COMPUTER POLICY COMMITTEE

Annual Report, 1992-93 Academic Year

The Computer Policy Committee met eight times during the academic year to discuss and review policies and plans about computing on the UWM campus. As in past years, the CPC organized itself into subcommittees which met independently to develop recommendations for full committee consideration. In addition, regular reports about activities of the Computing Services Division were delivered by Director Neil Trilling. Vice Chancellor Kenneth Watters and Assistant Chancellor Paul Haubrich attended a Fall meeting to discuss campus planning. Paul Haubrich attended other meetings to provide liaison with campus administration.

The Committee continued to monitor patterns of use of central facilities, with special attention to efficient utilization of the Convex machine. Attention also was paid to issues raised by the proliferation of microcomputers and workstations on campus, most notably the scarcity of information about faculty needs in this area.

Survey of Current and Future Academic Computing Needs. With the help of the Social Science Research Facility and the Vice Chancellor's office, the CPC surveyed the faculty about their needs in the computing area. The questionnaire sought information on a range of topics, including mainframe use, sources of funding for microcomputer and software purchases, satisfaction with microcomputer repair services, and the availability of consultation and software support. Results are currently being analyzed, and a report will be available during the coming academic year.

Software Audit. Central Administration directed the campus to conduct a mandatory search of randomly-selected university-owned microcomputers for the purpose of identifying illegal use of software (i.e., software obtained without proper payment). Upon learning of the audit, the CPC made several recommendations to the Vice Chancellor about procedures to protect the privacy rights of the faculty (such as giving sufficient advance notice to allow removal of confidential files). The audit revealed that unlicensed use of software is not a significant problem on the UWM campus. The favorable outcome may reflect increased funding for software acquisition (recommended by the CPC last year).

Although most of the CPC recommendations about the audit procedures were followed by campus administration, we remain concerned about the general implications of such an audit. The procedure of searching university-owned computers for suspect electronic files suggests the possibility of similar searches of university-owned desks, bookcases, and file cabinets. At this time, there is no published UWM policy about searches of faculty offices and laboratories by university authorities. The CPC asked the University Committee to consider development of such a policy.

Computing Services Division Program Review. The CPC was asked by the Vice Chancellor to respond to the report of the program review committee. Although we found ourselves in general agreement with the report and its recommendations, a number of revisions were proposed. Two issues needing special attention were identified in our discussions: (a) the uneven support for microcomputing in different academic units; and (b) the more generous support for acquisition of new equipment and software than for replacement of outmoded items. A document summarizing the Committee's response has been forwarded to the Vice Chancellor.
Access to Network News Systems. Last year, the CPC developed a policy about publication in electronic form, based on the premise that the same standards of intellectual and academic freedom developed for university libraries also apply to access to and transmission of material in electronic form. The Committee's report, submitted last year, now has been approved by the Chancellor's office as campus administrative policy.

Committee Members

Swarjit Arora, Economics
Alan Baron, Psychology (Chair)
Alan Corre, Hebrew Studies
Arlindo DaSilva, Geosciences
James Fisher, Admin Leadership
Arun Garg, Ind & Syst Eng
Timothy Haas, Business Admin
William Haseman, Business Admin
Gregory Iverson, Linguistics
Leonard Levine, EE & Comp Sci
Stephen Pevnick, Art
Gilbert Walter, Math Sci
Neil Trilling, CSD (ex officio)
Robert Jones, Grad Sch (ex officio)

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