

# **SOUTHWESTERN COMMUNITY COLLEGE**

## **College Technology Plan Update**

**Updated September 1, 2007**

Division of Information Technology and Telecommunications  
Institutional Research & Planning Office

# College Technology Plan Update

## **Introduction**

Initiatives related to the on-going college commitment to, and focus on distance learning educational offerings dominate technology related activities at the college during the 2006-07 year. In addition, these initiatives are expected to be key elements of technology related enterprises at the college for the foreseeable future.

There are four components to this year's plan: (1) major accomplishments related to information technology related programs, resources and services at the college during 2006-07, (2) short-term (one to two years) information technology initiatives planned for Southwestern, (3) long-term information technology initiatives (two to five years) and (4) an assessment of information technology resources and services at the college. This plan does not focus on highly specific technical details. The college has come to the realization that technology is changing so rapidly that some of the technical details contained in previous plans were obsolete almost as soon as the plans were published. Instead, this plan provides a more general portrait of the direction of technology at the college. The end result of this approach is a document which accurately and effectively addresses technology planning at the college.

## **Major Accomplishments for 2006-07**

- In the past year, SCC has continued to work cooperatively with Drake Enterprises and the Eastern Band of Cherokee to complete the installation of a high-performance fiber-optic network which serves the six North Carolina counties west of the Balsam Mountains, portions of north Georgia, and a portion of eastern Tennessee. This 240 mile network consists of a minimum of 144 fiber strands. Some of the strands are retained by Drake and the Eastern Band, some are dedicated to SCC, and some have been used to create a new company, BalsamWest FiberNET, LLC. One hundred percent of the BalsamWest FiberNET, LLC fiber ring is now "lit". Additional co-location sites may be added in the future. The mission of BalsamWest FiberNET, LLC is to ensure that the region has the tools to participate fully in a global economy by providing open and affordable access to state-of-the-art telecommunications infrastructure. SCC serves on the BalsamWest board of directors as the Community Interest Partner.

SCC has worked collaboratively with many regional partners to develop a plan to utilize this fiber to provide a private telecommunications wide area network for all of the educational institutions in the far-western region of the state. As a result, 70 public schools in the six counties served by the network have signed a contract with the Appalachian Strategic Alliance Partnership (ASAP). The Partnership consists of Blue Ridge Mountain Electric Membership Cooperative, Drake, the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians, BalsamWest FiberNET and Southwestern Community College. During 2006-07 the majority of public schools were connected to the network. This connection enables students and teachers to electronically connect with one another and anywhere in the world—and bring never-before-imagined resources into the classroom—all at the speed of light.

- The college continued to expand its distance learning course offerings during the 2006-07 year. As was the case during the last several years, much of the growth was in Web-centered and Web-enhanced offerings. This growth is evidenced by the 113 percent enrollment increase in these courses from Spring 2004 to Spring 2007. This increase would be even more dramatic if Hybrid courses were included in the analysis.
- Recognizing that many aspects of the college phone system are outdated, a priority was given to upgrading this system. This includes a total conversion to Voice IP phones. However, the college is also analyzing other needed upgrades, such as switches, etc. in order to ensure the overall system is current and reliable. This transition should eventually result in lower telecommunication costs for the college and will also increase overall productivity.
- The college continues to expand the width and breadth of information available for students on the college webpage, as well as for faculty and staff.
- The college evaluated various options for the course management software associated with online classes. After analyzing the various options, the college selected the Enterprise Version of BlackBoard. This software significantly upgrades the features available to both faculty and students teaching/taking online courses.
- The college continued the conversion to the Colleague computing system. The focus during 2006-07 was the conversion of the student record component from the Unix system to the Colleague System. The successful conversion occurred in Summer, 2007.

## **Short-Term Information Technology Initiatives**

Initiatives addressed in this section are those which the college plans to implement within the next one to two years. This includes those projects which will be fully underway/completed within this time frame as well as those which will be initiated but not completed as well.

