Final Report – Work Group 5

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Background: This workgroup has collected information about the physical & technological capacity of the Cheney and Spokane campuses. We have reviewed the Strategic Planning White Paper, the EWU Academic Space Profile, The EWU Information Technology Master Plan 2001-2008, the Information and Technology Portfolio, the dean of libraries & chief information officer and director the Enterprise systems regarding technical capabilities of enhanced and tele-video classrooms. Following are our vision statements and strategies/goals to achieve them by the year 2010.

Academic Vision: (1) Eastern will have comfortable, modern and modular facilities for learning and teaching.

Current status:
Classroom-use analysis reveals that 85 percent of total seating capacity is used between 8 a.m. and 1 p.m. After 1 p.m., classroom demand is considerably reduced. Therefore, the use of enhanced classrooms and tele-video classes is reduced. Within the next three years, the addition of the School of Computing and Engineering Sciences and the remodeling of Senior Hall will add two large classrooms, 11 medium-sized classrooms and a minimum of one enhanced classroom with tele-video capabilities.

By 2010, classroom capacity will have increased by a minimum of 10 percent. As enrollment steadily increases, the Cheney campus will continue to have sufficient classroom space if the space is used properly. However, some programs may temporarily experience classroom shortage due to the nature of their discipline and/or curricula.

For example, laboratory based courses cannot accommodate a large classroom full of students without the addition of laboratory space and/or the course availability beyond 8 a.m.-5 p.m. However, space concerns could be accommodated by altering curriculum requirements or adding computer assisted instructions or a combination of both.

In addition to the space, technical support for use of these classrooms needs improving. We therefore, make the following recommendations to overcome existing and future deficiencies in the physical facilities for instruction.

Note: We have identified “unknown” factors, which could change the need for classrooms based on their use and scheduling. These factors are:
- transition from quarter to semester
- collaboration with Community College of Spokane and local high schools (potential space sharing)
- Additional off campus partnerships on the west side of the state and Spokane (including additional space on the Riverpoint campus and sale of the Spokane Center)

Recommendations:
(1) An efficient use of existing facilities should be explored by offering classes in the afternoon when many classrooms remain empty. A study reported in the *White Paper* supports this recommendation. Otherwise, additional classrooms may be required to meet increases in enrollment. This would mean building new space, modifying existing under-utilized space or leasing new space in the community. Alternately, we need to explore the use of portable classrooms for the Cheney campus. Classes with enrollment less than 30 students can be taught in portables. Such portables can be situated in the parking lot #12 (behind Woodward stadium) or near the Red barn for short-term needs. The same approach can also be used to find office space for part-time faculty.

In a similar manner extra space for the classes meeting in Spokane metropolitan area can be found through a short term leasing throughout the community, including the Community Colleges of Spokane. An additional benefit to community leasing, is stronger ties with the community colleges, therefore, improved transitions for students into Eastern.

**Success Indicator:**
(a) A plan is developed before the end of academic year 2005-2006, which identifies potential classroom space for Cheney & Spokane area to manage increased enrollment. Such plan is to be reviewed every other year by a group of faculty, students and staff.

(2) Centralizing classroom scheduling through the Registrar’s office is another way to increase efficiency in classroom use. This idea, although not popular with stakeholders, can become acceptable if a well-defined policy on classroom assignments is developed and used consistently. Such a policy could only be effective if all concerned parties were involved in developing it.

**Success Indicator:**
(b) A policy for assigning classroom is developed in the academic year 2005-2006 with the help of the Registrar, group of faculty, students & staff. The Registrar or his/her designee will be responsible for adhering to such a policy.

(3) Many existing classrooms have not been upgraded for long time to replace old furniture, or to facilitate appropriate use of the writing surface and projection screen simultaneously. A schedule for their upgrade already exists. We recommend periodic review of this list as and when funds become available to reprioritize the list with the changing needs of the programs and curricula. It is our hope that such a review will be conducted in consultations with the space users. We have cannot determine the remodeling cost at present.

**Success Indicator:**
(c) A list of classroom slated for upgrade is developed with inputs from students, faculty and staff. Such a list will be reviewed periodically to adjust to changed circumstances or to take advantage of unexpected opportunity.
(4) Locations of the projection screen need to be changed to facilitate simultaneous use for the board and the projection screen in many classrooms. The total cost for which can be determined after a campus-wide survey.

