Technology and the Library at Queens College 2004-2005 Report to the Academic Senate

Submitted by the Special Committee on Technology and the Library
April 18, 2005

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Introduction

The Special Academic Senate Committee on Technology and the Library meets regularly with the three Queens College units responsible for providing, promoting, and facilitating technology and library services on campus: the Library, the Office of Converging Technologies (OCT), and the Assistant to the Provost for Educational Technology (EdTech). Such meetings have provided a forum for the committee's members to review existing policies, encourage and support the coordinated development of the three units, and generate information to share with the Academic Senate. The present report has the objective of disseminating information to the campus community at large on the current and future state of such services, and their impact on the user groups represented in our committee: students and faculty.

The report focuses on this academic year, 2004-2005. Generated based on matters addressed in Fall 2004 and Spring 2005 meetings, the report outlines the committee's activities and discusses summary reports submitted to the committee by each of the three units in March-April 2005, interleaving remarks regarding our vision for future considerations. The three unit reports are included as appendices.

Committee Activities

In this, our second full year of operation, we have filled out our membership roster — albeit with constant changes — and begun to establish our role in the campus community. In addition to our task of nominating members of the Technology Fee Task Force (a formal procedure involving review of applications submitted by interested individuals), we see ourselves as the group that represents student and faculty interests in the way technology is made available to the campus community. Summaries of our discussions and actions taken are available in our minutes, archived on our homepage, http://qcpages.qc.cuny.edu/AcademicSenate/TechLibCom/; the following deserve explicit mention:

- As a direct result of committee discussion on this matter, OCT will support the redirection of electronic mail and servers from qc.edu to qc.cuny.edu, indefinitely or until a university-wide policy beyond local control mandates ceasing such redirection.
- In part because of our discussions with the former Office of Information

Technology, frequently updated network status information is now more accessible, via the Internet (on OCT's homepage) or telephone (by calling the Help Desk).

- We endorsed a policy proposed by the Library to increase fines for overdue Interlibrary Loan books, having collectively found its underlying rationale reasonable.
- We are engaged in an on-going discussion of emerging Open Access models for scholarly publication, compared to more traditional models. We feel that the campus community would benefit from having more information about Open Access publishing, particularly because of its implications regarding the processes of tenure and promotion. We are about to deploy a survey that will help us understand the degree of familiarity, experience, and expertise on campus regarding Open Access publication models. We will open up our discussion on this topic by means of a public bulletin board. We are also planning a colloquium, to be held in the Fall 2005 semester, which will offer faculty a formal forum in which to learn about Open Access publishing.

Unit Reports

The committee requested the administrators of the three units — the Library, OCT, and EdTech — to outline their missions and functions, articulate their relationships to each other, and list key developments, challenges, and opportunities facing them this year. The three unit reports are included as an appendix; we comment selectively on these reports below.

Mission and Functions of the Three Units

The Library, OCT, and EdTech share the task of providing students and faculty with information resources, facilities, and services to support instruction, study, research, communication, and academic life. Because of their variable functions, each unit approaches this task differently:

- The Library is the primary source for information/content in multiple formats. The Library also offers facilities and services to assist independent study and research, and it provides instruction in developing research skills, critical evaluation of information sources, and appropriate search and retrieval skills.
- OCT provides reliable and secure information and communication services, supporting academic, administrative, faculty and student life, through the use of technological solutions.
- EdTech facilitates the use of technology in the classroom by working directly with faculty on solutions, offering training (faculty development), administering the BlackBoard server, reporting technical problems related to CUNY CIS, and reviewing proposals to the Technology Fee Task Force.

Technology Fees

The recently instituted technology fee, overseen by the Technology Fee Task Force (http://qcpages.qc.cuny.edu/provost/Committees/techfee/), has had a positive impact palpable in the accomplishments listed by the three units. Technology fees have not only funded the installation, renovation, and cyclic upgrade of numerous

laboratories across campus. They have also increased the Library's collection, created a Faculty Development Lab, facilitated the future implementation of an active directory system and virtual storage system for students, and made Queens College the most wireless CUNY campus. (See individual reports for additional details.)

