Hancock using new technologies to teach

COLLEGE INCORPORATES IPADS, APPLE TVS

When David Brown, coordinator of instructional technology, began work at Hancock College in 1995, the school had purchased its first color inkjet printer for $1,500. The first data projector cost about $8,000.

Brown said the college increased its investment in technology through a federal Title III grant to serve immigrant students and those with limited English proficiency.

“That kind of started things at Hancock,” he said.

“We’ve come a long way,” he added.

The South College campus in Santa Maria now houses touch-screen computers in the business center, two new industrial technology complexes and — as of last year — about 100 iPad tablets, including about 20 available in a loan program.

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Hancock also provides a learning center to teach professors how to use technology and consistently incorporate such advancing changes as how to stream video and integrate audio into their instruction.

“IT’s amazing how things have changed,” Brown said.

Nancy Meddings, dean of learning resources, said the school heightened work to improve innovation in 2006 when voters approved a $150 million bond measure to modernize.

Meddings helps oversee a technology committee that processes teacher requests for such updates and improvements as a recent move to implement Apple televisions that allow teachers to wirelessly broadcast iPad content onto big screens in classrooms.

Brown said the televisions allow chemistry professors to show visual demonstrations of elements.

“This is one of the most exciting things we’re doing in the classroom now,” he said.

The televisions, supported by wireless networks, allow professors to instruct from multiple areas in the classroom.

“A lot of instructors don’t want to be tethered in front of a podium,” Brown said.

About three classrooms have the televisions, and the college is researching how to support more of the devices, Meddings said.

“We look at ‘what do you need to teach well,’” she said.