

MEMORANDUM

To: Chancellor's Cabinet
From: Dr. Jeffrey C. Huskamp, IRCC Chair, on behalf of the IRCC
Subject: IRCC Recommendation - Student Computing Ownership Requirement

Recommendation:

In keeping with East Carolina University's commitment to leadership in the development and deployment of information technology in higher education, the Information Resources Coordinating Council recommends that all new students (starting with the freshman class entering in Fall, 2003) be required to own a desktop, portable computer or other system with minimum specifications set by ITCS in consultation with the Faculty Information Technology Committee (FITC), the Information Systems Steering Committee (ISSC), the Information Resources Coordinating Council (IRCC) and student representatives. The IRCC further recommends that a detailed implementation plan be developed by March 31, 2002 for presentation to the Board of Trustees at their May, 2002 meeting. In preparation for this requirement, students entering in fall, 2002 will be strongly encouraged to own a computer system.

Action Desired:

Before expending significant resources to develop a detailed plan for a student computer ownership requirement, we seek agreement from the Chancellor's Cabinet that a plan should be created. Once the plan is developed, we would seek endorsement from the FITC, ISSC, IRCC, Chancellor's Cabinet and Faculty Senate. The Chancellor would then make the final decision on whether to implement the plan.

Rationale:

Personal ownership and access to computer systems builds on the University's major investments in information technology infrastructure and services, and will enhance our learning and research environments. Many of the University's instructional environments, student service functions, library resources, and communication systems are now available via the web and accessed through the campus backbone. Students benefit from ready access to these resources by gaining valuable experience in utilizing information technology systems to facilitate learning, in preparing for lifelong learning, and in enhancing workforce preparedness.

According to the sophomore survey from spring, 2001, 90.6% of ECU students, already have a computer where they live (up from 83.4% in 2000 and 40.9% in 1998). For ECU students, computer ownership is already a de facto standard. In addition, a computer ownership requirement will assist with the computer literacy requirement now under consideration by the SACS Steering Committee.

The ownership requirement also enables the University to redirect Student Computer Technology Fee funds to support more discipline specific laboratories and software, thus enhancing the overall student-learning environment. This requirement will also enable the University to take advantage of vendor site licensing agreements for commonly used student desktop software, such as the Microsoft Office suite. As an added benefit, students should be able to purchase computers at a lower overall cost through vendor pricing agreements brokered by the University.

Planning:

A broad-based Student Computer Ownership Steering Committee named by the IRCC and including student representation, should be charged with developing a detailed campus-wide implementation plan that will leverage the experience gained from the Brody School of Medicine student computer ownership requirement instituted in fall, 2001. The plan should be completed and endorsed by the FITC, the ISSC and by the IRCC by March 31, 2002. The plan should be available for consideration by the Board of Trustees at their May, 2002 meeting. The detailed plan should include, but not be limited to, the following:

- Faculty development plan
- Campus computer support plan for student assistance
- Assistance program for needy students
- Detailed timeline and project plan
- Budget required for implementation and effects on related budgets
- Additional resources needed (if any)
- Vendor support to assist with broken computers
- Support for both Macintosh and PC platforms
- Specification of a computer configuration that will be effective for four to five years
- Possible consideration of permitting workplace computers to be counted with the concurrence of the employer
- Partnership with local ISP providers to obtain effective off-campus access to campus on-line resources