

	Computer Hardware Replacement Policy	POL-806
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Approved By:	College President's Signature 	Date Approved: 11/01/2017
Effective Date: 12/06/2017	Board of Trustees President's Signature 	Date Approved: 12/06/2017

806.1 POLICY STATEMENT

It is the policy of the Board of Trustees to provide computer-related equipment to college users in a cost-effective and efficient manner, subject to available funding. Computer-related equipment will include equipment located at Lummi Campus, extended sites, employee offices, Media Center, computer labs and community access computers in the Lummi Library.

806.2 PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide a clear outline of how and when computer systems and hardware throughout the college should be replaced to avoid interruptions, maximize production value, and maintain our competitive edge.

806.3 SCOPE

The scope of this policy applies to all workstations, laptops, peripherals and servers within the College used by users (employees and students) at the Lummi Campus as well as extended sites.

806.4 BACKGROUND

The sheer amount of devices managed by the Information Systems Department requires a well-defined and transparent strategy to ensure that NWIC staff, students and local community are provided the most efficient tools to complete their duties/studies and inquiries.

806.5 RESPONSIBILITY

It is the responsibility of the Information Systems Department to administer this policy, under the general direction of the Vice President of Campus Development and Administrative Services.

806.6 DEFINITIONS

- A. **Hardware**
-Physical computing equipment such as workstations, servers, and the subsystems they contain.
- B. **Software**
-Non-physical programs, data suites, or operating systems used by hardware.
- C. **Equipment**
-Physical accessories, components, or mechanisms that compliment or supplement hardware.
- D. **Replacement**
-The removal of outdated hardware, software, or equipment for a more productive solution.
- E. **Performance**
-The efficiency of which the hardware, software, or equipment allows for workplace production.
- F. **Deployment**
-Installation of hardware, software, or equipment in the workplace.
- G. **Maintenance**
-Manufacturer level support, repair, or replacement of covered item.

806.7 PROCEDURE RELATING TO POLICY

Desktop and Laptop Replacement

While replacement of computing hardware is an expensive and often labor intensive process, it is necessary to ensure continuity of the College's business and academic functions. And while computers of any age can have hardware problems, older computers are significantly more likely to fail, resulting in lost time, increased employee dissatisfaction, and potentially lost information. The intention of this policy is to provide a clear outline of how and when computer systems throughout the college should be replaced to avoid interruptions.

Desktop and laptop computers should be purchased with the intention of providing acceptable performance for no less than three years, with the goal of replacement by the fourth year.

- A. While computer configurations should remain relatively consistent across the organization to minimize the time required for deployment and maintenance, users needing resource-intensive applications like Wolfram Mathematica or Adobe Creative Suite will be given priority access to machines capable of higher performance.
- B. Computers should be replaced in the event that they are no longer able to run required software adequately. Systems that require replacement earlier than anticipated need to be evaluated and approved by both the department head of the user requesting the replacement and the director of Information Services. Computers may be purchased through institutional funds or grants, if applicable.
- C. Replaced systems must be returned to Information Systems for imaging and re-deployment or disposal at the discretion of the Director of Information Systems.

- D. Because they are both more expensive and less robust, laptops should only be purchased for users who have job duties that require their primary workstation to be portable. The college supports other mechanisms for working remotely.

Server Replacement

Servers should be purchased with the intention of providing acceptable performance for no less than five years, with the goal of replacement by the sixth year.

- A. To maximize compatibility and longevity, servers should only be purchased from top-tier manufacturers providing full support for the expected lifespan of the hardware, and should not contain consumer-grade components like SATA disks.
- B. Because server downtime affects the work of many people at once, resiliency during hardware failure should always be considered. Hot-swappable and redundant components should be purchased whenever possible.
- C. Servers should be purchased with at least a five-year hardware warranty and with response times of at most one business day by the manufacturer or representative.
- D. The Information Systems department will maintain a supply of replacement components, especially for server hardware that is nearing end-of-life.

Replacement Strategies

Hardware replacement requires different strategies in different areas to minimize inconvenience for end users.

- A. Staff will be given adequate notice prior to workstation replacement, and Information Services personnel will attempt to work around individual end user schedules.
- B. Student computers will be replaced between terms or during holidays. To make sure that computing hardware remains continually available to students, no more than one lab will be scheduled for replacement at any given time.
- C. Server replacement typically requires software migration, which often requires an interruption of service. Migrations should take place outside of normal business hours and, when feasible, on days that minimize impact to end users.
- D. The college will annually replace outmoded workstations with institutional or grant funding to address the four year replacement schedule. Replacement schedule may be completed earlier if technology and funding opportunities are available.

Maximizing Workstation Lifespan

The college uses a rolling replacement strategy to ensure that computers purchased by the college are utilized to their fullest extent before decommissioning.

- A. When new computers are purchased, Information Services first evaluates the current hardware being used to run resource-intensive applications. Any substandard computers being used for such applications are replaced first. While the computers being replaced may no longer be suitable for intensive use, they are typically acceptable for normal business and academic use, and will be redeployed.
- B. The remaining new computers and the reclaimed computers are then deployed to locations with typical application use, with the oldest computers taking the highest priority for replacement. The computers being replaced may then be redeployed to a location with very conservative usage (e.g. email and Internet access), or may be disposed of if they are deemed too old to be reliable.

Peripherals

The usable lifespans of monitors and other peripheral hardware can vary significantly from the usable lifespan of a desktop computer.

- A. Information Services permits individual departments to purchase nonstandard keyboards, mice, and speakers for their employees. In the event that these devices require replacement, Information Services will supply standard replacement peripherals.
- B. Replacement of nonstandard peripherals will need to be approved by the department head and ordered on an as-needed basis.
- C. Standard peripheral hardware is evaluated and replaced as needed whenever a workstation is replaced, or whenever an end user reports a problem.

Disposal

When a workstation or server reaches the end of its usable life, the Information Services department decommissions and disposes of the machine.

- A. Prior to disposal, all fixed disks must either be removed for physical destruction or securely erased using an algorithm approved by the director of Information Systems.
- B. An asset disposal form must be filled out by Information Services personnel and submitted to purchasing for inventory removal. The computer's asset tag should be submitted to Purchasing/Inventory with the form.
- C. Reusable components should be reclaimed as needed.
- D. Reusable components can be donated to students or the Computer Maintenance Program as needed.
- E. All equipment must be recycled or disposed of in accordance with applicable laws.

Stock

Information Systems should keep a small number of standard workstations, monitors, and standard peripherals on hand for new employees or unexpected needs. These should have college software installed on them, but they should be kept in the original boxes so they are easy to ship to an extended site if needed.

806.8 RELATED INFORMATION

- Institutional Budget Policy POL-704

806.9 REVIEW DATE

This policy is to be reviewed every three years.