Each of the three administrators has independently expressed a need for additional staff in order to more fully and effectively fulfill each of their missions. Increased staffing will promote the units' abilities to support current faculty and student services, to develop new services, and to assess all services. The area of faculty development would benefit from the expertise of an in-house educational technologist. Additional staffing would also help expand systems support should, at least to the weekends (and ideally 24/7), in recognition of the Weekend College, expanded library hours, the increased use of asynchronous teaching through BlackBoard, and the 24/7 availability of the web and the Library's electronic resources. Technology fees should be directed, to the extent possible, toward hiring more personnel.

Despite the number of classrooms that have been made electronic and digital media carts that have been deployed to departments, most college classrooms remain without appropriate equipment or have no ready access to such equipment. To reduce this barrier to using technology in teaching, technology fees should be funneled into the renovation of more classrooms.

The increased number of well-outfitted laboratories has facilitated numerous teaching/learning objectives. However, we are uncertain that the users (both students and faculty) are regularly asked to evaluate the configuration of the facilities and the support available on-site. We commend the fact that the evaluation and implementation of Technology Fee proposals has become streamlined, yet we feel that the outcomes of large-scale projects in particular are not being effectively evaluated. We would welcome information about this from the Technology Fee Task Force.

Library

As noted in the Chief Librarian's report, the library is a large structure which is no longer used in the manner for which it was designed: providing physical access to the stacks for students and researchers. Good progress has been made in transitioning it to a place for study, coupled with administrative support for remote access to information resources.

The Library's acquisition of electronic resources, spurred by Technology Fee allocations and 'economical' consortial purchasing with other academic libraries, has resulted in a great expansion of full text journals available 24/7 to the Queens College community. However, this expansion has not occurred in the print collections, especially in the research monographs so important to many disciplines. The Library has used some of its Technology Fee funds to purchase electronic monographs, but electronic monographs are not yet in an acceptable format for convenient use because of publishers' restrictions on printing and downloading; furthermore, electronic monographs in the humanities are not widely available.

The reliance of the Library on OCT for the installation and management of its

technological infrastructure needs to be reviewed continually. Librarians should not be experts in cables and routers, nor should the OCT staff have expert knowledge of trends in on-line publication. But the boundary between the two administrative units is not sharp, and is complex enough to warrant impartial attention to make sure both sides are working towards the same goals. We note that the relationship between the Library and OCT is mentioned in one paragraph of the Library's report to our committee, and not at all in the OCT report. We find this situation to be a cause for concern.

There are many dynamic and exciting advances being made in the way that information resources are being made available to students and researchers. A key role of the Library at an institution like Queens College is to monitor these changes, to provide access to them, and most importantly to help the college community know about and easily access them. We anticipate benefits from the planned web-based and user-initiated interlibrary loan services. We also note with approval the Library's focus groups on the design of the Library's Web Site. There is a wealth of information available there, but the initial hurdle to access it is high, and we encourage the Library to put resources into several "how to" links that would be most easily accessible to casual and/or new users.

The Library will face an important challenge in the coming year, after Chief Librarian Bonk's retirement takes effect. It will be difficult to fill the position now held by an individual with outstanding talents in management, technology, and traditional library administration, as well as with a deep understanding of Queens College and CUNY.

Office of Converging Technologies

OCT faces formidable challenges because of the pervasive and ever-expanding need for managing the college's technological infrastructure. The staff seems uniformly sincere in its attempts to provide professional service to the college community, but results are mixed. The problem, we think, is the one alluded to in our comments on the Library above: OCT's staff is trained in technological areas and does not have expertise in the core academic areas of the college's mission: instruction and research in the wide range of disciplines characteristic of a liberal arts institution. Consequently, there is a constant degree of stress between OCT as the delivery agent of technology on campus and the academic users of that technology: faculty, students, and librarians. (In addition, OCT has a huge responsibility for serving the administrative segments of the college, an area that is outside the scope of this committee's purview.)

