



# Minutes of the Computing Advisory Committee

November 10, 1998

Those attending: Ruth Bernhart, David Blakesley, Patti Cosgrove (for Al Allen), J.P. Dunn, Steve Etcheson (GPSC Representative), Skip Hardenburg, Geoff Nathan, Carolyn Snyder, Mike Wainer, Mary Wallace (Administrative Intern), Brad Wilkie (USG Representative)

Geoff began by addressing several questions to Al through Patti.

1. One dealt with the question of whether there would be continued support for token ring cards by IT. A rumor is going around that IT will no longer support them, and many units cannot afford to make the switch to ethernet
  2. A second dealt with problems associated with the changes in the SMTP server software. Geoff has received complaints that the announcement of the change was made after the fact, and that the implications for ordinary users were not made sufficiently clear.
  3. Finally a question was raised about upgrades to Dr. Solomon. Although the University contracted for monthly upgrades, they had not been received from Network Associates, and as a consequence the release of the software has not been complete. The upgrades have now been received, and an announcement to that effect should be forthcoming soon.
- Considerable discussion ensued on the CD-ROM. Patti noted that over 600 had already been sold, in labs and in the bookstore. Beginning in the Spring the CD-ROM will also have Dr. Solomon. David Blakesley suggested putting the software portion of the Little, Brown writing handbook on the CD. Carolyn asked why they could not simply be given away, rather than being sold for \$5. Patti suggested they could be included within the new student's acceptance package, along with an e-mail account. Perhaps this could be paid for with a small portion of the technology fee. For everyone's information, the person responsible for the CD-ROM is Michael Bruens (michael@siu.edu), and Mike Schwartz (schwartz@siu.edu) is chair of the CD-ROM committee.
  - Patti wondered how to get information about which other departments at the university have purchased site licenses for various software. Although she is particularly interested in Assimilator, there may be other software titles for which that information would be valuable.
  - The committee then began discussing the question of completing the equipping of faculty desktops. It was suggested that the spreadsheet proposal passed out at the last meeting was priced too high, and Geoff will check with Purchasing and IT about estimates on current prices. Infrastructure costs (such as hubs and routers) should also be included in any overall upgrading proposal. The question of leasing was again raised, and Patti pointed out that for leasing to be realistic, the University must be willing to make a long-term commitment, and not base computing costs on windfall funding. It was pointed out that Western Kentucky and the University of Iowa have leasing programs, and some of the committee will investigate this issue further.
  - Another issue that was raised was the lack of a dedicated University computer store where students can purchase computers, perhaps subsidized by the University. This could be considered a retention issue, if subsidies could be tied to students' commitment to staying at the University. It was pointed out that at the University of Florida,

students must prove that they have access to a computer in order to be admitted to the University (access may include such things as a parent's computer).

- Finally, it was suggested that computers discarded by some units could be made available as e-mail stations or word processing stations in the dorms and other public-access areas. In this case, the computers need not be of particularly high quality. A related suggestion was for ethernet ports to be made available in the Student Center and Carolyn announced that the Library was also investigating making such ports available.

The next meeting is scheduled for *Tuesday, 1 December at 3:30 in the Library Conference Room.*

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*Minutes Prepared by Geoffrey Nathan*

*Last Updated: 28 November 1998--D.B.*

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