

Library, Media, Academic Computing Committee
Final Report
May 3, 1999

1998-99 LMAC Committee Membership:

Rob Beezer	Bob Steiner (chair)
Joe Deters	Nic Michal (student)
Mark Fiegenger	Kris Bartanen (Ex-Officio)
Mike Gardiner	Raney Ellis (Ex-Officio)
Heidi Orloff	Marilyn Mitchell (Ex-Officio)
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The Senate charges to 1998-88 LMAC Committee were:

1. Collect information from faculty and students to define adequacy and long range development plans for the library and academic computing resources.
2. Advise the library staff in the review of plans for library resources.

Committee actions regarding the Senate charges

Advise the library staff in the review of plans for library resources.

Several meetings were devoted to a discussion and review of plans for the library. Documents including *Collins Library: Planing for a New Future*, *Collins Library: 2001 and Beyond*, *Library Renovation Vision*, *Concerns for Consideration in the Building Renovation Project*, *Faculty Resource Center*, and *Technology in Collins Library* were reviewed. Mitchell indicated that one of the difficulties with developing a firm plan was the fluid nature of the project scope and timeline. The Committee provided comment and suggestions regarding the information contained in the documents.

Collect information from faculty and students to define adequacy and long range development plans for the library and academic computing resources.

Various methods to collect information from faculty regarding the adequacy or academic computer resources were discussed. A faculty survey conducted in 1996 was discussed as well as information gathered from the Academics Dean's meeting with department chairs regarding the use of technology.

The committee decided to conduct a survey of departments to assess faculty use, concerns, and awareness of technology use on campus. Committee members suggested general questions and procedures to gather information. It was agreed that each committee member would gather information from her/his faculty as well as one or two other departments. The faculty input was gathered by 1) meeting with the entire faculty at a faculty meeting or other such gathering of department faculty, 2) meeting with selected

members of the department faculty in a focus group or in individual interviews, or 3) departmental faculty could be e-mailed the questionnaire and the information gathered by the returned e-mail responses. All three means were used to gather the information. The student member of the committee also solicited some student input, but this was not extensive. The summary report of the information obtained from faculty is included as Appendix A.

Other Activities/Actions of the Committee

The Committee reviewed the Chapter V, Library and Information Resources of the Accreditation Report. Feedback was provided regarding the accuracy, scope and clarity of the chapter.

The library video policy was reviewed and based on the discussions and recommendations of the Director of the Library, the committee recommend that the restrictions on students checking out "home use" videos be modified.

A proposal (<http://buzzard.ups.edu/private/ownership.html>) that all students be required to own computers was discussed and forwarded to the Senate. The hope of the committee was that the Senate would encourage a wider discussion of the proposal and implications of its adoption.

Numerous other items were discussed as they occurred during the year. The Director of the Library and Associate Vice President for Information Systems brought some to the committee and other were from committee members. Some items were informational whereas others were to obtain advice from the committee. It was apparent that often concerns of the faculty are caused from a lack of information. A vehicle to better share accurate information is important.

Recommended charges for the 1999-2000 LMAC Committee.

1. Develop a use policy for technology enhanced (electronic) classrooms.
2. Promote the sharing of faculty integration of technology in instruction through faculty run information sessions
3. Develop information/ideas that will assist faculty to deal with the implications of extensive use of the web for information used in papers and assignments.
4. Assure that the LMAC has the major role in policy-making decisions, rather than ad-hoc appointed committees.

Faculty Technology Use Questionnaire

The committee conducted a survey of departments to assess faculty use, concerns, and awareness of technology use on campus. It was agreed that each committee member would gather information from her/his faculty as well as one or two other departments. The information could be gathered by 1) meeting with the entire faculty at a faculty meeting or other such gathering of department faculty, 2) meeting with selected members of the department faculty in a focus group or in individual interviews, or 3) e-mailing department faculty the questionnaire and the information gathered by the returned e-mail responses. All three means were used to gather the information. It is not claimed that the information is representative of the total faculty, but is one indication of technology use on campus.

Responses were received from faculty in biology, physics, chemistry, mathematics & computer science, history, education, psychology, art, foreign language, business and public administration, politics and government, religion, classics, philosophy, English, physical education, occupational therapy, and physical therapy.

