New Directions in General-Access Computing

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LEARNING & SCHOLARLY TECHNOLOGIES
UNIVERSITY of WASHINGTON
UW Technology
Outline

- Background
- Use of Computing Centers
- Technology & Space Needs
Background
University of Washington

Seattle Campus
- 693 acres
- 200+ buildings
- 140 majors
- 1,800 courses
- 42,933 students
Learning & Scholarly Technologies supports members of the University of Washington community as they discover, work toward, and achieve their learning, teaching and research goals. We explore innovative technologies and offer proven solutions, in collaboration with our clients, to help them stay at the forefront of their work.

http://uw.edu/lst

22 staff & 50 students
Current General-Access Computing

OUGL Learning Commons

MGH Computing Resource Center
Changes to Campus Spaces

Closure of MGH CRC
- 180 workstations

Remodel of Husky Union Building
- Closed for 2 years

Improvements to Libraries
- Research Commons
- Infrastructure upgrades
New General-Access Model

- OUGL Learning Commons
- Distributed Workstations
- New Services to Support Laptops
- Research on Student Needs
Research Questions

How and why do students use existing general-access computing centers?

How can we support students as they use their personal laptops/netbooks in various public spaces on campus?
Online student survey
- 3,250 students responded

Focus groups
- 24 students participated

Usage data
- 28,353 unique users
Use of Computing Centers
28,353 Unique Users (all LST services)
401,563 Total Logins
Avg. Logins/Hour Open (MGH CRC)

2009 Hours: M - F, 8:00 am - 6:00 pm
Usage Trends

Computing Centers continue to be highly used by students

No significant drops in usage over the past five years
Technology & Space Needs
93% own a laptop and/or netbook
Only 35% frequently use their laptops on campus
Obstacles to Using a Laptop

Top 3 Obstacles

1. Weight of laptop or netbook
2. Concern about damage or theft
3. Insufficient access to electrical outlets
Improvements to Public Spaces

Top 5 Improvements

1. Electrical outlets
2. Quiet work areas
3. Evening access
4. Comfortable furniture
5. Natural light
Spaces for Independent Work

Desired Features
- Quiet, but not too quiet
- Space to spread out
- Electrical Outlets
- Comfortable Chairs
- Pleasant Environment
- Natural light
Spaces for Collaborative Work

Desired Features

- Space for 4-6 people
- Space for their stuff
- Enclosed area
- Outlets for laptops
- Large monitors
- Whiteboards
Technology & Space Needs

Minimize obstacles and offer more services that support laptop use on campus.

Enhance campus spaces to support individual and collaborative activities.
Meeting Students’ Needs

- Adding electrical outlets & wireless access
- Proposal for laptop charging stations
- Online Software Access
- Technical support via chat
- Adding large monitors to study rooms
- Design of new Research Commons
- Sharing findings with campus
Questions?