 62% of the incoming freshmen class owned their own computers as compared to 95% in 2001-02. In addition, student-owned computers increasingly are mobile computers; the percentage of laptops among student-owned computers grew from a small percentage in 1998 to 40% in 2001 and now, in 2002, a majority of students prefer and purchase laptops over desktops.

• From 1997 to 2002, Internet traffic on campus has increased four-fold. Additionally, Internet2, which support academic research, has become available for CU-Boulder faculty and researchers.

• In 1997-98 13,500 campus computers were connected to the campus network as compared to 23,000 in 2001-02

• In 1997-98 very few academic courses had any web-presence. Now, in 2002 virtually all classes do. Also, in 1997-98 a central course management system did not exist. Now, in 2002, over 300 courses, supporting over 15,000 students, utilize the campus’ course management software, WebCT.

• The Libraries are increasingly relying on adding digital materials via a subscription service rather than owning the hardcopy periodical and/or journal.

• In 1997-98 72% of students had CU-Boulder email accounts as compared to 100% in 2001-02.

• In 1997-98 41% of centrally scheduled classrooms had network connectivity as compared to 58% in 2001-02.