The questionnaire (attached) sought information in the following areas:

- 1) Faculty Instructional Use of Technology
- 2) Faculty Awareness of Campus Technology Resources
- 3) Student Access and Use of Technology
- 4) Other Thoughts About Academic Computing

Instructional Use of Technology

Uses varied greatly, but a majority of the respondents were not highly sophisticated in their use of technology. Most indicated that they were fairly comfortable with technology, but when correlated with their uses, the technology with which they were comfortable was often an overhead or the computer as a word processor. The overhead and slide projectors were used more than the computer in instruction. Use of the World Wide Web was commonly cited. Some departments such as psychology and several in Thompson Hall reported more extensive uses of technology in instruction, especially when dedicated computer labs were available. A number of faculty cited the use of computers in the research which they were conducting for access to resources which are not readily accessible otherwise. A number cited the use of presentation software and projection devices to make presentations in classes. Several respondents cited being able to utilize CD-ROM technology in instruction as a future desired direction. Almost all of the faculty respondents did cite the personal use of technology for word processing of instructional and research documents and the use of e-mail for communication with students and peers. Web Board is also beginning to be used by a number of faculty as a means to facilitate communication/comment between students and students and faculty. Departments such as art and music anticipate much more extensive use of technology in the areas of digitization of art work and music. Several faculty are exploring these areas currently.

It seems that overall; the computer is used more as a personal tool for the preparation of instructional materials, communication and research than for direct instructional applications.

Faculty Awareness of Campus Technology Resources

Overall, the respondents were not very aware of technology resources available on campus. Most inquire when they have a specific need and either contact OIS or search the OIS web page. Similarly, knowledge of peers' instructional uses of technology is lacking. Many indicated a little or no knowledge or awareness of peer uses of technology. Those with some knowledge of peer use of technology cited the recent Informal Committee on Teaching session on Instructional Uses of Technology as their source of information about what others are doing. A number recommended that meetings of this nature should be a regular occurrence. Several faculty specifically commented that they would like to learn about technology from other faculty who were using technology in instruction, rather than from "how to" sessions conducted by OIS. A number indicated that it was their own business to find out what others were doing or to attend information sessions, but their busy schedules were limiting their time and motivation to do this.

Student Access and Use of Technology

The main student uses of computers were for word processing papers and other assignments and to access the world wide web for information. Students also commonly used information databases accessible through the library and on-line. A concern expressed by a number of faculty was that the computer labs need to be equipped with machines which are reliable and contain current software. Several faculty cited students' excuses for late assignments being hardware and access problems that they encountered in the labs. Although most cited the above student uses of technology, a number of respondents also commented on the lack of computer skills of students and their seeming reluctance to learn to use technology.

A number of faculty also cited concerns about the extensive use of the world wide web by students. Over reliance upon the web and resources which are not subject to peer review is a concern. Several faculty also raised the issue of plagiarism. Several faculty indicated that they either orally or via handouts inform the students on the limitations of the world wide web and the need for critical analysis of information found on the web. Some have used specific web sites to help students see some of the inherent problems of false information, which can be readily published (found) on the web.

Faculty were asked if students should be required to have computers with certain minimum capabilities. Although many favored this, the concern for the financial implications makes the majority nonsupportive of the idea. More favored having adequate on-campus computer labs with reliable hardware and software readily accessible for student use. Several suggested that most students will be socialized to own a computer and probably all would if they could afford one. One respondent, who did not favor requiring students to own computers, did express the view that students had better learn to use technology for their own sakes.

Other Thoughts about Academic Computing

Several of the faculty expressed frustration about the response time from OIS when a particular problem was encountered. Others did not like the response desk, saying that being given a number did not solve their problem, and they reported that occasionally it took days or weeks for someone to fix the problem. Others did not like having students being sent to fix problems, citing a lack of knowledge of the particular software by the students, or not wanting a student to have access to their computer.

Most respondents recognized problems with which OIS must deal and felt that there is a need for additional OIS staff to address the many technology problems which currently arise and will undoubtedly increase as more technology and more sophisticated applications are made of technology. Faculty in high technology use departments (buildings) recommended that OIS staff be assigned full time to these buildings to trouble shoot problems and assure that the technology is functioning properly.

Several faculty questioned the policy regarding the options for faculty choice in computers. Expanding the current option of a desktop system (PC or Mac) to allow for a choice of either a laptop or desktop system was recommended. Those advocating this option suggest that it would allow greater flexibility for faculty to utilize the computer more extensively in instruction, where the user would not be as dependent upon the hardware and software in the classroom.

Conclusions/Suggestions

1. There was strong demand for greater ability to display computer output in a classroom setting (or in a science laboratory).
2. The faculty is split on requiring student ownership of computers.
3. Faculty development and training might be best handled by the faculty themselves, though some recognition (time and money) should be provided to encourage those interested in assuming this sort of responsibility in a big way.
4. The reliability of hardware, software and personnel needs to improve before faculty are willing to "gamble" on making technology a central aspect of a course.
5. The use of the world wide web by students in preparation of reports, papers appears to be an increasing concern. Issues dealing with plagiarism, unreviewed sources, and lack of use of more traditional print sources are all concerns. Not only must students be educated in these areas, but also faculty need education on how to address these issues in their classes.