Minutes of the Library, Media, and Academic Computing Committee

Tuesday, October 17, 1995

Present: Ellis, Greene, Hanson, Hommel, Lamb, Mitchell, Peterson, Robertson, Share, Woodward (recording)

Minutes from last committee meeting were approved.

Hanson reported on the board of trustees committee on technology, which is examining a range of issues from cultivating relations with Intel and its new plant to a university-wide vision of technology.   Several faculty members have made presentations to the committee on their instructional uses of technology on campus. Hanson felt that Ellis, who participates on this committee, would be a useful conduit for our committee reports and pertinent findings. Hanson also mentioned that some of the faculty are considering a proposal to NSF which would emphasis instructional innovations in the sciences and technology use.

Hanson suggested that LMAC investigate four areas based on the September 28, 1995, minutes. These would include: 1) faculty technology survey / long-term planning 2) budgetary considerations 3) student, faculty, and staff training, and 4) information dissemination and computer security.
Greene felt that these were appropriate groupings and that there would probably be overlap from one area to the next. After some discussion, Hanson suggested that the best approach would be through subcommittees. He suggested that each member participate on two subcommittees.

Ellis commented the LMAC committee might be interested in a plan he and Mitchell are developing for a campus technology use. Potts will appoint an ad hoc committee to help develop this plan. This ad hoc committee will consider broad questions such as how the university views its use of technology, the focus of (and commitment to) specific technologies (e.g., distance learning, funds for network operation and maintenance, desktop platforms). Hanson felt we should have representation on the new committee given the basic charge of LMAC. Ellis pointed out that the ad hoc committee will have a limited life span and would be an open forum for comments and suggestions.

Share suggested that a good place to begin LMAC efforts would be the faculty survey. Hanson added that several issues could be pursued simultaneously. In regard to the faculty survey, Greene asked if a direct approach (e.g., campus wide mailing) to the entire faculty would be the best tactic or should we use departmental structures as a way of gathering more detailed information. Woodward suggested that this might occur in two phases, where the initial survey would be a way of gathering and quantifying broad concerns and that a second survey could be conducted either through departments or, as Greene suggested, by an LMAC member attending a meeting where the department would focus on computing issues.
As Greene noted, LMAC already represents eight departments on campus. This second survey would provide a means of probing issues in greater depth than a general survey as well as a mechanism for presenting campus wide data.

Peterson reported on the work of the faculty survey subcommittee. He has collected questions from other subcommittee members and will formalize the survey over the next two weeks. There will be a report on this at our next meeting on October 31.

Finally, Share reported on several complaints from faculty and students who have had some difficulty getting on the VAX. Faculty and students are typically unsure as to the source of the problem (i.e., their system, the VAX). Ellis stated that part of the problem had to do with extensive amount of mail that collects on the VAX. Users are gradually being shifted to Eudora, and many of the networking problems will be addressed this year.

The meeting adjourned at 9:50.

Our next scheduled meeting will be at 9:00, Tuesday, October 31.