

AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF ARMENIA
College of Business and Management

MEMORANDUM

TO: Members of the Computer Advisory Committee
Ara Arabyan
Ruben Karapetian
David Livingston
Igor Mktumian
Tigran Nazarian
Virgil Strohmeyer

FROM: Allen G. Greenwood, Chair

DATE: July 26, 1993

SUBJECT: Minutes of the 7/20/93 meeting of the AUA Computer Advisory Committee

The fifth meeting of the AUA Computer Advisory Committee (CAC) was held Tuesday, July 13, 1993, from 3 until 5:00 p.m. All members were in attendance.

The minutes of the July 13, 1993 meeting were approved.

The last meeting of the entire committee will be Tuesday July 27, as Ara and Virgil will be leaving. Allen and David leave August 12. Armen will be arriving July 30; therefore, it may be necessary for the committee to meet with Armen and George during Armen's visit.

Ara indicated engineering would need four computers for the college and four for the research center. David raised the issue of a digitizer or plotter but Ara felt they were not necessary.

Since most colleges/departments indicated a desire for a scanner, the committee began discussing its desired capabilities. Tigran noted that Vartkas Barsam told him the university already bought an HP black and white scanner (not sure what model). One issue that needs to be decided is where to place the scanner -- copy center or computer department?

David felt even if the university purchases laptops for faculty, there is a need for an external monitor when the laptop is used as a desktop machine. He also indicated a top-end laptop would cost about \$3800 while a 486/80MB with mouse would cost approximately \$2000.

David suggested only buying Microsoft mice because of reliability.

Six more computers would be needed to fill the existing labs stations.

Engineering is using AutoCad which requires 40 MB of hard disk space. The issue was raised because we may need to have larger hard disks on machines running AutoCad. Since we only have one copy (it is expensive -- approximately \$3700 or \$2000 educational version), it is suggested only one machine be set up for AutoCad in the lab. David suggested considering the use of GenericCad which sells for only \$395.

Igor was concerned that faculty specify certain software and the AUA must get it. The committee feels that the university and each college/department should establish standard software for use in their courses. If a list of AUA's software is provided to faculty when they agree to teach, they can adapt their course to what is available, negotiate with the dean to purchase the required software, or make their own arrangements to get the software here (bring their copy, make an arrangement with the company, etc.) It may be the case that faculty do not know what is available; therefore, they specify their preference, but would be satisfied with the comparable product

that the AUA already has. Also, in most cases it doesn't matter what the brand name is, the products are very similar, e.g. Lotus 123 versus Excel versus Quattro.

With regard to the issue above, it was reiterated that the university must standardize its software. One strategy for deciding the standard may be price -- who among Microsoft, Borland, and Lotus will give us the best deal on a site license for a suite of word processing, spreadsheet, and database software.

David indicated the university should be careful using any software that has DES encryption built in -- it cannot be exported!

There was a lengthy discussion on CD-ROM and how it should be used at the AUA, both near term and long term. It is obvious this is the media of the future, but in many ways it has already arrived -- computer software, documentation, magazines are now routinely available on CD-ROM. The AUA should begin using this technology for basic reference (encyclopedia), data, etc. There should be several simple players available and the AUA should start to build a collection of disks; more exotic uses should be considered later. Should they be available in the library (if so maybe they can be acquired through USIA) or in the computer department or both?

The AUA is in dire need of current computer magazines; many of the magazines, especially weeklies, are free. One alternative is to get them on CD-ROM; another alternative is to have them shipped monthly on the UAF flight. They would either be consolidated in the Oakland office or AGBU in New Jersey.

Aragast expects its UPSs to be available next week. As soon as they are ready, Igor and David will visit Aragast and assess their product.

Since we are considering four-machine UPSs, there would be a need to cut through walls between offices so the UPS could be shared. This may be a problem with the architect. The same problem would result when installing the LAN. Igor indicated there are tubes under the floor for wiring which may be another alternative. David will discuss these issues with the university architect.

In determining what equipment should be bought with additional funding, the priority will be given to the computer department and for instruction purposes. Administration and research centers will have low priority. In addition, we are not considering audio/visual equipment or copiers -- only computer-related equipment.

One goal of the committee in its allocation will be to have at least one computer for every two faculty. Based on current estimates, business and engineering both plan to have at most eight faculty here at a time. Therefore, there should be at least four computers for each. Since there is a high turnover of AUA faculty from quarter to quarter, the needs of the faculty are dynamic -- some faculty are heavy computer users, others do not use them at all. To ensure the best use of resources, one possibility is to have some or all of them in a pool that can be allocated by the Provost and computer department based on the needs of the faculty that particular quarter. The deans should solicit faculty needs as soon as they have agreed to teach and forward that information immediately to the Provost.

The next meeting will be Tuesday July 27 from 3 p.m. until 5:00 p.m. in room 24. Since this will be the last meeting for all members, we have a lot to resolve. Our priority will be the allocation of additional funds. In order to prepare our final report, I will try to have the following items ready for the meeting or by Tuesday morning so that you can hopefully review it before the meeting: a list of recommendations and decisions that the committee has made and a list of issues brought up during our meetings but not yet resolved. Please give some thought to the continuance of the committee -- its need, who should serve, who should chair it, what should its charge be, etc.

cc: Armen Der-Kiureghian
George Gibson