**Success Indicator:**
(d) A sum of $25,000.00 is set aside from the university’s budget for minor upgrades or for emergency (e.g. replacing broken furniture, addition of a SMART Board, etc.)

(5) Classroom design and seating arrangements should be flexible to facilitate better use of technology, to meet different pedagogical needs of the faculty and the programs.

**Success Indicator:**
(e) An ad-hoc group of faculty, students and staff is formed to provide input regarding classroom upgrades based on pedagogical needs, increased flexibility in seating arrangements, etc.

**Academic Vision:** (2) Eastern will use technology to its fullest potential for learning and teaching.

**Current status:** Status of the use of technology and some potential issues have been summarized very well in the Information Technology Master Plan 2001-2008 and therefore will not be restated here (http://www.ewu.edu/x17717.xml). At present only two to three classrooms with 50 or less seats have “Enhanced classroom” designation. As more faculty move to incorporate technology in their classes, lack of adequate facilities in small-medium sized classrooms will become more acute. The present level of support for using these tools and maintaining them is not adequate for Cheney and Spokane campuses. This support needs to be enhanced. All new and remodeled classrooms will be constructed such that they can be easily upgraded into enhanced classrooms.

The VPnet or tele-video classrooms make it possible for holding synchronous classes at two or more physically separate locations. They can enhance our off-site offerings and thus can help reduce classroom size limitations or classroom availability during “prime-time.” Currently, tele-video classrooms use phone-based technology and are under utilized. On the other hand, VPnet is new to this campus and only recently is being tested. However, both the technologies will be useful in communications with off-campus sites and in promoting collaborations with other institutions across the state.

Computer technology is used both, by faculty and the students. Eastern has a plan to provide all tenure, tenure-track faculty with adequate computer hardware and limited support for its use. But, we do not have any plan to equip special faculty or students in a similar manner. However, we do provide our students with some technical support. The students rely upon computer labs for hardware/software. These computers are immovable and space-bound. With an exception of 2 classrooms on the Cheney campus, there are no other classrooms on this campus where students can use computers during regular classes. This deprives them of opportunities to learn on their own or to be able tap into vast resources of the Internet in the classroom. The instructor can engage in two-way communication with the students in
class. Furthermore, the technology can now allow the students and instructors both to tap into the vast repository of knowledge available freely on the Internet.

**Recommendations:**

(1) Increase support for use of computer assisted & other technology in small-medium classrooms. Two slightly different approaches are recommended to reduce this problem. In the first we take a low cost approach, with portable LCD projectors and laptop computers. Alternatively, a bit more expensive but more permanent and elaborate hardware can be installed in classrooms to add multipurpose functionality. Most likely a combination of both will be required.

(a) An LCD projector and a laptop computer would require an investment of approximately $5,000 per set. They can be housed either in the department or loaned to faculty upon request. (Placing them in the department may be better as it avoids administrative cost associated with lending them out and retrieving them for later use.) Our recommendation is to equip 10 classrooms in 2005-2006 and another 10 in the following academic year at the cost of about $50,000 per year. Alternatively, in place of a projector and a computer, only the projectors could be made available to the departments since many faculty have their own laptops. The $50,000 could be used to provide projectors to more departments.

(b) A second approach is to install a projector, a document camera and other accessories, as recommended by the Information Resources, in classroom ceilings. The hardware cost (with computer) can range upward of approximately $12,000 per classroom. A decision about what equipment to install should be made in cooperation with the departments concerned and director of the Enterprise systems.

**Success Indicator:**

(a) A special fund in the range of $50,000.00 to 75,000.00 is kept aside for LCD projectors, computers & other hardware required for upgrading medium to small classrooms. The ACC and the CIO will recommend types of hardware & software to be included in each classroom. (The idea here is not to make all classrooms alike, but to upgrade them for technologies used 80-85% of the time and to get bigger bang for the bucks).

(2) Develop and implement a plan(s) to upgrade hardware and software for faculty (tenured, tenure-track and special faculty) and staff through discussions with ACC and CIO.