The challenges and opportunities for OCT from our perspective, therefore, lie in developing excellent avenues of communication tailored to the roles and capabilities of its various constituencies. The Help Desk is a promising vehicle, but there is considerable room for improvement with regard to its responsiveness and competence. We feel that one of the areas of responsibility our own committee faces is to step outside the environment in which OCT operates and to investigate ways in which communication channels between OCT and the academic interests of the college can be opened wider.

Education Technology

Among other functions, the Office of Educational Technology has the potential for playing a critical role as liaison between OCT, the Library, the faculty and, to a lesser extent, the student body. This unit has been instrumental in ensuring the stable deployment of BlackBoard, which we anticipate will become more and more widespread as it is used not only for managing courses, but also for developing other campus communities. We also expect that faculty will continue to profit from the support and equipment available in the Faculty Development Lab.

The challenge of developing a better understanding of online education practices will be addressed through this unit's participation in the CUNY-wide Committee on Distance Education formed by Executive Vice Chancellor Selma Botman. A particular challenge facing EdTech is helping faculty who for one reason or another are not motivated to take the initiative to learn what technological resources are available and what options might exist for managing what may seem to be steep learning curves. The resources available to help faculty members adopt appropriate technological solutions are good, but effort needs to be made to reach out to faculty in more direct ways, such as short presentations at departmental meetings.

Concluding Remarks

The observations and recommendations contained in this report are offered to inform the students and faculty at large about the state of technology and the library at Queens College. We welcome and encourage input from the Academic Senate and from individuals outside our committee.

The regular members of the Special Committee on Technology and the Library:

Ari Bronstein, student
Eva Fernández (Chair, elected March 2005), Linguistics & Communication Disorders
Johan Gunawan, student
Angela Love, Elementary and Early Childhood Education
Christopher Vickery, Computer Science
Shelly Warwick (Chair, resigned March 2005), Graduate School of Library and Information Studies
The ex-officio members:

Chief Librarian Sharon Bonk
Chief Information Officer Naveed Husain
Assistant to the Provost for Educational Technology Ken Lord

Appendix A

Chief Librarian's Report to The Technology and Library Committee
Sharon Bonk, Chief Librarian
March 14, 2005

Mission and Functions

The QC Library serves the college community by providing and promoting access to all forms of information to support research, study, teaching and the general pursuit of knowledge and through instruction in developing research skills, critical evaluation of sources, and appropriate search and retrieval skills to form the basis of post-graduate careers and education The full mission statement is available on the library home page. (http://qcpages.qc.cuny.edu/Library/info/libmission.html)

There has been a shift in emphasis from collection processing functions to user services in all academic libraries. This is true for the QC Library. Almost the entire Library faculty is involved in direct service to the faculty and students. Others manage units that support the public service functions through the catalog and systems support. The QC Library is still traditionally organized by functions. Public services include Reference, Instruction, Interlibrary Loan, and the Access Services units of Circulation/Reserve, Media Center/Periodicals and Collection Management. Technical services include Acquisitions, Bibliographic Access (cataloging, serials check-in, CUNY+ database maintenance) and Library Systems. There is also an administrative support group that handles building services liaison, fund raising, public relations, statistical reports, budget, and personnel.

Relationships

Educational Technology. The Library faculty members are both students and instructors in the faculty development program run by the Assistant to the Provost for Educational Technology. Individual librarians enroll in classes they select to learn new tools and techniques in their teaching. There is great interest in determining how Blackboard can serve us in our instructional roles. Several librarians have taught faculty workshops on E-Reserve as part of the Ed Tech series.

E-Reserve and Blackboard offer overlapping functionality in the area of digitized documents for classes. Faculty has the option of independently using Blackboard tools and personal or departmental scanners. E-Reserve is a centralized service with the library providing the scanning, copyright compliance management, and technical support. Some Library faculty who teach credit courses use Blackboard and mount their own documents; some use BB and E-Res, and others use only E-Res. This variety is probably a typical of all departments.