- The regional education wide area network will be implemented. Gigabit Ethernet connectivity will be available to all of the educational institutions in the region to permanently eliminate recurring transport costs, increase capacity and reliability, and to deliver many educational applications. At this point this project is about 80 percent complete.
- All existing CommunityLink interactive television sites will be equipped with Tandberg Video Conferencing Units, including some Tandberg Educator Series comprehensive distance learning classroom equipment.
- Drake Enterprises and the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians will make a gift to SCC of approximately 20 strands of fiber on their completed 240+ mile high-performance network. SCC will utilize this gift as an additional resource to connect its campus sites for educational purposes.
- SCC will continue serving in its capacity of Community Interest Partner for BalsamWest FiberNET, LLC, the fiber-optic telecommunications company created by Drake Enterprises and the Eastern Band. In that role, SCC will pay particular attention to the strands of fiber reserved for philanthropic community and economic development in western North Carolina.
- Continue the upgrade of the college's phone system, including the related core electronic system.
- Finalize any remaining issues as a result of the migration of the college's administrative computing system to the Colleague System (referred to as the Information System for the Future in prior reports). The main focus over the next couple of years will likely be in the category of troubleshooting as the college adapts to this new system. In addition, there will likely be some additional training for users. Some of the training may be in-house while other training session will be coordinated by the North Carolina Community College System.
- Pursue the necessary funding to enable the implementation of the document imaging capability at the college. Part of the cost is associated with the need to install an archive server. The hardware and software utilized for this initiative will facilitate the storage of many of the college's key reports and documents.
- Implement the Campus EAI Project. The college obtained a \$900,000 grant through Oracle and Campus EAI to fund a web portal project which would provide students, faculty and staff with single sign-on access to numerous application portals. The overall intent of this concept is to facilitate the ability of students to access any of their personal records or to acquire any information they may need concerning the college via a single springboard with only one log-in requirement. For example, students would access their student e-mail, access their student record,

access any on-line course they may be taking, etc. through this process. In addition to the benefits this offers to students, it also has benefits to the college due to the security features it provides.

- The development of the new campus in Macon County will result in a number of challenges and opportunities in the area of information technology. The necessary information technology infrastructure for the new campus has been installed. Additional elements and features will be added as necessary. In addition, the college will need to evaluate the additional technical staff resources needed to support the technology at the new campus.
- The college will continue work which emerged from its discussions of potential projects for its Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) as part of its reaffirmation effort with the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. The original topic of the QEP was Improving Distance and Technology-Enhanced Learning from a Learning College Perspective. However, concerns with how to measure progress in student learning resulted in the elimination of this project as a viable QEP topic. However, the college recognized that this project was important to the institution and its ability to serve distance learning students. As a result, a committee was appointed to continue the work on a number of important initiatives which emerged from this topic.

### **Long-Term Information Technology Initiatives**

Initiatives addressed in this section are those which the college plans to implement within the next two to five years.

- The schools served by the regional education wide area network will be focusing on the deployment of various applications to improve the learning opportunities for students throughout the region. Some examples of applications that the schools may choose to deploy include:
  - Access to HDTV
  - Real-Time Course Sharing via Interactive Television Systems
  - Virtual Field Trips
  - On-line Teacher Training
  - Wider Distribution of Educational Resources such as the Adventures of the American Mind, NovaNet, etc.
  - Access to Educational Activities for Homebound Students
  - On-line Mentoring and Tutoring
  - Shared Software Applications
  - Digital Literacy Training
  - Basic Skills, GED, ESL via Technology
  - Public Access Spaces
  - Shared Computing, Printing, and Other Electronic Devices
  - Increased Security
  - Interactive Among Sites

The Schools will also begin to explore the development of their own unique applications that could be beta-tested and shared with other regions of the State and across the Nation. In addition, the schools will begin “telling their story” across the State and Nation—as a best practice.

- SCC will continue serving in its capacity of Community Interest Partner for BalsamWest FiberNET, LLC. In that role, SCC will continue to pay particular attention to the strands of fiber reserved for philanthropic community and economic development in western North Carolina. SCC will also seek to share this model with other communities across North Carolina and the nation.
- Although listed under short-term initiatives, the conversion of the college administrative computing system to the Information System for the Future (Colleague) also has long-term implications as well. This conversion is currently being implemented at institutions within the North Carolina Community College System. The final phase of this project will be the conversion of all student records to this new system. This will be a very time consuming transition, as a result it will likely be several more years before all phases of this project are fully operational.
- While also addressed under short-term initiatives, the development of a new campus in Macon County will likely include long-term technology-related initiatives and challenges.
- It is anticipated that the regional telecommunication initiative will result in the availability of greater Internet bandwidth at more affordable prices. This project will enhance communication with public schools and other users (more video-conferencing, file sharing, etc.). In addition, this will enable the college to remove servers from the off-campus centers and centralize them at a location on the Sylva Campus.
- The college anticipates continued growth of its on-line course offerings (with increases in both the number of students enrolled and the number of faculty teaching via this instructional method).
- The college recognizes that the expected increase in the number of servers, users and applications will require additional technology support personnel in the future. It is projected that at least two new support staff will be required over the next five years in order to meet the increased demands on the college’s information technology system.

