

University of Massachusetts

Information Technology Council Subcommittee on Academic Technology

Vision and Plan, Phase 2: Integrating the Vision for Learning and Technology at UMass

Updated September 2007

In the Spring of 2005, the Subcommittee on Academic Technology (SAT) completed **Academic Technology for Teaching and Learning[:]** **Vision and Plan**. The "Vision/Plan," as it came to be called, reasserted the centrality both of teaching/learning and technology in the academic life, recognized advances the University had already achieved, and identified preliminary steps toward realizing the following vision for 2015:

The University of Massachusetts is recognized as a leading university in using academic technology to improve teaching, learning, and scholarly exchange, and in evolving its role as a university in an information age society.

Following the Vision/Plan's release and endorsement, the SAT, the Presidents Office, UMassOnline, and campus agencies have been exploring what such a vision means operationally. Working Groups examined practice and made recommendations in the areas of Assessment, Course and Curriculum Redesign, Faculty Engagement and the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning, Physical and Virtual Learning Environments, and Support Services. University-wide symposia have probed assessment of learning outcomes and programs and the use of electronic portfolios. The University's academic technology grant program was more than doubled, with the increase supporting Strategic Initiative Grants and funding for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning.

This summary presents a digest of recommendations for further action coming out of the SAT's deliberations and the reports from the Working Groups named above. We call for enhancements in the following broad areas:

- **Integration: Teaching & Learning, Technology, Institution**
- **Support**
 - Support Services
 - Faculty Engagement
 - Infrastructure
- **Organizational Processes**
 - Assessment
 - Collaboration

The chart below details imperatives in each area. An 'x' identifies responsible parties with respect to each imperative; 'XX' indicates those chiefly responsible. A timeline is filled

in for several of the imperatives. These imperatives constitute a guideline for the SAT's activities and, we hope, for all the constituencies the SAT serves. For further information, we invite you to contact any members of the [SAT](#), which is co-chaired by [Bob Green](#) (Vice Chancellor for Library Services, Information Resources, and Technology, Dartmouth) and [Mark Schlesinger](#) (Associate Vice President for Academic Technology, President's Office).

Imperative	Who										When			Comment	
	Presidents Office	ITC	SAT	Chancellors	Provosts	CIO's	Deans/ Chairs	Faculty	Fac Dev	UMOL /CE	FY 07	FY 08-09	Beyond		
Integration: Teaching & Learning, Technology, Institution															
1	Assure that learning and technology issues are infused in strategic planning.	XX	x	x	XX	XX	XX	x	x		x	Raise awareness	Do it		SAT campus visits
2	Assure that centers for the improvement of teaching and agencies involved in providing technology training for faculty either merge or work closely together (i.e., that teaching, learning, and technology are integrated among themselves).					XX	XX				x	x	Create Fac Dev SIG		
3	Assure a strong academic presence in policy issues involving learning and technology, through:														
a.	<i>Provost staff assigned to provide leadership in this area.</i>					XX									
b.	<i>Faculty representation on committees concerned with academic technology.</i>					XX	XX	x	X						
4	Provide mechanisms for cross-functional communication and collaboration (e.g., between IT and the academic enterprise; providers, users, and trainers).	x				XX	XX					x			
5	Provide resources indicative of the relative importance of teaching and learning, and the role of academic technology in enhancing teaching and learning.	XX			XX	x	x	x	x						
Support: Support Services															
6	The University should study and benchmark staffing levels in support service functions at peer institutions.		x			XX	XX						Core Data Study		
7	Campuses should consider the best ways to organize support services.					XX	XX				x	x			
8	The University should encourage opportunities for support services staff to share expertise and technology use across campuses														
a.	<i>To this end, we urge a return to the level of intercampus support service collaboration that existed under the SAT's earlier instantiation, the Technology for Academic Development Subcommittee.</i>	x	x	XX								x	Establish SIG; SIG Co-Chairs sit on SAT		
b.	<i>We also urge a closer look at hardware and software applications as well as staff expertise that could be shared across campuses in the interest of effectiveness and efficiency.</i>		XX				x					x	Library Directors; Support Staff SIG		
9	The University should encourage the establishment of thresholds for hardware and software. Where possible, such thresholds should apply across campuses in the interest of purchasing power and the provision of support. (The establishment of clear standards would apply across campuses in the interest of purchasing power and the provision of support.)		XX				x				x	x	Review thresholds on campuses	Review thresholds on campuses	
Support: Faculty Engagement															
10	Enhance incentives and rewards and provide opportunities for inquiry into teaching, learning, and technology.	x		XX		XX		x	x	x	XX		Create Fac Dev SIG		
a.	<i>Continue and enhance the Academic Technology Grant Program.</i>	XX	x	XX		x							Happening	5-Year Assessment of Grants and Projects	
b.	<i>Revisit current mechanisms for assessing teaching and learning, including Annual Faculty Reports, Academic Quality Assessment and Development, and the Periodic Multi-Year Review to examine how best to incorporate encouragements for experimentation.</i>	XX				x		x	x						
c.	<i>Study the development of criteria for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning in the tenure and promotion process.</i>	x				XX		XX	x	x					
11	Provide avenues for inquiry and dissemination.														
a.	<i>Establish an electronic repository of peer reviewed writing on teaching, learning, and technology.</i>	XX		x							x		And Libraries		
b.	<i>Include peer review and dissemination in UMass System-wide professional development opportunities.</i>	x		XX									AT Grant incorporation		
12	Promote the importance of faculty engagement and the scholarship of teaching and learning by celebrating achievement in the scholarship of teaching, learning, and technology, as well as in teaching in general.	x			x	XX						x			Pres Office is exploring process for system-wide award
Support: Infrastructure															