OCT. The Library is one of the largest consumers of OCT services. We rely on telecommunications links to CUNY CIS for access to the CUNY+ servers, to the Internet for access to the hundreds of database and journal publisher servers, and for access to the E-Res server. The Library faculty and staff live by e-mail, which has been a prime mode of internal and professional communications for a decade. Almost all library support staff positions require network access in order to do their daily job. Library faculty is also reliant on the network whether at the reference desk, in a classroom, in the office, or remotely at home. The Library's website is also developed within the context of OCT parameters, protocols, and security. OIT chose Rosenthal for one of its first wireless installations, for which we were (and are) grateful. OCT approves the specifications for the equipment we connect to the campus network.

Faculty and students. I wish I could say that all students and faculty use our services and find them exemplary. However, from numerous user surveys, forums, focus groups, and face-to-face conversations, I know that the *faculty*has never been satisfied with the depth and breadth of our collections. This stems from the fact that the QC library is not a research library by mission and budget. In the last three years, many faculty whose research is reliant on current journal literature have reported that our electronic journals collection is great and that they now use the 'library' from home or office. For those faculty whose research requires breadth and depth of monograph collections or primary resources, our collections are below par. These people form the core users of our interlibrary loan services.
Students use the library in a very different way. Most use the building a study place. Some attend classes and programs held in Rosenthal. Some visit the Art Center for its displays and gallery talks. Building entrance

Appendix A

counts show a steady rise in Rosenthal use. Although the reference desk is always busy, the number of reference questions asked (sampling) shows a decline in number of questions, but reference librarians report that the nature of the questions has changed and that the reference question is now often a how do I do research question since Google can provide the 'ready reference' fact type answers. Annual student forums give us an opportunity to hear what the students think we can do to improve.

Accomplishments 2004-05
- Fundraising for collections and services will reach $100,000 in 2004/05. This represents about 10% non-PSR operating budget of the library.
- Library received a digitization grant for a proof of concept for digitizing selected archival materials. Grant is a collaboration with Prof. C. Perry (GSLIS) whose students will be digitizing the materials.
- Tech Fee Committee approved the creation of an electronic classroom in BRL 223 pending a solution to the HVAC issues.
- Tech Fee continues to supply replacement PCs for public workstations. OCT has agreed that networked public use printers qualify for inclusion in the replacement plan.
- Tech Fee Committee approved an additional $30,000 for laptops for loan. The Student Association has given us 10 (?) scientific calculators to loan to students.
- E resources continue to expand through cooperative purchasing within CUNY, additional allocations from CUNY central, and additional allocations from the Tech Fee. We now have over 22,000 journal titles available full text through subscriptions and aggregator databases.
- Approximately 100 O'Reilly computer manuals are available to all students, staff, and faculty via the library home page (Safari Tech Books). At this time, these titles will not be available through CUNY.
- Use of E-Reserves continues to grow. We have modified somewhat our strict interpretation of the CUNY guidelines.
- We received a CUE grant to develop a virtual tour of the library to use as part of our tutorials used with English 110 classes, new student orientations, new staff orientations, and we hope by independent users of our homepage.
- Recent QC webmaster statistics indicate the library homepage is #2 after the QC map in total number of hits.

Challenges
- Loss of support staff lines and exceedingly long fill periods for College Office Assistants resulting in using funds that could be spent for resources to be spent for part time staff.
- Flood damage still not completely addressed: ceilings and carpets awaiting replacement.
- Building needs many physical repairs, painting, carpet replacement etc. Little support from B & G on major areas in need, especially HVAC in new computer classrooms.
- Areas of the library need to be changed physically to accommodate new services, reorganized departments, and reduced staffing.
- College-wide student print management
- College should establish a replacement cycle for staff support service equipment (e. g. checkout workstations, reserve processing, cataloging workstations, etc.).
- Protecting user privacy by trying to avoid the tentacles of the DMCA and Patriot Act.