### **Assessment of Information Technology Resources and Services at the College**

The college acknowledges that a critical component of technology planning is an assessment of the effectiveness of that technology. Southwestern conducts several surveys which include questions designed to assess the overall level of satisfaction (by both students and faculty/staff) with those resources and services related to information technology. These surveys include the Faculty/Staff Evaluation of College Services and the Student Climate Survey. Both of these are administered annually. In addition, the college has developed the Distance Learning Survey which is designed to assess the level of satisfaction of those students who are enrolled in classes utilizing the various distance learning mediums employed by the college. This survey is administered in Spring Semester of each year. Tables 1 - 3 provide the results from the most recent surveys for those questions relating to information technology. As the tables indicate, students as well as faculty and staff are highly satisfied with most aspects of information technology at the college.

Table1. Results of Faculty/Staff Evaluation of College Services Survey, 2004 - 2007

		% Don't Know	% Strongly Disagreeing	% Disagreeing	% Agreeing	% Strongly Agreeing	Mean
The e-mail system is effective and enables better communication.	2004	6.1%	1.7%	5.2%	56.5%	30.4%	3.23
	2005	0.0%	3.0%	8.9%	47.5%	40.6%	3.26
	2006	0.0%	0.9%	7.5%	56.1%	35.5%	3.26
	2007	2.6%	0.9%	5.2%	57.8%	33.6%	3.27
The speed of accessing external networks such as the Internet is adequate.	2004	7.8%	6.1%	24.3%	44.3%	17.4%	2.79
	2005	1.0%	7.9%	14.9%	48.5%	27.7%	2.97
	2006	0.9%	6.5%	9.3%	56.1%	27.1%	3.05
	2007	3.4%	2.6%	12.1%	51.7%	30.2%	3.13
The college's internal data network is sufficiently reliable.	2004	11.3%	2.6%	12.2%	53.9%	20.0%	3.03
	2005	5.9%	1.0%	10.9%	53.5%	28.7%	3.17
	2006	1.9%	2.8%	12.1%	57.9%	25.2%	3.08
	2007	9.5%	0.9%	4.3%	62.1%	23.3%	3.19
I am aware of procedures for requesting technological support/reporting problems.	2004	8.0%	1.8%	6.2%	60.2%	23.9%	3.15
	2005	4.0%	0.0%	2.0%	55.4%	38.6%	3.38
	2006	0.9%	0.0%	3.7%	59.8%	35.5%	3.32
	2007	6.1%	0.9%	6.1%	54.8%	32.2%	3.26
The college's information system meets my needs for accessing student records and other college information.	2004	31.3%	3.5%	14.8%	38.3%	12.2%	2.86
	2005	19.0%	7.0%	16.0%	39.0%	19.0%	2.86
	2006	5.7%	1.9%	5.7%	57.5%	29.2%	3.21
	2007	13.8%	3.4%	9.5%	48.3%	25.0%	3.10
The college webpage is a convenient resource for accessing current and accurate college information.	2004	7.0%	0.9%	9.6%	47.8%	34.8%	3.25
	2005	3.0%	2.0%	5.0%	44.0%	46.0%	3.38
	2006	0.9%	0.0%	1.9%	49.5%	47.7%	3.46
	2007	5.2%	0.0%	2.6%	49.1%	43.1%	3.43
Computer/technology support staff respond to my requests for help in a timely, professional and courteous manner.	2004	7.9%	3.5%	7.0%	44.7%	36.8%	3.25
	2005	4.0%	1.0%	7.0%	52.0%	36.0%	3.28
	2006	0.0%	0.0%	6.5%	51.4%	41.1%	3.33
	2007	6.1%	3.5%	3.5%	45.2%	41.7%	3.33
Overall, I am satisfied with Information Technology resources.	2004	6.0%	0.9%	6.9%	62.9%	23.3%	3.16
	2005	3.0%	1.0%	5.9%	55.4%	34.7%	3.28
	2006	1.0%	0.0%	4.8%	58.1%	36.2%	3.32
	2007	4.3%	0.9%	4.3%	58.6%	31.9%	3.27

Table1. Results of Faculty/Staff Evaluation of College Services Survey, 2004 – 2007 (Cont.)

