Library, Media & Academic Computing Committee Minutes
April 8, 1999

Members present: Beezer, Deters, Gardiner, Michal, Mitchell, Sousa, Steiner

Meeting was called to order at 8:00

Minutes of the 1/28/99 and 3/25/99 meetings were approved.

Members present continued the discussion of responses to the faculty technology use questions. Gardiner distributed and summarized responses gathered from biology and geology faculty. Some faculty use computer/projection equipment in classroom presentations while others primarily depend on computer based programs for laboratory based activities. There were complaints about the lack of availability of computer/projection equipment in enough classrooms. Some faculty were reticent to adopt approaches that require a high level of technology based skills because of the investment of time required, a perceived shortage of equipment, and lack of technical support. Faculty currently use their computers and those available in laboratories and computer labs for daily preparation of teaching and research materials and expect students to have access to lab computers for assignments. Some faculty use computers and web based materials extensively for their teaching while others expect students to use computers and software available on campus in their search for information and completion of assignments. Nearly all of these faculty admitted limited knowledge of the use of computers across campus and the resources available. These faculty found students use computers in completing assignments; the only complaint seemed to be the availability of adequate computing facilities students could access and depend upon. There was variable support for the requirement that students own computers when entering UPS, however, most supported the idea. Most of the other comments were aimed at the importance of local resource people from OIS that were available to help faculty implement the use of technology in their teaching and research.

Sousa summarized the responses from politics & government and economics faculty. There were mixed views concerning the issue of student ownership of computers. Most of these faculty said they were not very aware of the technology services available to faculty.

Steiner summarized the responses from education, psychology and art faculty. These faculty generally use computers as a personal tool and do not use them extensively in class. There were mixed views concerning student ownership of computers.

The question was raised concerning what to do with the data collected. Ideas that ranged from writing a summary to sponsoring technology seminars and distributing a technology newsletter surfaced. However, it was generally understood there is an important relationship between individual needs, timing of the need and lack of time to become generally more aware of using technology, and availability of support. At this time, Steiner will attempt to write a general summary based on the collected information. The summary will be incorporated into the year-end report to the senate.

The committee took up the proposal from Beezer concerning a future requirement for entering students to have a computer. The proposal was meant only to start a more formal discussion and consideration of the proposal, with a possible recommendation going to the faculty senate for further consideration. Deters raised the issues of institutional responsibilities with respect to support and security. In view of the wide range of faculty responses to the question of required student ownership, variations that included access without ownership were discussed. Michal raised the question of who is expected to supply the software to be used. In some instances, the software is packaged with text. Steiner offered the generalization that, at present, more faculty probably do not support this proposal than support it. Others observed, given the data that an increasing percentage of entering students arrive with or purchase a computer to facilitate their academic work, this may be a self-correcting problem for which the university does not need a requirement. Current recommendations concerning computer platforms distributed to entering students may be adequate.

The next and last meeting of LMAC for 1998/99 has been rescheduled from 4/22 to 4/29.

respectfully submitted,

Mike Gardiner
4/9/99