(3) Increased technological capacity will require an increase in client support, which includes additional personnel, repair and maintenance of the equipment. In addition, changes in the electrical, and physical facilities need review. We are unable to estimate the total cost of such an endeavor but do recommend that a portion of the budget be kept aside for this purpose every year.
Success Indicator:
(a) Additional staff to provide support for faculty’s use and for students’ use of technology be provided in the year 2005-2006. (Consult Information Technology Master Plan, the ACC and the CIO to identify staffing needs)

(4) Encourage use of Vpnet or tele-video classrooms by providing faculty training and support.

Success Indicator:
(a) At least 2 new courses are offered in the academic year 2005-2006 using Vpnet and/or tele-video classroom.
(b) Hold annual faculty workshops in use of the Vpnet and/or the tele-video technology. (The DEO and the ACC could help organize such events).

(5). Eastern needs to be creative in providing the students with a laptop computer of their own for use in the classrooms.
   (a) Lease laptops/TabletPCs/PocketPCs to incoming freshman/students.
   (b) Checkout laptops for the entire quarter for specific course(s).
   (c) Require incoming freshman to buy a laptop through university bookstore and provide on-campus support.
   (d) Give each incoming Presidential Scholar a laptop instead of a check to make a start on this path.

Success Indicator:
(a) The university should seriously explore possibilities leasing laptops for incoming students through some creative financial deals with the manufacturer. An ad-hoc committee consisting of representatives of ASEWU, ACC, CIO and staff are appointed in the year 2005-2006 to explore this concept.

(6) Increase Wi-Fi connectivity on campus.
Requiring students to use a laptop/TabletPC/PocketPC in classrooms will mean that the university will provide them with access to Internet (LAN or WAN or both). To maintain the portability, it will be necessary to provide them with access to the Internet via wireless network.

Success Indicator:
(a) Every year a new building is added to the existing Wi-Fi network.
(b) The ACC and the CIO will begin assessing needs for Wi-Fi network in the classrooms in buildings where the Wi-Fi network exists in the general purpose area (in other words, extend the Student Technology Fees funded Wi-Fi networks into the classrooms).
Academic Vision: (3) Eastern’s libraries will have and continue to meet the needs of its students, faculty and staff.

Current status: Eastern’s library is struggling to meet its mission due to inadequate financial support when compared with the increases in cost of acquiring and maintaining current collections to support academic programs, which exceeds the normal inflation rate. For example, the cost of periodical subscription has increased by 10% annually over past 5 years whereas there has not been corresponding increase in library’s base budget. In addition, use of technology has changed the way the library meets students’ and faculty needs. Students and faculty both, have increased their use of on-line resources and yet the need for in-print materials such as books, monographs and serials has not decreased significantly. In the last 10 years Eastern has added new programs or upgraded existing programs (from undergraduate programs to graduate programs). Such additions, without any increased funding to compensate for the increased cost, have compounded the problem. In absence of new funding, the library has managed costs by cutting staff positions, postponing staff hires, reducing operating hours and limiting reference librarian services during intersession breaks. The library has valiantly tried to meet the needs of patrons by adding access to on-line periodicals and journals, partially funding staff positions for TechEze program, using interlibrary loan services and by joining a consortium of libraries. Obviously these new directions have their associated costs too, which further reduces the funding for more traditional resources for learning and teaching.

Recommendations:

(1) Appoint an ad-hoc committee to identify the role of library for students, faculty & staff.

**Success Indicator:**
(a) Formation of such an ad-hoc group in 2005-2006 academic year.

(2) Provide additional funds in the base budget when a new program is added or a current program is upgraded.

**Success Indicator:**
(a) Increase in Library’s base budget to accommodate needs of the new programs added in last two academic years.

(3) Increase funding to match increased cost of maintaining library collections.

**Success Indicator:**
(a) Develop a plan to help library to catch up with increased cost over a period of next two-three years. Consult, the LAC and the Dean of the Libraries for needed funds.

(4) Increase funding to support Title III funded services when the grant expires.
(5) Provide additional staff & funds to promote information literacy amongst students & faculty.

**Success Indicator for Recommendations 4 & 5:**
(a) Dean of the Libraries will provide the amount of funds required to support Title III funded services, requirements of
staff & additional funds to support Information Literacy program to benefit students, faculty & staff.
(b) After receiving this input, the Provost will provide funding for these activities.