		% Don't Know	% Strongly Disagreeing	% Disagreeing	% Agreeing	% Strongly Agreeing	Mean
Distance Learning facilities are adequate.	2004	46.1%	0.0%	7.8%	33.9%	12.2%	3.08
	2005	30.6%	3.1%	4.1%	38.8%	23.5%	3.19
	2006	30.2%	1.9%	8.5%	30.2%	25.5%	3.18
	2007	31.0%	0.0%	3.4%	42.2%	23.3%	3.29
Distance Learning resources are adequate.	2004	46.1%	0.0%	10.4%	31.3%	12.2%	3.03
	2005	30.6%	2.0%	9.2%	37.8%	20.4%	3.10
	2006	28.3%	1.9%	14.2%	30.2%	25.5%	3.11
	2007	31.0%	0.0%	2.6%	45.7%	20.7%	3.26
Distance Learning staff respond to requests promptly.	2004	40.0%	0.0%	4.3%	33.0%	22.6%	3.30
	2005	31.3%	3.0%	4.0%	33.3%	28.3%	3.26
	2006	31.1%	1.9%	3.8%	21.7%	41.5%	3.49
	2007	30.2%	0.0%	0.9%	37.1%	31.9%	3.44
Distance Learning staff are helpful and knowledgeable.	2004	39.1%	3.5%	3.5%	30.4%	23.5%	3.21
	2005	30.0%	8.0%	2.0%	33.0%	27.0%	3.13
	2006	28.3%	1.9%	5.7%	22.6%	41.5%	3.45
	2007	27.6%	0.9%	0.0%	40.5%	31.0%	3.40
The Distance Learning program is effective in meeting the educational needs of students who take distance learning courses.	2004	43.1%	0.9%	6.0%	32.8%	17.2%	3.17
	2005	32.0%	6.0%	8.0%	34.0%	20.0%	3.00
	2006	29.2%	0.9%	9.4%	31.1%	29.2%	3.25
	2007	32.8%	0.0%	2.6%	41.4%	23.3%	3.31

Table 2. Results of Student Climate Survey, 2004-2007

		% Strongly Disagreeing	% Disagreeing	% Agreeing	% Strongly Agreeing	Mean
I am satisfied with the quality of computer hardware and software at SCC.	2004	6.6%	11.2%	53.9%	28.4%	3.04
	2005	6.0%	10.7%	50.0%	33.3%	3.11
	2006	4.0%	9.9%	53.5%	32.7%	3.15
	2007	7.7%	15.9%	51.5%	24.9%	2.94
Appropriate technology is effectively incorporated into classroom instruction.	2004	3.3%	9.1%	63.4%	24.2%	3.09
	2005	1.5%	6.5%	62.8%	29.1%	3.20
	2006	4.2%	4.2%	60.5%	31.2%	3.19
	2007	2.1%	13.9%	62.2%	21.8%	3.04
I am satisfied with my ability to access my course grades on-line.	2004	6.2%	6.8%	56.8%	30.2%	3.11
	2005	1.2%	7.4%	49.2%	42.2%	3.32
	2006	4.9%	4.2%	50.3%	40.6%	3.27
	2007	3.4%	8.3%	58.5%	29.8%	3.15
I am satisfied with the performance of the Internet on the campus.	2004	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
	2005	4.1%	7.0%	57.0%	32.0%	3.17
	2006	5.0%	8.0%	57.2%	29.8%	3.12
	2007	4.4%	10.9%	59.0%	25.8%	3.06
I am satisfied with the variety of distance learning course offerings.	2004	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
	2005	5.9%	17.1%	52.4%	24.6%	2.96
	2006	6.0%	15.5%	57.1%	21.5%	2.94
	2007	6.7%	12.8%	67.2%	13.3%	2.87
I am satisfied with my ability to enroll in distance learning classes.	2004	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
	2005	4.2%	5.3%	60.3%	30.2%	3.16
	2006	3.0%	9.1%	61.0%	26.8%	3.12
	2007	3.5%	11.2%	61.8%	23.5%	3.05

Table 2. Results of Student Climate Survey, 2004-2007 (Cont.)

