TECHNOLOGY FEE GUIDELINES

The Review Team recommends that technology fee expenditure guidelines should be based upon two fundamental principles.

•   Student technology fee revenues should not be used to supplant current levels of technology fee expenditures. Institutions should provide evidence that overall institution technology expenditures clearly reflect that expenditures based upon fee revenues are above and beyond normal levels.

•   The focus of the student technology fees should be on academic or instructional technology and distinctions should be drawn between expenditures for administrative applications or scientific and laboratory equipment, and instructional technology.

With respect to the second principle, technology fee revenues should be directed toward those needs that directly meet the educational value criterion established in the Chancellor's approval letters; i.e., the fees provide added value to the educational experiences of the students. We define this value to be instructionally oriented and not oriented toward other services such as housing registration, advising, record keeping, etc., important as these services are to a student's overall collegiate experiences.

The guidelines in bold print be print below are not prescriptive but rather are intended to provide a framework for local institutional decisions.

[1] Technology fee revenues should be used primarily for the direct benefit of students to assist them in meeting the educational objectives of their academic programs. At this point in the evolution of collegiate academic technologies, access is important: access to productivity tools, discipline specific software packages, computers and printers, internal and external databases, introductory and advanced training, and access to networks (from home or from campus). Therefore, high priorities should be given to the use of technology fees for these purposes.

[2] Technology fee revenue should be used to assure that there are sufficient campus licenses for primary productivity tools such as those found in the Microsoft Office product suites for discipline specific software. The fees should be used to assure that students have easy access to tools and software packages that are critical within their chosen disciplines. This range from computer assisted design through music composition, art and drawing tools, scientific notation, modeling, and other discipline specific analytical tools. Appropriate computer based or web-based instructional modules are appropriate as well.

[3] Technology fee revenues should be used for hardware and network related expenditures that include support of general-purpose laboratories used by students for body productivity and more discipline related activities. Provision of adequate network bandwidth and access to the Internet and special purpose databases and specialized computing are vitally important in some disciplines and should be supported. At the same time, institutions will need

to balance competing demands for greater and broader access to resources for all students versus the demand for important but specialized and restricted resources.

[4] Technology fee revenues may be used for training of students and, to a lesser extent, staff and faculty. Students and faculty perceive good training in the use of computing and networking resources as an important component of effective use of electronic instructional resources both inside and outside the classroom. Consequently, the secondary educational value is high; training allows students and faculty to focus on course content rather than on the mechanics of operating a computer. In general, staff and faculty training should be supported from operational funds. Obvious exceptions include circumstances such as space remaining available in a training session after student sign-up is completed, or the purchase of a site license for online training that permits access by all members of the campus community.

[5] Technology fee revenues may be used to leverage other funds where appropriate.
Keeping in mind the second fundamental principle, there are circumstances where a grant or other or one-time allocation could be combined with technology fee revenues to yield greater access or resources for the students.

[6] Technology fee revenues may be used – with caution – for new staffing that is either temporary or ongoing. Institutions should continue to focus on the criterion established initially by the Chancellor's approval letter – the fees provide added value to the educational experiences of students. Where additional staffing clearly will provide added value to students – and the value can be documented – technology fee expenditures may be warranted. For example, hiring temporary trainers may be the best way to ensure that all incoming freshmen and transfers receive a thorough information technology orientation session. However, under no circumstances should technology fee revenues be used to fund existing positions that would otherwise be cut from an operational budget, nor should fees be used to fund general computing and networking positions that have a significant administrative or research support component. Institutions are encouraged to develop a formal process of review for proposed student technology fee staffing expenditures to ensure continued awareness of this guideline.

[7] Lower priority uses of technology fee revenues include development of software packages, acquisition of one of a kind software or hardware products for faculty use in training and consumable supplies such as printer paper.

[8] In almost no cases should technology fee revenues be used for administrative software
or software implementation (such as BANNER), administrative hardware, research equipment, non-networkable specialized scientific equipment, space renovation, or other items or activities that do not have a direct and immediate impact upon students instructional objectives.