



I.E. Success Stories

Institutional Effectiveness....Mapping Excellence!

A Publication of The Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Assessment
A Unit of the Information Services & Planning Division of South Texas College

Volume 10, Issue 1

January 2014

Happy New Year! Semester classes have begun. Institutional Effectiveness plans have been completed, and assessment is becoming more of a focus. One key reason for assessment is finding things going well and things that went well in 2013.

With a new year comes a new set of *Success Stories*. This year, the format will be slightly different. Instead of individual stories, the new version will be coming as a whole. Since the goal of this newsletter is keeping you informed of good things happening on South Texas College campuses, it made sense to bring things together as much as possible.

Please enjoy the latest edition of *I.E. Success Stories*. The staff at STC's Institutional Effectiveness & Assessment office wish you success in 2014. May you have many successful stories to tell at year's end.

Let us know about those stories, too. We will help you tell them.

Best,

Paul T. Henley, Ph.D.



This month:

- ⇒ VP of IS&P Guides Development of STC's 2013-2018 Strategic Plan
- ⇒ IEA Office Prepares and Trains for New IE Cycle
- ⇒ The Library Art Gallery Impacts Student Engagement and Retention
- ⇒ Information Commons and Open Labs Expand Services
- ⇒ Technology Resources & Library Technical Services Together Support eSTC
- ⇒ IT Services Department Provides and Expands Wireless Services on STC

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NEW STRATEGIC PLAN

...This five year Strategic Plan, taking us from 2013 through 2018, serves as the culmination of detailed systematic planning and includes the broad participation of faculty, staff, and students from across all five campuses.

-Dr. Shirley A. Reed

VIEW PLAN



The Information Services & Planning Division at South Texas College makes considerable and significant contributions toward (a) open access to quality higher education in the Upper Rio Grande Valley, (b) the effective and timely delivery of student and administrative services necessary for successful degree attainment, college transfer, and workforce training and placement, (c) a culture of evidence "on demand" in which all decisions are data-driven and timely, and (d) a higher standard of ultimate and timely student success at STC necessary to improve the quality of life of its students, constituents and stakeholders.

The Office of the Vice President for Information Services & Planning Guides Development of STC's 2013-2018 Strategic Plan

The Office of the Vice President for Information Services & Planning established 10 Objectives for the 2011-2013 IE Cycle. These objectives would see them accomplish nine (9) goals...all of which contribute to open access education, student & administrative services, data-driven decision-making, and a higher standard of success at STC.

Intended Outcomes:

- ◇ **Objective #10: Develop a New Strategic Plan**
The Office of the Vice President for Information Services & Planning will provide leadership and support for STC's planning process by leading the development of a new five-year Strategic Plan. **Achievement Target** – Complete the development of the new Strategic Plan by December 2012.

Measures:

- ◇ Success of this IE objective will be determined by a target date by which the new Comprehensive Mission and Strategic Plan will be developed.

Strategies:

- ◇ Internal and external environmental scanning was conducted early during the development process, and the resulting data was discussed in the President Development Council, the Completion by Design Steering Committee and the Institutional Effectiveness Team.
- ◇ New national trends, indicated by the American Association of Community Colleges report, "Reclaiming the American Dream," was

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The Office of the Vice President for Information Services & Planning Guides Development of STC's 2013-2018 Strategic Plan

incorporated into external environmental scanning data.

- ◇ A Strategic Work Team was formed to review the integrated data set, and to draft STC's new Comprehensive Mission, Values, Guiding Principles, and Strategic Directions.
- ◇ Once Strategic Directions were determined, a team was developed to examine specific "Intended Outcomes" associated with each Strategic Direction.
- ◇ Once all of these ideas were 'on paper,' the resulting document was presented to all faculty and staff for input and comment. Edits, corrections, additions, rephrasing, reordering, and other edits followed. Finally, the document was passed through the Strategic Plan Work Team once again, through the President's Cabinet, and finally arrived at the STC Board of Trustees.

Results:

- ◇ The New Comprehensive Mission and 2013-2018 Strategic Plan were both completed during early 2013 and approved by the Board of Trustees on September 18, 2013—with ample time to implement the new Mission and Strategic Plan with the beginning of the 2013-2014 Academic Year.