		% Strongly Disagreeing	% Disagreeing	% Agreeing	% Strongly Agreeing	Mean
I am satisfied with the on-line student orientation process at SCC.	2004	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
	2005	4.7%	7.6%	57.1%	30.6%	3.14
	2006	2.6%	9.5%	63.2%	24.7%	3.10
	2007	5.7%	10.8%	65.0%	18.5%	2.96
The quality of my distance learning classes is equal to that of my traditional classes.	2004	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
	2005	7.6%	11.0%	51.7%	29.7%	3.03
	2006	5.0%	14.5%	54.0%	26.5%	3.02
	2007	8.4%	17.5%	57.3%	16.8%	2.83
The SCC student e-mail system is an effective mechanism for communicating with the college.	2004	7.6%	8.9%	57.3%	26.3%	3.02
	2005	5.8%	5.8%	51.9%	36.5%	3.19
	2006	7.3%	9.7%	53.8%	29.2%	3.05
	2007	7.6%	10.1%	62.1%	20.2%	2.95

Table 3. Results of Distance Learning Survey, 2004 - 2007

		% Strongly Disagree	% Somewhat Disagree	% Neither Agree or Disagree	% Somewhat Agree	% Strongly Agree	Mean
Adequate Internet access was available to me on campus.	2004	0.0%	0.0%	48.3%	6.9%	44.8%	3.97
	2005	0.0%	0.0%	41.4%	10.0%	48.6%	4.07
	2006	0.0%	0.7%	21.3%	10.6%	67.4%	4.45
	2007	0.0%	0.7%	39.0%	16.3%	44.0%	4.04
I would take another distance education class in the future.	2004	0.0%	3.4%	6.9%	20.7%	69.0%	4.56
	2005	4.3%	4.3%	5.7%	8.6%	77.1%	4.50
	2006	2.8%	3.5%	5.6%	9.2%	78.9%	4.58
	2007	3.5%	0.7%	3.5%	9.8%	82.5%	4.67
The orientation prepared me to use the technology associated with this class.	2004	3.4%	20.7%	34.5%	20.7%	20.7%	3.35
	2005	2.9%	0.0%	34.3%	30.0%	32.9%	3.90
	2006	2.1%	5.6%	29.6%	22.5%	40.1%	3.93
	2007	2.1%	4.2%	46.2%	23.1%	24.5%	3.64
The instructor was comfortable with the technology used in this class.	2004	3.4%	10.3%	20.7%	24.1%	41.4%	3.91
	2005	5.7%	14.3%	12.9%	21.4%	45.7%	3.87
	2006	2.8%	4.9%	17.6%	15.5%	59.2%	4.23
	2007	0.7%	3.5%	14.0%	17.5%	64.3%	4.41
The technology worked well most of the time.	2004	3.4%	10.3%	20.7%	24.1%	41.4%	3.91
	2005	0.0%	8.6%	0.0%	40.0%	51.4%	4.34
	2006	1.4%	4.9%	5.6%	26.0%	62.0%	4.42
	2007	1.4%	2.1%	6.3%	27.3%	62.9%	4.48
The technology enabled me to take courses otherwise unavailable to me.	2004	0.0%	3.4%	24.1%	6.9%	65.5%	4.35
	2005	1.4%	2.9%	15.9%	15.9%	63.8%	4.39
	2006	2.1%	2.8%	14.8%	16.2%	64.1%	4.37
	2007	0.7%	2.8%	11.3%	14.1%	71.1%	4.52

Table 3. Results of Distance Learning Survey, 2004 - 2007 (Cont.)

		% Strongly Disagree	% Somewhat Disagree	% Neither Agree or Disagree	% Somewhat Agree	% Strongly Agree	Mean
The technology used in this class contributed to a positive learning experience.	2004	0.0%	6.9%	17.2%	27.6%	48.3%	4.17
	2005	4.3%	2.9%	12.9%	31.4%	48.6%	4.17
	2006	0.7%	5.0%	6.4%	24.8%	63.1%	4.45
	2007	2.8%	4.2%	9.8%	18.9%	64.3%	4.38

