Office Of Information Technology

Emerging Technology Adoption Process for General Purpose Classrooms

Learner Centered  Discovery Driven  Globally Engaged

WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY
Overview

Purpose: With the speed that technology is introduced to the public, Western Michigan University needs to have a process in place that evaluates emerging classroom technology in order to enhance the learning experience of students. The purpose of this evaluation process is to determine not only if there is a reasonable chance that the technology will be embraced by faculty but also if it works with the current classroom technology infrastructure. This process covers only technology to be evaluated for potential adoption into general purpose classrooms. It does not cover technology that is supported in college- or department-managed specialized classrooms, to include research-funded initiatives.

Background: Complex classroom technology (technology beyond the use of slide projectors, overhead projectors, Cable TV and movie projectors) was introduced in the late 1990’s when 20 classrooms across campus received classroom technology stations (non-mobile wood structure referred to as “bunkers”).

In 2001-2002, a committee was formed to standardize the classroom technology systems. In 2002, seven classrooms were outfitted with the newly developed standard technology stations. Also, in 2002, the new College of Engineering and Applied Sciences building was built with classroom technology already installed. Most of the installation was done according to the standards at the time but additional items were added to the classrooms without any recurring costs to maintain them. In 2003, four more classrooms were outfitted with standard stations.

In 2006, the committee received a commitment of funding from the Provost Office to install classroom technology in 120 classrooms that were general use classrooms as defined by, and scheduled by, the Registrar’s Office. This aggressive three-year plan ended up as a six-year plan with classroom technology installed into 189 classrooms on main campus and in CEAS. The final 30 classrooms were retrofitted in FY 2011-2012.

During the 2006 period, a Classroom Technology team was formed in order to support the growing number of stations and the faculty that use the stations. Also during this period - a maintenance budget and an equipment refreshment budget were established. These two budgets increased in direct proportion to the new classroom technology stations as they were being installed.

During the period from 2006 to 2012, the standards evolved as technology changed (e.g. from analog systems to digital systems). The standards also changed based upon equipment usage levels. Some equipment was not integrated into the instructional delivery so it was removed from the standards definition and the money reallocated to equip more classrooms.

Current Standards
Emerging Technology Adoption Process for General Purpose Classrooms

Classroom technology equipment that OIT is currently installing consist of 1-3 data projectors (depending on the room size), a document camera, a DVD/Blue Ray player, high definition laptop connections, an interactive help system and a microphone system (also depending on the room size)\(^1\).

**Process to Introduce Potential Technology into General Purpose Classrooms**

**Assumptions:**

1. That this process is for technology that 1) is not in the current standards and 2) is slated for general purpose classrooms (and not specialized classrooms).
2. that the process for evaluating and funding emerging classroom technology is different enough that it warrants its own process.
3. the Educational Technology (Ed Tech) Committee will define a process for emerging technology for use in non-general purpose classrooms.

**The process**

The process for introducing emerging technology into general purpose classroom is divided into three distinct phases.

**Phase 1: The Discovery Phase.** This phase begins with faculty initiating a request to their College IT Director. This request specifies the new emerging technology that they would like to be installed in General Purpose classroom(s).

Phase 1 ends at a decision point. Is the classroom a general purpose classroom? If it is not, implementation and support of the technology remains with the college. If it is a general purpose classroom, then

1. the request moves over to OIT with approved “proof of concept” funding from the college
2. a completed Product Review Form (filled in on-line)
3. a product review checklist (an Excel spreadsheet found on-line).
   (These two documents can be found at [https://www.wmich.edu/it/productreview/index.html](https://www.wmich.edu/it/productreview/index.html)).

**Phase 2: The Analysis Phase.** This phase begins with the receipt of Product Review Form and Checklist by OIT. The OIT Reviewer will verify the information. Additionally, the Reviewer will collect additional information from the proposed contract, the vendor, the client and from OIT staff that may be involved.

This packet will be forwarded to the Ed Tech committee for a preliminary review. After any clarifications are completed, the Ed Tech committee will forward the packet to either the Director or Assistant Director of OIT’s Customer Service.

\(^1\) http://www.wmich.edu/classroomtechnology/
Figure 1. Emerging Classroom Technology System Request Process

The Classroom Technology Team will review the product. They will determine if the product will work with the classroom technology equipment in their test area (UCC building, room 2033). If it is compatible, they will install it in 2033 and will invite the requesting faculty to use the product in the teaching environment and/or invite faculty to test the environment by conducting a class(es) in room 2033. Phase 2 ends with the final report, feasibility analysis and recommendations which are all forwarded to the Ed Tech committee.

Phase 3: The Fruition Phase. This phase starts with the Ed Tech committee reviewing the information provided from phase 2. Depending on the information provided, the Ed Tech could send it back to the college or move it forward. To move it forward they will need the Office of Business and Finance and the General Counsel’s office to review the contract and other legal documents to ensure that they adhere to university business and legal standards. The Ed Tech committee then forwards their

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2 The feasibility analysis will contain what it takes to install the product into any general purpose classroom. It will also provide an assessment on whether the product has a reasonable chance of high usage by faculty.
recommendation, legal advice, initial cost to install and recurring cost (costs are determined during the Product Review) to the Academic and Information Technology Council (AITC).

After reviewing the documents, the AITC will either send it back to Ed Tech as not supportable (e.g. too costly) or present it to the Faculty Senate Executive Board to determine if there is a broad base of support for adding the product to general purpose classrooms. If this determination is positive, then the endorsement, other supporting documentation and cost information is presented to the CIO for funding budgeting and implementation.

It should be noted that this process has many recursive aspects to it. At any point in this process, the product documents may be sent back to a certain point for clarification or modification. Once the adjustment(s) is/are made, the documents would continue the vetting process as laid out in this paper.

Please address questions or comments to Edward Kluk at ed.kluk@wmich.edu.

This document has been accepted by:

Faculty Senate Executive Board
On behalf of the Faculty Senate
(William Rantz, President, July 27, 2012)

Faculty Senate
Academic & Information Technology Council
(Alan Rea, Chair, April 24, 2012)

Office of Information Technology
Chief Technology Officer
(Thomas Wolf, CTO, April 24, 2012)

Office of the Provost
Vice Provost for Budget and Personnel and Chief Information Officer
(Dr. James Gilchrist, April 24, 2012)