Opportunities
- Use Blackboard community groups for positioning library resources within each BB course (in addition to the generic tab now in use).
- Explore Blackboard community groups for use with other library services.
- Contract for Illiad software to streamline ILL processing with the intent of providing a full patron (faculty only in the beginning) directed ILL service.
- Provide leadership and support for the CUNY "Moving books not people" initiative.
- Acquisition of ArtSTOR, Mellon developed visual image database resource for teaching.
- LibQUAL+ user satisfaction gap analysis will be performed from data collected during the April 2005 CUNYadministered survey of students, faculty, and staff. Results will be reported in Fall 2005 and used in service development.
- Faculty forum feedback will be used in service and collection development.

Appendix B

Report to the Technology and Library Committee of the Academic Senate
Ken Lord, Assistant to the Provost for Educational Technology
March 14, 2005

Mission and Functions

My mission is to be a facilitator for the use of technology in the classroom. This includes answering faculty questions on what can and cannot be done, scheduling training workshops in the Faculty Development Lab, arranging for one-on-one training, administering the BlackBoard server for Queens College, reporting technical problems to and from CUNY CIS. I also attend the biweekly Provost's meetings and serve on the Tech Fee Committee and the Senate's Technology and Library Committee. As the Bb admin for Queens College I attend the monthly meeting of CUNY Bb Administrators, and am also a member of the CUNY-wide Committee on OnLine Education which also meets once a month.

The Technology Fee guidelines state that all new lab proposals are sent to me first for review as being "educationally sound." I have found it helpful to bring OCT into the proposal process very early, and usually do an initial walkthrough with OCT staff and a representative from the department. Doing this gets many questions addressed early.

I am the College coordinator for the CunyOnLine Distance Learning Network grant from the Sloan Foundation which is run by Prof. George Otte.

Relationship to Other Units in the Committee Purview

Having a good line of communication with OCT is very important as they are the implementation arm of the Technology Fee. I work closely with them, as well as the departments, when new labs are proposed. OCT also houses the Faculty Development Lab and handles the timesheets for the staff. OCT and the FDL staff coordinate software installations in the lab. The move to CUNY Central for using BlackBoard has reduced the direct interaction with OCT for the administration of the BlackBoard server, but there is still a lot of data flow that must be coordinated.

The Library's use of technology to provide information to students and faculty should integrated as seamlessly as possible with BlackBoard and other technologies on campus (the proxy server, EReserve). The Library is also my source for working out copyright issues.

Relationship to Students and Faculty

Since my charge is to help faculty use technology in the classroom, my interaction with students is usually indirect and in the background. The problems in getting started with CUNY BlackBoard this semester caused me to have a lot of contact with students by email to get them over the initial hurdles. The OCT Help Desk is now able to handle most of these problems.

I interact very often with faculty with respect to the use of BlackBoard, enhancements for Bb (to the product itself, or third-party add-ons), and other needs such as getting course materials digitized. I enjoy listening to how they actually use technology in the classroom for pedagogical reasons, and finding ways, when possible, to make the technology work for them.

Appendix B

Accomplishments

The Faculty Development Lab has been a great success, and the staff members are often praised for their knowledge and helpfulness. The lab has equipment which is not available anywhere else on campus, as well as software which is ordered for faculty to experiment with.

The number of courses successfully put on both the local Bb system and the CUNY system far exceeds the number of problems that occurred, though it probably doesn't seem that way. The folks at CUNY CIS that were primarily responsible for BlackBoard did a great job.

I have put more help information on the Ed Tech Web site for the Portal and BlackBoard, and I find the number of questions I have needed to answer lately has gone down.

I am very satisfied with the contribution I have made towards new and renovated labs paid for by the Tech Fee.