As in previous years, analysis of the survey results indicates high levels of satisfaction in technology resources and services at the college by both students and employees. That being said, survey results have been monitored for a number of years for some areas where the data suggest a close scrutiny is warranted. For example, the college has been monitoring the response of faculty and staff to the question of “the college’s information system meets my needs for accessing student records and other college information” (Table 1). The mean for this question on the 2003 Survey was 2.96, with just over 18 percent of respondents expressing dissatisfaction with the information system. In 2004, the mean for this question declined to 2.86, with again just over 18 percent of respondents expressing dissatisfaction. In 2005, the mean for this question remained steady at 2.86. The percentage of respondents expressing dissatisfaction increased somewhat to 23 percent. Satisfaction levels increased markedly in 2006 however, with the mean rising to 3.21, and the percentage of respondents indicating dissatisfaction decreasing to less than 8 percent. In 2007, the mean was 3.10 and the percentage of respondents indicating dissatisfaction increased somewhat to 17 percent. Previous levels of dissatisfaction, as expressed in this survey, were not surprising, as the college acknowledged the shortcomings of this system. However, no action was taken on this issue, as the college was in the process of converting from the older Unix system to the new Colleague System. This conversion is well underway, as both the financial and human resources areas at Southwestern have converted to the new system. Student records will go live with this system effective Fall Semester 2007. All 58 institutions in the North Carolina Community College System are converting to this new system.

Another issue which has been monitored for a number of years emerged from the Student Climate Survey (Table 2) concerning student satisfaction with the quality of computer hardware and software at SCC. The level of satisfaction on this question improved slightly in 2005 (although almost 17 percent of respondents still expressed some degree of dissatisfaction. Further improvement was registered in 2006 as the mean increased to 3.15 and the percentage of respondents indicating dissatisfaction declined to just under 14 percent. However, in 2007 the mean declined to 2.94 and the percentage of respondents indicating dissatisfaction rose to over 23 percent. To help address this issue, the college expended over \$350,000 from the Title III program for technology-related equipment in programs and laboratories. While this expenditure has helped, the college recognizes that many of its students possess the latest in computer

hardware and software at home. As a result, students' expectations for the availability of cutting-edge technology resources at the college remain very high. The college strives to equip its computer labs with current hardware and software. However, it is a financial challenge to always provide the very latest in computer hardware. The college will continue to monitor the results to this question to ensure the college is meeting the expectations of its students in this regard.

The college is also closely monitoring the results to another question from the Student Climate Survey concerning the satisfaction with the variety of distance learning course offerings. In 2005 and 2006 the mean scores for this question were 2.96 and 2.94 respectively. Also, the percentage of respondents indicating dissatisfaction with this area was 23.0 and 21.5 percent, respectively. In 2007 the mean score declined to 2.87 (on a positive note, the percentage of respondents indicating dissatisfaction decreased somewhat over prior years to 19.5 percent). The college recognizes this is an area of high demand for students. However, meeting this growing demand is a challenge to the college's financial, human and technical resources. In an effort to meet this demand, the number of distance learning course offerings at the college has grown exponentially over the past four to five years.

Also, the college has created a relatively new Distance Learning Specialist position. This individual works with faculty, assisting their efforts to develop and enhance distance learning classes. The college will continue to monitor the results to this question, as well as its efforts to meet the growing demand for these course offerings.

Finally, the results of the survey administered each year to those students taking distance learning classes are included in Table 3. The results of this survey for 2004 through 2007 indicate a generally high degree of satisfaction with all aspects of the college's distance learning effort. One issue which has been monitored for some time is the question concerning "the instructor was comfortable with the technology used in this class." The percentage of respondents disagreeing with this statement increased from almost 14 percent in 2004 to 20 percent in 2005. One factor contributing to the declining scores on this topic is the increase in the number of new faculty teaching distance learning classes. Like a number of institutions, Southwestern has made every effort to meet the rapidly growing demand by students for distance learning offerings. As a result, the number of distance learning offerings and consequently, the number of faculty who are new to this teaching method have increased accordingly. As mentioned previously, the college has taken an important step to assist faculty with using distance learning technology by adding a new Distance Learning Specialist position. The person in this capacity is working with faculty to enhance their ability to utilize the various technologies associated with the college's distance learning courses. This assistance, combined with the increasing familiarity of faculty with the technology utilized, appears to be addressing problems in this area. In 2006, the percentage of respondents indicating dissatisfaction on this issue declined to less than 8 percent. Further improvement was noted in 2007, as the percentage indicating dissatisfaction declined to just over 4 percent. It is anticipated that the results on this question in future surveys will also indicate a decline in student dissatisfaction levels.