

Pending computer consolidation plan undergoes revision

By OWEN MASCOTT
Of the Emerald

Affirmative: computers are making news again in Oregon, logically enough. A pending plan

to centralize the computer operations of the state's nine institutions of higher education into a consolidated network has undergone a recent revision. The change involves placing

the network data processing function under the direct supervision and control of the Chancellor's Office rather than under Oregon State University's supervision as earlier planned.

This latest development is in accordance with recommendations made by the Oregon legislature's Ways and Means Salary Subcommittee in a May report. Another suggestion offered by the legislators was "to defer for one year the Department of Higher Education's request which relates to additional computing capacity (new machines)."

The legislature passed a one-year budget for the computer network in the recent session and instructed that the funds be used to hire a network director and administrative staff.

The director and staff will be charged with completing the comprehensive planning that the network consolidation requires. One of their primary tasks will be to open a bidding process with several computer manufacturers to determine which machinery will be installed.

The change in the network's proposed site is the focal point of discussion in computing centers throughout the state. There had been much concern, particularly at this University, that centralizing the network at Oregon State could have created a conflict of interest. George Struble, University Computing Center Director, says "running their (OSU's) own operation alongside the network project could have raised some problems, particularly in terms of time scheduling and financial arrangements."

University President Robert Clark publicly declared skepticism in regards to the network plan as it was formulated at a State Board of Higher Education meeting last September 26. On that date the board conducted its first review of a plan to add \$484,000 to the state system's proposed \$7.5 million 1973-75 computing services budget to establish a computer network over the following two years.

Clark was concerned that the University might suffer a loss of quality in its computing service. Provisions in the original network plan had included the possibility of trading in the University's \$1.1 million IBM 360-50 computer for \$250,000 two years from now, as well as the centralization at OSU. Clark and eight other University representatives pressed the board on what they considered the shortcomings of the network plan. The board then passed provisions which provided:

— Any plans for removing, replacing or adding computer equipment at any state system school would be thoroughly reviewed by the board's finance committee before approval.

— No existing computer equipment will be removed from any state system campus until after the full board has reviewed the removal plans.

President Clark said the proposal "may be the most important issue we've had to discuss with the board" since he was named president.

Computing Center Director Struble noted that the decision to locate facilities at OSU "was made by the Chancellor's Office alone and never was recom-

mended by the Computer Policy Council." (CPC is a 10-member group representing the nine state system campuses and the Chancellor's Office — it was formally established by the state board last July 24).

Struble is the chair of the technical advisory group, an important ad hoc subcommittee of the CPC. It is his group's function to "evaluate technical matters relating to the network and advise the CPC on them."

During a May meeting the council established the following priority order for the subcommittee's work over the coming term:

— Review, summarize and submit to the CPC the computing needs identified thus far by the various groups, e.g. academic systems, administrative systems, etc.

— Assess the general computing resources necessary to meet the collective computing needs of the Oregon State System of Higher Education.

— Develop general criteria for evaluating computing equipment needed to meet the network requirements.

Struble feels there is still plenty of planning to be concluded by the computer network personnel. The search is now on for a network director and administrative staff to assist in the preparations.

"Further consultation regarding the technicalities of locating the facilities under the Chancellor's Office supervision is sure to comprise the bulk of our discussions at the next council meeting on August 15," Struble said.

Report hits health policies as vague, incomprehensible

Most people in the Eugene-Springfield area do not understand their health insurance policies and don't know where to go with their claim problems, a study issued Monday by the Consumer Research Center of the University (CRC) and OSPIRG reveals.

OSPIRG said the three-month study concluded that "the Oregon Insurance Commissioner has approved health insurance policies containing such vague and obscure language that many consumers do not understand their health insurance coverage."

The report calls for the Insurance Commissioner "to take strong action to protect health insurance policyholders by requiring that policies be written in plain English."

The study which included a survey of 114 households in the Eugene-Springfield area disclosed that the majority of respondents misunderstand common policy language and that while nearly 25 percent have previously had a claim problem, only two in ten know that the Oregon Insurance Division can assist with complaints.

Commitment process detailed

If you've been planning to have a friend or an enemy committed to the State Hospital, here's how to go about it.

First of all, you need another person to cooperate with you. The two of you must observe and record the patient's erratic behavior for at least a week. Then you need to go down to the Lane County Mental Health Clinic at 1901 Garden Avenue and fill out certain court and petition papers, discuss the patient's emotional or behavioral problems with one of the 40 persons ranging from psychiatrists and clinical psychologists to volunteers working at the clinic.

Next, you need to set a time for a board hearing at which you and your 'co-committor' and two physicians must be present. If the board's verdict is affirmative, your friend or ex-friend will be "escorted" to Salem.

About two-third of the patients in the State Hospital are committed as a result of this process. The others are volunteer admittants.

This information was offered by Tom Nugent, Supervisor of the Mental Health Division of the Lane County Health Department, in a Friday speech to the Eugene Rubicon Society. His speech was part of the Rubicon continuing series, "Know Your County Government."

Besides committing persons to the State Hospital, the Mental Health Clinic also maintains an alcohol abuse program, program for ex-hospital patients and services for emotionally-disturbed children and adults, Nugent said. The clinic's two main priorities are children and alcoholics.

He said contracts with three local organizations have replaced some of the work that used to be done in the clinic: White Bird Clinic and its services related to drug abuse, Family Counselling Services and Pearl Buck Center.

The Mental Health Clinic also maintains Carlton House, a live-in situation for alcoholic males, Buckley House, a detoxification center and a half-way house for alcoholic women.

Applications Available

The following committees are opening applications for students to fill positions during the summer session.

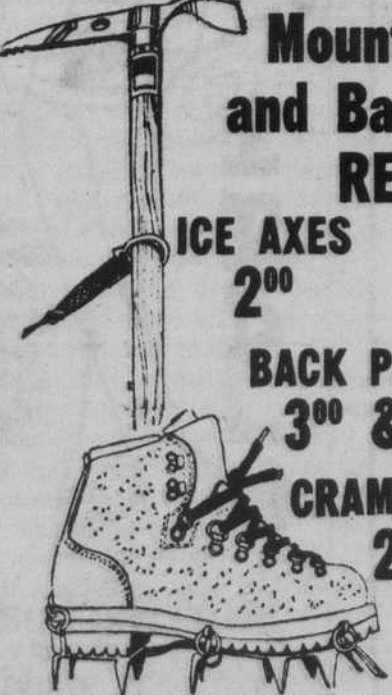
Applications can be picked up at the A. S. U. O. office 315 EMU.

Application deadline is Thurs. July 19, 1973.

The following committees have openings.

1. Status of Women 3 positions.
2. Academic Occasions Comm. 3 positions.
3. Academic Requirements 1 positions.
4. Equal Employment Opportunity 1 position.
5. Student Conduct Comm. 1 position.
6. Scholastic Deficiency Comm. 2 positions.
7. New Student Orientation Comm. 4 positions.
8. Assembly and University Lectures Comm. 3 positions.





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