Enrichment Committee Meeting, Wednesday November 29th, 1995

Members Present: All members present.

The minutes of last Enrichment Committee meeting were approved, and the Committee moved on to consider two new items of business: a discussion of laptop computer resources and student research grants.

I. Laptop Computer Resources

Chair Susan Owen and Associate Dean Finney summarized for Dr. Raney Ellis, Associate Vice President for Information Systems, our current problem with laptop computers: the two computers are insufficient to meet faculty demand, most especially in the summer, when faculty wish to use laptops beyond the current ten day limit.

A discussion followed in which a host of ideas were presented. Dr. Ellis indicated that he saw a need for additional machines, and that he could submit a request to the budget task force for laptop funds. To make strong case to the budget task force he should have information about : the frequency with which waivers to existing policy are sought by faculty; recent and current patterns of use; and information from comparable academic institutions about their laptop resources. Dr. Ellis indicated that he would be conducting a survey next semester on computing needs; in this he can solicit information about faculty demand for laptop computers.
We should expect, Dr. Ellis indicated, that four machines will cost roughly $10-12,000. In the longer run, we should probably aim to purchase new equipment that will move our personal computing systems towards portability.

II. 1995/1996 Student Research Applications

Last spring 18 student research proposals were funded under the "early bird" procedure. In response to an especially strong set of proposals, the committee chose to allocate $5,542 of its $8,542 to early bird proposals, (rather than 40% of the budget, as was its policy). Thus, the research subcommittee had only $3,000 remaining to allocate for the 33 proposals it received in the fall. The research subcommittee decided that 11 of the 33 proposals should not be funded, and that another 22 should be funded. Of these 22, 10 were judged to be significantly stronger, and the research subcommittee aimed to fund them at 84%, and the remaining 12 proposals at 47%. To achieve this, the research subcommittee requested of the full committee that it authorize the transfer of $2,125 from the faculty research fund to the student research fund (to restore the fall research budget to 60% of the total fund). John Finney indicated that $32,000 remained in the faculty research fund, and vouched that $30,000 would be adequate to fund all faculty research requests for this year. By a unanimous voice vote the members of the UEC agreed to transfer $2,125 from the faculty research fund to the student research fund.

The committee then adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Thomas Weko
Recording Secretary