

LMIS Minutes, October 18, 2019

Committee Members Present: Derek Buescher, Genevieve Caskey, Jeremy Cucco, Andrew Gomez, Matthew Link, Janet Marcavage, Adam Smith (Chair), Mike Spivey, Bryan Thines

Meeting called by Adam Smith at 11:02am.

The meeting began with a discussion about our October 4th meeting and recent minutes. As part of our previous discussion about streaming media, Jane Carlin sent a brief note about recent outreach efforts (added below as an addendum). Afterwards, minutes from May 3rd and October 4th were both approved.

The committee then started a broad discussion about computer purchases. Cucco began by mentioning his most recent “Monthly Technology Update” which included a link to a [Technology Services site with resources on technology initiatives](#) (including an FAQ on computer replacement).

Smith then asked Cucco for clarification on the four-year computer replacement process. Cucco cited sharp increase in computer failure after four years as well as a lack of options for warranties after four years. Moreover, given limited staffing on campus (roughly one service desk employee per 1,000 users), this policy also allows for attention to be paid to other technology issues on campus.

Gomez then asked for clarification regarding the selection process for Apple machines and whether Apple purchases would be phased out given their costs. In the case of the former, Cucco mentioned that MacBook Air laptops are not offered because the processors are underpowered. To the latter concern, he noted that a shift away from Apple computers may make business sense, but that it was not his decision to make.

Cucco also clarified a question he has received before about maximum allotments for faculty computer purchases. While Technology Services will pay up to \$1,500 for a computer, many Windows purchases are in the ~\$1,300 range. Some faculty have asked if they could upgrade specifications on the Windows systems so as to reach the \$1,500 maximum. Cucco noted that this was often not necessary and Technology Services has tried to emphasize a discussion over pairing computers to a faculty member’s particular needs.

Marcavage asked about the process of attaining computers for student staff members that previously did not require computers. Cucco noted that the process would vary by situation and that the best advice would be to get in touch with Technology Services to propose a solution.

Buescher then asked about what happens to a computer if a faculty member leaves before the 4-year cycle has been completed. Cucco noted that the computer would go to a new faculty member or be used as a student computer. In these cases, the computer would still operate on the 4-year cycle that begins when the computer is first purchased. Thines asked if the university makes money on the sale of cycled-out computers. Cucco noted that they are often sold to faculty via a facultycoms listing. In the future, he would like to be able to sell these computers to the faculty members that previously used them.

Smith then asked for clarification regarding the switch to laptops for faculty computer purchases. He noted that this has caused particular issues in the Computer Science department as some faculty prefer desktops and desktop computers are sometimes tied to on-campus activities (as an example, he noted a student competition held on campus). Cucco noted that some exceptions could be made to the laptop purchase policy but that these would be handled on a case-by-case basis in consultation with Technology Services. Cucco also explained that the switch to laptops was predicated by the negligible price difference (in laptop vs. desktop) and the lower energy costs of laptops. Smith noted that the environmental argument about laptops needs to factor in the various costs of lithium batteries which is often ignored. Cucco noted that laptops also factored into the university's emergency preparedness in the case of extenuating circumstances that require faculty to work remotely.

Smith then asked if support for server space could be improved in the future. Cucco noted that this is also a personnel issue given the 800+ servers already on campus. He also noted that the university's partnership with Amazon and its Amazon Web Services platform could serve as a potential solution. Smith noted the decreased need for computer labs and the potential reallocation of funds for other uses such as server space. Cucco noted that he has already proposed decreased funding for labs but that these savings would not inherently go to an expense like server space.

Marcavage then noted an incident where a faculty member going on sabbatical received a request from technology services to turn in their computer so it could be used by visiting faculty. Cucco noted that Technology Services recently purchased loaner computers (on a 2-year cycle) to avoid this type of request.

Meeting adjourned at 11:58am

Minutes taken by Andrew Gomez

Addendum – Update from October 4th meeting regarding streaming media:

“Jane Carlin reported on follow-up associated with streaming media. After the last LMIS meeting, a core group of faculty, identified as teaching with media, were contacted and asked for input and feedback concerning streaming services. This communication was sent jointly by Jane and Jeremy. One faculty colleague responded asking for clarification on the policy. Librarian Andrea Klyn followed up right away.”