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	Presidents Office	ITC	SAT	Chancellors	Provosts	CIO's	Deans/ Chairs	Faculty	Fac Dev	UMOL /CE	FY 07	FY 08-09	Beyond		
13	Establish best practices and classroom standards, seeking commonality across campuses where possible.		x	XX			x			x	x				Involve: SS and FacDev SIG
14	Promote better connectivity and interoperability within and across campuses to encourage collaboration and improve service.	XX	XX				x				x				UITS, ITC
15	Enhance ongoing R&D across campuses:														
a.	<i>Broker hardware software trials and comparisons.</i>	XX	XX	x			x				x	AT Grants	Sandbox: group; funds		
b.	<i>Absorb risk for experimentation with emerging technologies.</i>	x			x						x				Not every dollar will result in effective adoption
16	Establish and maintain standards for hardware/software maintenance and upgrades, seeking commonality across campuses where possible		x				XX								
17	Assure that a significant number of classrooms (70-80%) are technologically enabled.				x	x	XX								
18	Explore the implications of blended learning and other emerging models for deploying technologies in online and/or face-to-face environments.		x	x			x		x		XX				
Processes: Assessment															
19	Incorporate assessment of student learning, including assessment supported by academic technology, in campus strategic plans.														
a.	<i>Identify mechanisms for continuous quality improvement in curriculum and instruction.</i>			XX?		x		x	x	x	x				
b.	<i>Provide the means to select appropriate tools and train faculty and staff to use them effectively.</i>			x		x	XX	x	x	x	x				Also: UMOL Role
c.	<i>Seek to integrate assessment of student learning with assessment at departmental program and institutional levels.</i>	x		x		XX		x	x			Continue ePortfolio explorations	ditto		
20	Provide incentives for assessment.														
a.	<i>Highlight exemplars.</i>	x		XX		x				XX	x				
b.	<i>Provide informational and expert support for assessment.</i>	x		XX						XX	x	WebSite; FacDev SIG			
21	Assess progress toward the SAT vision.														
a.	<i>Establish process.</i>			XX		x						Plan			
b.	<i>Identify measures of quality improvement.</i>	x		x	XX								Identify measures		
c.	<i>Take measures and incorporate feedback (baseline and subsequently).</i>	x		XX									Ongoing -->		
Processes: Collaboration															
22	Foster intercampus communication														
a.	<i>Provide opportunities for advice and information sharing</i>	x		x	XX						x	SIGs, etc.			
b.	<i>Offer improved technologies for sharing information, in the manner of Groove or SharePoint</i>	XX					x				x	Horizon-Wimba	Groove/SharePoint? Skype?		
23	Share knowledge and expertise.														
a.	<i>Continue symposia and conferences.</i>				XX							Ongoing --->			
b.	<i>Establish and maintain special interest groups.</i>				XX							Ongoing --->			
c.	<i>Provide a vehicle for ready access to information across the UMass campuses.</i>	X		x			x								
24	Enhance inquiry into teaching, learning, and technology.														
a.	<i>Provide a resource bank of materials and writings on the subject.</i>				XX					XX		Start	Grow		Role of FacDev SIG
b.	<i>Explore the establishment of peer-refereed outlets for dissemination of findings.</i>	X			XX					x		Exploring			UMass Press; other vehicles