Library, Media, Academic Computing Committee Minutes
March 2, 1998

Present: Rob Beezer, Shelby Clayson, Raney Ellis, Mark Fiegener, Mike Gardiner, Doug Goodman, Mary Rose Lamb, Marilyn Mitchell, David Sousa, Kris Bartanen (guest).

1. Minutes of the November 4 meeting were approved.

2. Barboni proposal. Raney indicated that the project was in the works. Information was being gathered, in particular information from George Mills and Financial Aid. The date for completion is mid May. It is still anticipated that the information gathered and a subsequent report will be brought to a committee consisting of the President, Academic Vice President, Financial Vice President and two faculty yet to be named with Raney acting as liaison. There will be a site visit by Barboni staff and open meeting(s).

3. Report on the state of campus computing (impromptu). Raney offered the following in answer to Mike's question, "Where are we now?":

    -   Replacement schedule. Currently all 750+ full time faculty, staff and lab computers are in the replacement program. An additional 250+ "trickle down" computers are in use by temp and work study staff. The latter are unsupported but many have network connections and are essential to the work of the university. Currently OIS staff provide 120 installations per year.
    -   Network review. The final report of the Dias and McDonough has been received and is available in Raney's office. It is anticipated that network upgrades will accompany building renovations within the facilities upgrade program.

    -   Long term planing. Any long term planning is impacted by the decision to require all students have computers. Such a requirement will create a bigger demand on faculty programs and consequent OIS support of those programs. The BTF has approved funding for backbone upgrading beginning with 1998/99. Kris commented that the budget request process does not address long term planning although the implementation of electronic classrooms and the replacement schedule do look at the longer term. Mike asked if LMAC could take any role in information gathering to aid the planning process. David asked if the annual budget made sense for technology planning. Raney indicated that both database development and network development were five year programs which are now complete and we now need to turn to other long term projects. Mike again questioned of the impact of LMAC on long range planning and its role as an advocate for adequate funding. The impact of the current policy of flat budgets on technology planning was raised and Raney responded that the drop in PC prices has impacted the university's ability to purchase positively.

4. Help Desk evaluation. The question was raised as to whether LMAC should conduct a customer satisfaction survey. Raney replied that he had had relatively little feedback. Most of what he had heard involved communication problems. Doug had heard mixed reports leaning toward the negative. The definition of urgent differs between help desk staff and those requesting help. There were questions regarding response time and the practice of some to circumvent the system by calling directly to those they believed would help them. David reported mostly favorable responses with the main complaint being the unpredictability of response time. Mike reiterated the need to find a common definition of urgency and reported the loss of custom applications when help was provided. Raney replied that there is a priority scheme with class machines having top priority and immediate response. Second priority calls get a 1-3 week response. He pointed out that the Help Desk is managed by 8 students and 2 techs under Theresa Duhart's supervision. The industry standard calls for one tech for every 200 machines while we have one tech for 500. He also reported that the second three month report evaluating service was due soon and there were plans to survey customer satisfaction.

Rob asked how students were selected and trained. Marilyn asked whether systematic feedback; i.e., how are we doing, is most needed or is this a resource issue and LMAC needs to recommend more adequate resources. The discussion ended with the conclusion that an LMAC survey was unnecessary at this time.

5. Computer printing. Raney reported that the metering software should be in place this summer for fall semester which will identify students printing and bill directly to their accounts.

Meeting was adjourned at 9:50.

Respectfully submitted,

Marilyn Mitchell