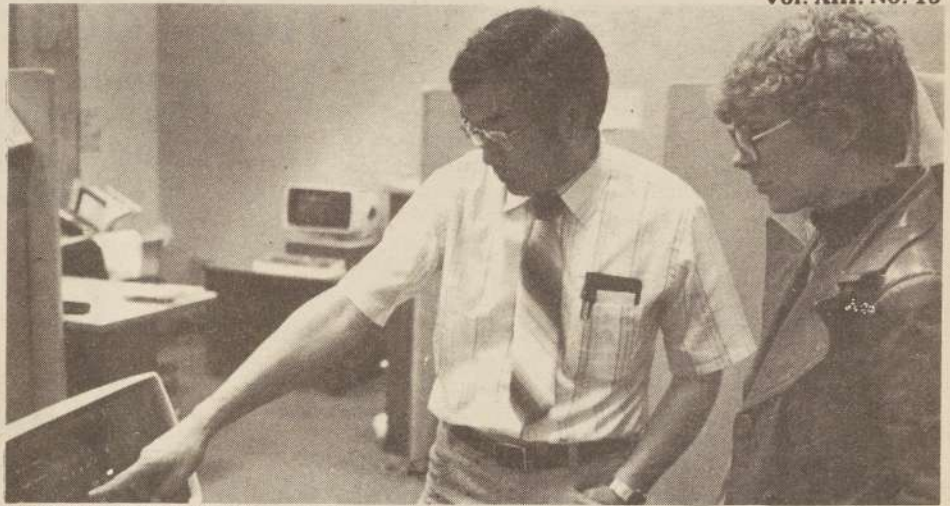# Computers may become main tools in near future

MAKING A POINT—Tsuyoshi Inouye, data processing officer, explains use of video display terminal. Photo by Duffy Coffman.

By Sandy Carter
Of The Print

Mike Aronson and Tsuyoshi Inouye are two men at the center of the rapidly changing computer scene at the College who have very different perspectives.

Aronson, a physics instructor now on sabbatical for two terms, is a firm proponent of universal computer literacy, on the grounds that, "In general, people with no experience in computers are fearful of them. I have to try and persuade everyone that they should be used not only in science and electronics, as they are right now, but in English and everywhere."

He describes the purpose of his sabbatical leave. "I'm studying 'computer-managed instruction'," he says. "That's a catch-all phrase that covers 29 different things. So far, I've had one month, and I've accomplished two of them. Right now, I'm working on 10 more."

His accomplishments so far have been the initial publication of a monthly faculty "Computer Utilization News" bulletin (printed by a computer), and the submission of a budget proposal involving purchase of seven new video terminals for students' "hands on" use.

Inouye, College data processing officer, describes his job as "basically, being in charge of information systems for the College, with the first emphasis on administrative systems, and second emphasis on support of computer instruction and utilization, to the extent that we can implement it."

Working with a staff of two programmers, one combination computer operator and keypunch person, and a full-time keypunch operator, Inouye is currently supervising the installation of the College's new Eclipse M600 Computer, the largest of the Data General line of computers. Eclipse's cost was $230,000 for "hardware," and $30,000 for "software," which might be considered the "logical" part of the system. It has a maximum memory size of two million "bites" of information, of which 512,000 are being used, giving the College programs "a lot of room for growth," according to Inouye.

College needs are now being served by two systems, the new Data General system and the older Burroughs computer which it will replace. "We have a major goal of leaving the Burroughs by the first of July," says Inouye. "The biggest push is to get on (the new system); after that, it will be a matter of fine-tuning it for maximum efficiency."

Aronson's main complaint with the College's approach to computer utilization in the past has been, "there's no one person on campus who's in charge of instructional uses on the computer."

Now, "I'm acting as the central place," he says simply, but it is not a simple job. Computers of different types, shapes and sizes are virtually scattered over the campus, and when Aronson lists their various locations and uses, he hastens to add that there may be others he doesn't know about.

According to him, the following terminals are available for use on campus: one Radio Shack computer in the math department, four more Radio Shack units in electronics, one Radio Shack unit in auto parts, one Apple II stand-alone unit in machine shop, and four terminals which tie into the MET-COM time-sharing computer in Multnomah County, located in machine shop, the community center, Orchard Center, and McLoughlin Hall. The College pays a maximum monthly fee to the MET-COM system for the number of hours logged in on it through the College code.

Aronson praises the College's present use of information systems in a business sense, saying, "the computer is used well by the administration," but wants to see its uses expanded and made more familiar to the students.

In an era when pocket calculators have become accepted as toys and prices on them have dropped so drastically that he says, "Nowadays, you can get one for $10, or 10 gallons of gas!",

Aronson emphasizes that a computer should be considered just another educational tool.

"I don't believe a computer can teach an entirely new thing," he says, "but I think it's possibly a good testing instrument." He outlines something called a "hidden answer" multiple choice technique, in which the student would only be presented with one possible right answer at a time, which he says could make "multiple guess" tests much more useful.

To sum up his feelings about the instructional uses of computer systems, Aronson says, "Humans do some things very well and computers do some things very well. Our different uses or skills make us compatible."

Inouye, looking at the possible business uses of the new computer, sees it taking over massive amounts of responsiblity in the areas of payroll, accounting, registration, and inventory. Instant, "on-line" uses in registration will save time and money, and a possible future hook up with the Statewide Information Sharing system would allow necessary information pertaining to the College to be automatically fed into the proper state agency.

The new Data General system boasts 12 CRT (cathode ray tube) video display terminals, which will be assigned to accounting, registration, and financial aid departments, and six printer terminals. It will accept programs in any of several computer languages.

"Because the technology in this field is very volatile," says Inouye, "systems generally become obsolete in five or six years, but the new technology allows savings of money and provides more responsive and accurate information."

Inouye and Aronson, as the two central figures in the changing College computer scene, work simultaneously toward a campus goal of increased computer use and awareness.

What's happening

This issue of The Print has to be the sweetest. On Page 12, catch a bit of Cupid's arrows as students and staff send their loved ones a Valentine's Day wish in The Print's classified section. Find out about the heated debate that went on as students conducted a draft forum, Page 9. Turn to Pages 2 and 3 for the opinion section and find out what 11 students and faculty think about the draft and war.

All you non-smokers will be pleased when you read the article on Page 9 about the new no-smoking area in the cafeteria. On Page 8, Cupid strikes again. This time, he's not too pleased. Read and find out why. Turn to Page 10 to find out all the latest scores and sports news on campus. Remember to get firsthand news information both on campus and off by turning to The Print.