Recommendations:

- ◇ While the Comprehensive Mission and Strategic Plan were not completed by the initial target date, the target was met before the end of the 2011-2013 IE cycle. Future timetables for developing a college-wide Strategic Plan will be based on this experience of this past timeline of events.



STC 2013-2018 Strategic Planning Website



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The IEA Office Staff (l-r) Dora Hunt, David Flores, Dr. Paul Henley, Jon Herrin, Medardo Garza and Patrick Lu

The Office of Institutional Effectiveness & Assessment Prepares and Trains IE Plan Writers

About the Division/Department:

The Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Assessment (IEA) works collaboratively with all work units throughout the College to ensure data-driven decision making and continuous quality improvement by facilitating and coordinating systematic, integrated, research-based institutional effectiveness planning and reporting. The Office of IEA also assists the College's administrators, faculty, and staff with designing evaluation plans for innovative strategies, projects, and programs, assessing the outcomes of the interventions, and using results for continuous improvement and further planning.

Introduction:

The Office of IEA laid out 15 objectives that would move them towards completing 7 goals related to (a) college-wide institutional effectiveness, (b) sys-

tematic, on-going assessment and (c) collaborative planning across the college.

Featured Objective:

- ◇ #9: Develop & provide training sections on developing IE plans and reports: The Office of IEA will develop and provide training sessions to each work unit and by one-on-one assistance.

Measure:

- ◇ Number of training sessions for Plan Writers for 2011-2013 IE cycle: At least 20 sessions.

Strategies:

- ◇ Offer IE training sessions to guide IE Plan Writers through the following processes:

-continued below-

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THE OFFICE OF INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS & ASSESSMENT PREPARES AND TRAINS IE PLAN WRITERS

- IE Plan Development and Writing
- IE Plan Mid-Bi Reporting
- IE Plan Budget Alignment Training
- IE Plan Assessment and Reporting

Results:

- ◇ The IEA Staff provided 10 Mid-Bi Report Trainings, 10 Budget Request Trainings, 9 IE Report/Data Collection Trainings, 15 IE Plan Writers Trainings, and 6 Data-Coach Trainings—a total of 50 training sessions with 417 participants! IEA well exceeded the objective in preparing STC faculty and staff for IE Planning and Data usage.

Recommendations:

- ◇ IEA will continue to engage faculty, staff, and administrators in IE and data management training so that STC will be able to plan, act, and react in responsible, intentional ways.

Dr. Jinhao Wang led the IEA Office through the 2011-2013 IE Cycle. She brought many changes and refinements to the office including the development of the “Data Coach Training” project.



Department Chairs work with IE Staff

Data-driven decision-making!



STC Faculty and Staff receive training on IE Plan writing structure and processes.



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The South Texas College Library Art Gallery program exhibits regional, national and international artwork, explores new visions and theories of creativity, and introduces innovative artistic expressions to the South Texas region.

The Library Art Gallery Supports Student Engagement and Retention

By creating opportunities for first-hand learning, providing aesthetically stimulating learning environments, and recognizing the diversity of student needs and preferences, the [Library Art Gallery](#) at South Texas College continually strives to increase student engagement and retention. In pursuit of this goal, the Library Art Gallery laid out four intended outcomes and six methods of assessment in its 2011-2013 IE Plan which support the ongoing goal to increase student engagement and positively impact student retention. The following story highlights two of these intended outcomes aimed at the growth of South Texas College's permanent art collection.

Intended Outcomes:

- ◇ **Exhibit Innovative and High-Quality Artwork**
The Library Art Gallery will strive to exhibit innovative and high-quality artwork at the Pecan Campus for the purpose of enhancing the knowledge of students and the community.
Achievement Target – The Library Art Gallery will exhibit at least 1 nationally-recognized artist per fiscal year.
- ◇ **Growth and Maintenance of Permanent Art Collection** – The Library Art Gallery will continuously improve, maintain and acquire artworks for its permanent collection, which will be available for exhibition in between regularly scheduled art shows.

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The Library Art Gallery Supports Student Engagement and Retention

- ◇ **Achievement Target** - The Library Art Gallery (LAG) will receive at least one donation of an art piece per fiscal year.

