

**Library, Media, Academic Computing Committee Minutes  
November 5, 1998**

**Present:** Bartanen, Deters, Ellis, Fiegener, Mitchell, Sousa, Steiner

Meeting was called to order at 8:00.

1. Minutes of the 10/22/98 LMAC meeting were approved.
2. Steiner circulated copies of a "letter to the editor" that a student planned to submit to The Trail. Subsequent discussion focused on two issues raised in the letter. First, the student claimed that the Apple computers in Howarth do not have sufficient memory to operate Netscape Communicator and WP software simultaneously. Ellis said he would investigate [note: an e-mail from Ellis to committee members sent later on 11/5 confirmed the problem, diagnosed the cause, and described the solution that would be implemented immediately].

Second, the student voiced concern that the number of PC's on campus was inadequate, and that the proportion of PC's relative to Apples was out-of-step with the world outside of academia. This led to a discussion about the costs and benefits of supporting the two hardware platforms across campus. Ellis acknowledged that although the exact proportion of Apples and PC's among faculty is unknown, his gut feeling is that it is close to 50-50. Bartanen cited the results of a student survey conducted by Shelley Owen (of OIS) showing that of the incoming 1998 UPS freshman who brought a computer with them to school, 82% came with an IBM-compatible computer. Steiner speculated about whether it would be worthwhile to survey faculty about the demand for Apple vs. PC. Deters recounted a recent conversation with Shelley Owen in which they discussed the feasibility of gathering data about the computing needs of faculty via focus group interviews rather than large survey. Ellis noted that the Apple-PC issue was a worthy topic for future LMAC discussion, and suggested that the Chairs' Meetings would be another forum to continue the discussion.

3. Discussion moved to the survey results (from the annual senior surveys conducted by the Higher Education Data Sharing Consortium) distributed to the committee by Beezer prior to the meeting. The data concerned a comparison of the "mean level of satisfaction with computer services and facilities" by samples of graduating seniors from UPS and from 5 comparison institutions over the years 1993-1998. The data suggest that UPS students have slightly lower mean satisfaction with computer services and facilities than students from the comparison institutions, and that satisfaction ratings are declining over time. The committee discussed the validity of the data and the meaning of the results, and speculated about plausible causes for the downward trend in student satisfaction. In response to a question by Sousa, Ellis noted that while there is no on-going, systematic effort to survey UPS student satisfaction with computing resources, OIS uses informal channels to gather some of this data.
4. Meeting was adjourned at 8:55.

Respectfully submitted:

Mark Fiegener.