Challenges

I feel that I have exhausted my current repertoire of avenues for getting faculty interested in using more or different technology in the class room (email announcements of workshops, invitations for general information sessions, etc.) and must find something new. There is a large amount of faculty yet to be reached and encouraged to see what their peers are doing. There are those who will not come, even if you build it, but who will become interested if approached properly. One possibility is to produce a DVD which promotes interesting uses of technology in the classroom and demonstrates how easy some of it is.

Getting the College to move as quickly as I would like when creating or renovating labs, or implementing other expenditures from the Tech Fee is frustrating. The money is spent wisely, but slowly.

It is also a challenge to me that I am not an Educational Technologist by trade, just by immersion. I find that attending conferences helps keep me better-informed, and the listserves I belong to are a valuable source of insight. I think it is necessary, now that we have come up to speed with respect to the other CUNY schools, to proceed with hiring a full-time assistant for the Faculty Development Lab (this has already been approved by the Tech Fee Committee.

Opportunities

The Tech Fee provides for ample funds to hire an Educational Technologist, as mentioned above, and I think this is one of the most important opportunities in the coming year.

The CUNY-wide Committee on Distance Education formed by Executive Vice Chancellor Selma Botman, presents a great opportunity to unify the University (in a good way) on the practical issues of doing teaching from fully on-line courses to web-assisted courses. I believe this group will extract the best practices in terms of course offerings and curriculum from all of CUNY. It is exciting to be involved at the grass-roots level.

We are installing software for compressing PowerPoint and doing interactive demonstrations on the PC, and plans are under way to instruct the faculty on how to use these tools. There are several other applications we are exploring (with our CUNY Bb Group) for eventual incorporation with BlackBoard.

Appendix C

**Report to the Technology and Library Committee of the Academic Senate
Naveed Husain, Assistant Vice President, Chief Information Officer
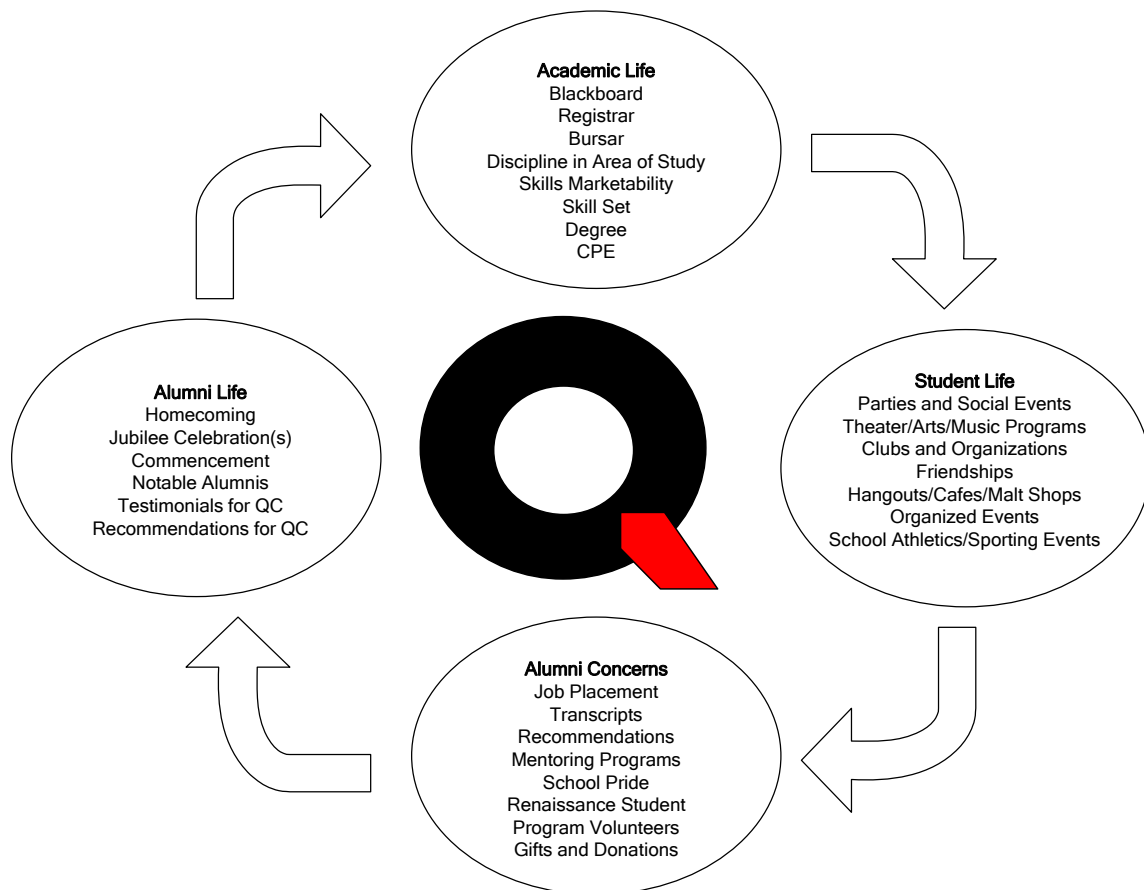April 5, 2005**