Measures:

- ◇ The number of nationally recognized artists can be measured by inspection of the LAG's calendar of events and related artist bios/vitae.
- ◇ The number of new acquisitions can be measured through review of the LAG's donation documentation.

Strategies:

- ◇ The LAG recruited professional and nationally recognized artists to exhibit their work and give quality educational lectures.
- ◇ LAG staff asked all guest artists to donate at least one work of art to the permanent collection.

Results:

- ◇ The LAG exhibited artwork by several nationally recognized artists during the 2011-2013 IE cycle including: [Kathy Vargas](#), [Pat Johnson](#), [Billy Ray Mangham](#), [Kirk Mangus](#), [Billy Ritter](#), [Jonathan Moller](#), [Lenard Brown](#), [Manuel Miranda](#), [Jimena Marin](#) and [Cristina Materon](#).
- ◇ Seventy-five pieces of artwork were donated to the Library Art Gallery during Fall 2012—Spring 2013. By the end of the 2011-2013 IE cycle, STC's permanent art collection grew to include more than one-hundred and twenty pieces!

Recommendations:

- ◇ LAG staff will contact at least one renowned artist through email, phone and internet to exhibit once per academic calendar year.
- ◇ LAG staff will continue to ask artists that exhibit to donate at least one piece from the collection they exhibit.





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Staff for STC Information Commons & Open Labs

Information Commons & Open Labs Expand Services on Three STC Campuses

About the Division/Department:

The Division of Information Services and Planning (IS&P) is committed to providing continued open access to an even greater availability of higher education to STC students by enhancing technology and information services. IS&P is a far-reaching division that brings together the strengths and services of a number of departments: Research and Analytical Services, Institutional Effectiveness and Assessment, Strategic Planning, Technology Resources, Library Services and Information Commons, Instructional Technologies, and the Library Art Gallery Program.

Introduction:

The Information Commons & Open Labs support the institution mission by providing access to instructional technology resources and support staff

in a pleasant and professional environment that promotes excellence in student learning.

Featured Objective:

- ◇ #2: Library Services will implement enhanced group study space, multimedia production spaces, and other elements at each campus library where possible and feasible.

Measure:

- ◇ Elements of an Information Commons will be present in the Starr Co. and Technology Campus libraries by the target date (January 2012) and in the new Pecan Campus classroom building (T-Building) by the target date (May 2012).

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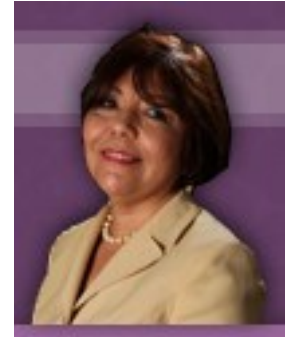


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Strategies:

- ◇ Provide areas for students to have access to the internet and printing capabilities so as to positively impact student success.
- ◇ Provide convenient computer access for students who do not have ready access to computing resources for writing.
- ◇ Provide the above mentioned services through extended service hours so as to be available to students.
- ◇ Provide these services and extended hours on all campuses.

Dr. Lelia Salinas, director of the Information Commons & Open Labs, continues to work for greater access to computing and internet access for all STC students on all STC campuses.



Results:

- ◇ Students served through new Information Commons & Open Labs; Oct.—Dec. 2013:
 - Pecan T-Building: 522 making 1,484 visits
 - Tech Building: 434 making 2,092 visits
 - Starr Co.: no data available as yet



Open Lab on Pecan Campus

Recommendations:

- ◇ Continue to develop Information Commons & Open Labs in future college development in order to provide these valuable services to all of our students on all of our campuses.



