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Knight Library lends computers with new Laptop Loan Service

Students borrowed laptops through the new program nearly 600 times in its first several months of operation

By A. Sho Ikeda
Senior News Reporter

A laptop computer is a great tool for any college student seeking mobility and convenience. Now, University students can borrow laptops from the Knight Library, thanks to the student technology fee.

The current pool includes seven Windows-based and two Macintosh laptops. The laptops are available for checkout for four hours a day at Media Services in the Knight Library, and may be booked in advance online. Otherwise, laptops are available on a first-come, first-serve basis. Laptops may also be checked out overnight or for the weekend.

The Laptop Loan Service, which began operating near the end of spring term, has loaned out laptops 595 times between May 16 and August 15, Library Systems Director Sara Brownmiller said. Brownmiller said she suggested the service to library officials because she wanted laptop technology to be more accessible to students. Funding for the laptops is provided through the student technology fee.

"I had heard and seen that other universities were offering this kind of service," Brownmiller said. "I think sometimes students don't have access to current technology, and this lets technology become

more available to people."

Knight Library ITC Coordinator Kathy Heerema said this is not the first time the library has offered laptops to students. She said the Information Technology Center had two laptops available to students, but could not let the computers be taken out of the library.

"We didn't have the resources to allow them to be taken out," Heerema said. She added that the pool of laptops may grow in the future because of the high demand.

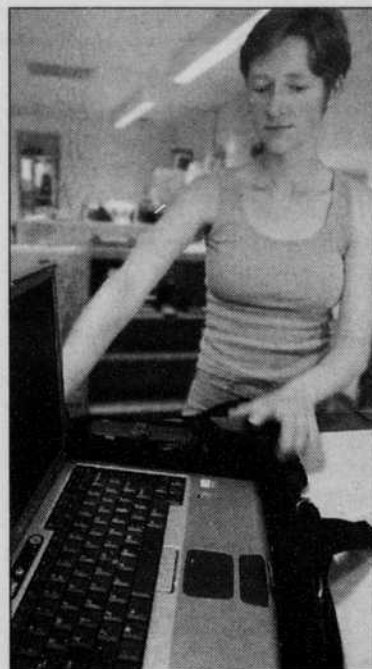
The seven available Windows laptops are Dell Latitude D600s, which have 14.1-inch displays and 1.3-gigahertz Pentium M processors. The two Macintosh laptops are Macintosh iBooks with 14.1-inch displays and 800-megahertz processors.

Both the Windows and Macintosh laptops include Ethernet ports, wireless network cards for wireless Internet access and DVD/CD-Rewritable drives. Both types also come with pre-installed software, including Microsoft Word, Microsoft Excel, Microsoft PowerPoint and Internet Explorer. External floppy-disk and Zip drives are also available for checkout.

Additionally, the laptops are configured to work with other equipment that students can check out from Media Services, including digital cameras.

But borrowing expensive equipment such as laptops carries a lot of responsibility.

"The overdue fines are quite considerable," Media Services technician Susan DeHart said.



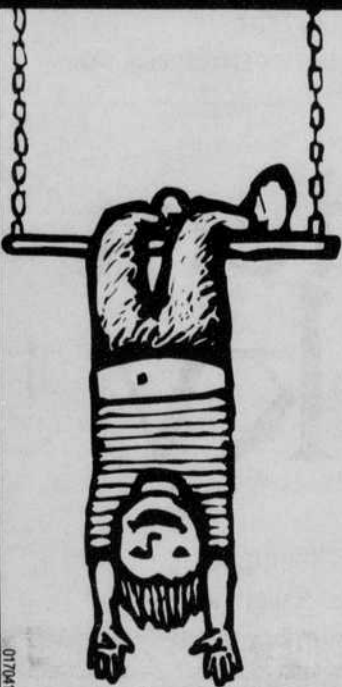
Jessica Waters Photo Editor

Knight Library employee Marina Wrench displays one of the seven Dell and two Macintosh laptop computers that Media Services now lends out to students.

Students with overdue laptops will be fined \$20 for every hour past the check-in time. Students are fully responsible for the laptop, and any loss or damage will have to be paid by the student who checked it out. Also, students who return laptops past the due time and date may not be allowed to check out laptops in the future.

Contact the city/state politics reporter at shoikedadailyemerald.com.

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