Mission and Functions

The mission for the Office of Converging Technologies is to provide reliable, secure information and communication services that enhance the technological experience of the Queens College, CUNY Campus community.

Our efforts are directed towards supporting academic, administrative, faculty and student life at Queens College through the use of technological solutions.

Relationship to Other Units in the Committee Purview

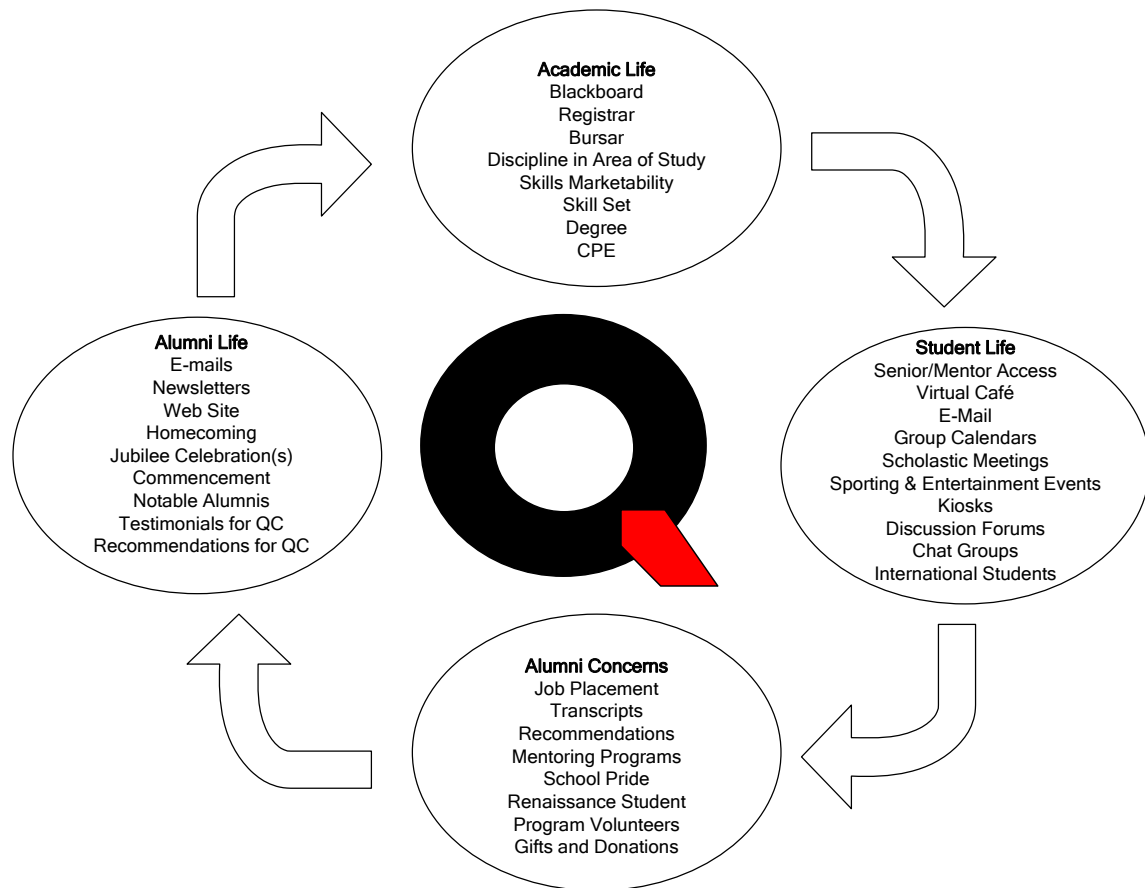Through the use of the technology fee and other resource streams we are working with faculty and students to provide access and use of best of breed solutions for enhancing the academic experience as well as the overall college experience for the students. This translates to a serviced community of 17,000students, 600 faculty and adjuncts, administrators, alumni, prospective students, and the Queens Community.