Information Commons & Open Lab on Starr County Campus



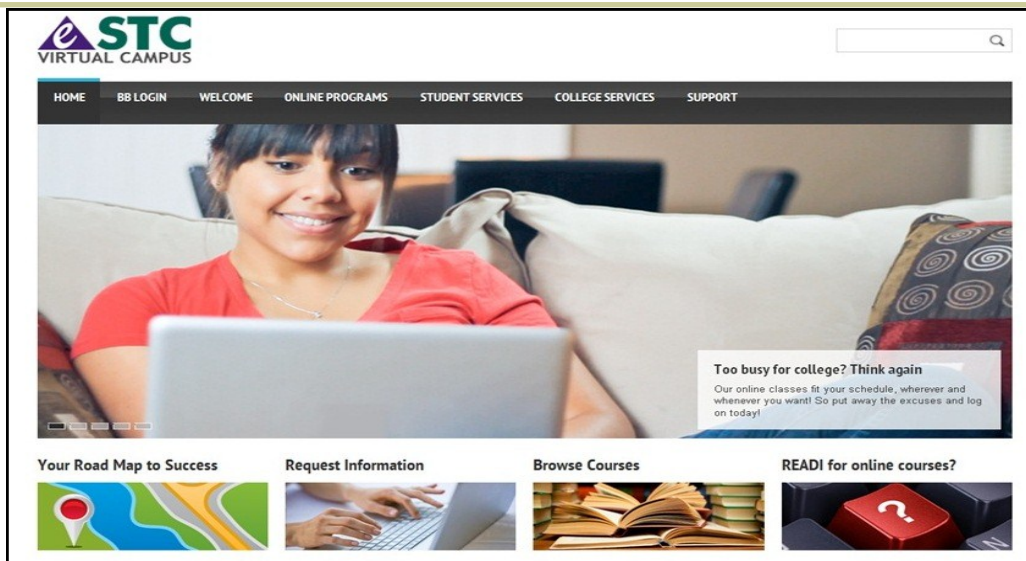
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The South Texas College eSTC Virtual Campus, the college's sixth state-of-the-art campus, was launched in early August 2011. Although the new virtual campus doesn't feature beautiful green spaces or ambitious new architecture, what it does offer is something equally exciting and fitting for a new digital age.

Technology Resources and Library Technical Services Working Together to Support eSTC

In 1997, South Texas College, then South Texas Community College, established its Distance Education program during the Spring semester by offering two courses to a total of 24 students. By 2003, after experiencing tremendous growth because of student demand, there were 1,283 students enrolled in distance education courses. With demand for distance education continuing to grow, it became imperative for South Texas College to provide not only online courses, but online *programs* as well as online services to support those programs - South Texas College needed a Virtual Campus. This special IE Suc-

cess Story features STC's Technology Resources department and Library Technical Services department, both a part of STC's Information Services & Planning Division, and their shared IE goal to support eSTC's Virtual Campus.

Goal:

Provide Support to eSTC Virtual Campus

- ◇ Before online services could be rendered to students and faculty, the Technology Resources department needed to create the eSTC campus infrastructure and support it so as to ensure that no interruptions of online

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Technology Resources and Library Technical Services Working Together to Support eSTC

services would occur—specifically during peak hours of usage.

- ◇ The Library Technical Services department worked to provide Distance Education students with services equitable to those of traditional students before the start of the Fall 2012 semester by 1.) developing online tutorial modules, 2.) maintaining adequate online resources, 3.) establishing e-reserves services, and 4.) providing document delivery services to online students.

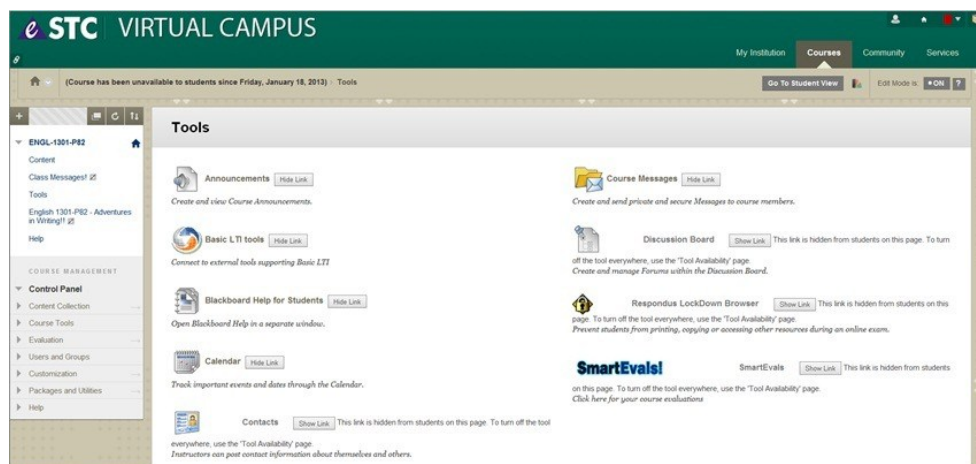
Strategies:

- ◇ In order to minimize the interruptions of online services, the Technology Resources department migrated Blackboard services to an externally-hosted environment. Additionally, system maintenance was rescheduled to hours of low-usage, and the maintenance window has been restricted to no more than three hours at a time.
- ◇ Online tutorials were developed for various library research functions such as searching the STC Library catalog, subject guides, finding articles, citing information sources, etc. The STC Library website was updated to provide

services which allow distance education students to submit document delivery requests. Instructions for were also provided on the website to allow faculty to link electronic resources to the Blackboard course management system.

Recommendations:

- ◇ The Technology Resources department is currently implementing stability upgrades to several core software packages including Oracle databases and the Luminus platform for the Jagnet portal. These upgrades are intended to minimize downtime and to provide a more secure, stable environment for eSTC's online services.
- ◇ With several new features in place, usage of the online resources made available to distance education students is being monitored in order to evaluate the services provided. Technological developments are continuously being monitored in order to take advantage of any time-saving innovations that could better serve students and faculty.



eSTC utilizes the Blackboard platform to provide instruction, testing, research tools, and many other elements to enhance the teaching experience for instructors and the learning experience for students.

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IT Services Provide Simplified, Expanded WiFi Service for STC Campuses

About the Division/Department:

IT Services is a part of [Technology Resources](#), a unit of the [Information Services and Planning Division](#), and is committed to providing South Texas College's students, faculty, and staff with innovative technology, effective security measures and unprecedented quality of service. Technology Support Services is committed to quality in implementing and supporting technology, providing effective technical consulting services, and enhancing instruction for student development, administration, and general operations throughout the STC community.

Introduction:

The [IT Services Department](#) laid out 10 objectives that would move them toward completing 5 goals

related to (a) student learning support (b) improved quality of IT services (c) and improved security for the entire network infrastructure.

Featured Objective:

Objective #7: Simplify wireless access for faculty, staff, and students in a secure manner.

Measure:

Perform wireless site surveys using Air Magnet wireless survey kit at all wireless networks.

Technology Support continues to perform wireless site surveys to ensure wireless coverage for our students, faculty and staff. Wireless surveys were performed at the Pecan campus in the academic buildings.

Strategies:

- ◇ Provide wireless internet access on all campuses for students, faculty, and staff.



L-R...back: Robert Pash, Lucio Gonzalez, David Casarez, Joe Galindo;
front: Edgar Espinoza and Phillip Goza



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IT Services Provide Simplified, Expanded WiFi Service for STC Campuses

- ◇ Determine the security and ease of access on all campuses.
- ◇ Perform wireless assessment surveys to ensure continued quality and security of wireless access.

Results:

- ◇ Wireless access is another step toward providing on-line education, on-line services, and on-line communications. Surveys were administered/performed in all buildings on Pecan Campus during this IE Cycle.

Recommendations:

- ◇ As Technology Resources continues to pursue and provide the best internet access for our students, faculty, and staff, surveys will continue to be administered regularly to make sure that STC provides continuous, quality access for Wi-Fi users.

CIO Alicia Gomez works with STC's Technology Resources staff to anticipate and provide and maintain the hardware and infrastructure for our students and faculty.



Wireless FAQ

What kind of technology is being used in STC's Pecan campus wireless network?

South Texas College has decided to go with the Cisco Unified Wireless Network solution to provide students, faculty and staff a secure wireless network connection at our campuses. The college adopted the 802.11 a/b/g standards to allow access to all campus wide Access Points.

Do I have to connect to STCsetup every time I come to STC buildings?

No. **STCsetup** is only for initial configurations. Once you've gone through the wizard and connected successful you don't need to repeat process.

Where on campus can I use the wireless network?

Every building at all campuses has wireless with the exception of some portables and administrative buildings. More details can be found on the Campus Map link below.



IT Services Team maintains Wireless infrastructure so faculty and students can stay connected.

[Information about STC Wireless Network](#)

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