Policy on Acquisition and Support of Digital Signage (Video Display Systems)

The use of large flat panel LCD, LED or plasma displays in public areas has begun attracting the interest of departments on campus. While the potential for enhanced communication about events and other current information exists, such displays have rarely been used effectively and then only where significant time and effort are invested by one or more members of the department in developing, maintaining and regularly updating what is seen by people passing by. People rarely give such displays more than a glance.

The use of digital signage is not promoted at the College and no resources are provided generally for the installation, operation and support of these systems. If a department is convinced that the use of such a system is a high priority, these guidelines must be followed.

1. Any display project in a public area (hallways, building entry, lounge, atrium or other gathering space that is not exclusively the department’s) must receive prior approval by the department’s reporting Vice President, as well as the Vice President for Administration. Requests for their approvals must include responses or plans as appropriate for the following topics.

2. Any digital signage visible in a public area of campus must comply with guidelines provided by the Office of Communications.

3. Departmental funds must cover any such installation. No funding from ITS or other service department on campus is available.

4. All costs must be covered by the department. This includes the video display, any required computer that will generate the display and the installation costs for mounting the display and installing cables. Purchase and installation must be arranged through Media Resources in ITS, which will provide information about required standards for equipment selection and installation, as well as software options for programming the display.

5. One individual in the department must be identified as having primary responsibility for maintaining the information being displayed. This individual should not be a support staff member to whom this responsibility is being added without changes in job description. Review of those job description changes with the Dean of Faculty’s office or HR should be conducted before being finalized.

6. The display design must include the capability of quickly switching to the Colby home page in the event of an emergency on campus. No special programming is required other than displaying the home page or the emergency status page linked on the home page. This display must be activated as soon as possible when the campus emergency notification system sends a message, either in a test or a real emergency. Upon notification that the emergency situation has ended, the display may be switched back to the departmental information.

7. Departments should at least annually review whether the commitment of faculty/staff time and budget justify continued operation of the digital signage system. Departments must also recognize that maintaining accurate information in the web environment for very widespread access on campus and throughout the world is an important College priority, which must not be diminished by shifting time to maintain a highly localized digital signage project.

This policy has been developed by Information Technology Services in consultation with other administrative offices and will be reviewed at least annually. Comments, questions and suggestions may be directed to Ray Phillips, Dir. of ITS.

Revised October 3, 2013