The Need

Appendix C

The How

Academic Life
Blackboard
Registrar
Bursar
Discipline in Area of Study
Skills Marketability
Skill Set
Degree
CPE

Alumni Life
E-mails
Newsletters
Web Site
Homecoming
Jubilee Celebration(s)
Commencement
Notable Alumnis
Testimonials for QC
Recommendations for QC

Student Life
Senior/Mentor Access
Virtual Café
E-Mail
Group Calendars
Scholastic Meetings
Sporting & Entertainment Events
Kiosks
Discussion Forums
Chat Groups
International Students

Alumni Concerns
Job Placement
Transcripts
Recommendations
Mentoring Programs
School Pride
Renaissance Student
Program Volunteers
Gifts and Donations

Relationship to Students and Faculty

Working closely with the Provosts office, Department Chairs/Deans, and faculty, and students we are gathering requirements and introducing solutions towards the goals set forth by the college to:
1   Increase Enrollment
2   Develop a more attractive image, physically and through our communications Integrate services across processes
3   Raise academic quality
4   Enhance programs and services through external funding sources

Accomplishments

We are meeting these goals:

By working with the Assistant to the Provost for Educational Technology on ways to increase the use of the faculty development lab, purchasing new equipment and providing support for the faculty development lab.

By working with students and faculty to develop a dynamic new website for Queens College that is providing more information to the college community. This is measured by the increased number of hits from last year.

By working with student affairs to get more student activities and information on the Internet to

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involve students with Queens College.

By rolling out an open standard, industry accepted e-mail system.

By continually looking at ways to increase helpdesk hours, recently increased from 9-5 Monday through Friday **to Monday through Thursday 8am to 7pm, and Fridays from 9-Spm.**

By working with consultants to develop an active directory for students faculty based on the Microsoft platform to insure that correct software is available to the students and faculty in the labs according to the student and faculty profile.

By providing virtual space for students of 500MB on the student Storage Area Network, so they will not have to carry diskettes that spread viruses.

By continually supporting the wireless network to provide wireless access throughout the campus to the Internet.

Challenges

1. **People**
2. **Process**
3. **Technology**
4. **Service**

1   People need a clear vision that defines purpose. The vision needs to answer:
    a. Who do we support?
    b. What do we support?
    c. How do we do it?
2.   People need defined processes and policies that can be translated into procedures and actions that are expected and repeatable.
3.   We need to be able to not only introduce new technology but be able to support which requires funds, training and people.
4.   We need to be customer focused, our customers are the Queens College students, faculty, staff, corresponding community, and colleagues in the same office

Opportunities

We have a staff that is motivated and willing to learn and explore new boundaries, work for solutions in a constrained environment as we increase the technology across the campus we need to train them and add to the current staff to meet the new demands. Opportunities are found with faculty and students expressing new ways to teach and learn and realizing the differences between the "Digital Immigrants" and the "Digital Natives." Today's students are "Digital Natives" and we need to meet their needs.