Policy for Scheduling of University Computer Labs

The university provides computer labs for its students as a resource to support the instructional program. The university is committed to providing students with opportunities to develop computer-based skills necessary for their educational, professional and personal development. The instructional program includes courses that teach computer skills directly as well as those that use computer-based instruction and activities to achieve understanding of the diverse subject matter in the curriculum. The primary goal of the policy on computer lab scheduling is to maximize the availability of the resources of the labs for student use throughout the day, afternoon, evening, and weekend hours. The policy outlined here is designed to maximize lab availability for drop-in use, as well as provide adequate opportunities for the instructional program to teach computer-based skills.

I.   Priority for Use of Computer Labs

Among the various constituencies who have made claims or requests for use of the computer labs over time, the following priorities shall be recognized.

A. Courses required for degree programs and other regular university courses
    (students/faculty)
B.   Instructional Computing Workshops
C. Other "Special Sessions" courses (students/faculty)
D. CAMS classes (students/faculty)
E.   Other Extension courses (students/faculty)
F.   Off-campus groups, even if the group is co-sponsored by a university unit.

II.   Definitions

     A. "Term-long" use of a computer lab is assigned use for a scheduled class section throughout an academic term.

     B. "Ad hoc" use of a computer lab is assigned occasional use of a computer lab for a scheduled class section. Requests for use of a computer lab exceeding the equivalent of six class sessions (1¼ hour modules) per term shall be considered "term-long" use.

C. "Open hours" refers to assigned time blocks in which a computer lab is available to any student on a "drop-in" basis.

D. The Academic Computer Lab Access Committee (or ACLAC) shall be the responsible body for implementing the lab scheduling policy and for resolving conflicts over requests for use of the computer labs. ACLAC will receive all requests for "term-long" use and will review requests for formal exception to this policy. ACLAC is chaired by the Associate Vice President for Academic Planning who serves in an "ex-officio" non-voting capacity. Membership of ACLAC shall include two faculty appointed by the Academic Senate, the campus Instructional Computing Coordinator, a school/college Dean or Associate Dean and one student appointed in consultation with ASI. ACLAC makes recommendations to the Associate Vice President for Academic Planning who shall make the final decisions on computer lab scheduling.

III.   Procedures for Scheduling Use of Computer Labs

Procedures for requesting "term-long," "ad hoc," and "open hours" use are outlined below.

A.   Provisions for "term-long" use:

1. "Term-long" use shall be limited to those course sections that have
    specific laboratory (L) or activity (A) components which have been approved
    through the university curriculum process **and** which require in-class
    computing experiences for achievement of student instructional goals.
    Provisions for a **formal exception** to this guideline are described in section
    III.A.4.

2. Only the laboratory or activity components of the course shall be
    scheduled into the computer lab for the term.

3. Formal requests for "term-long" lab scheduling shall be made each term at
    least two months prior to the deadline for submission of the class schedule for
    that term to Academic Affairs. The formal request shall describe the need for
    lab access and document, through submission of the course syllabus or
    assignment list, the ways in which the lab resources would be used. These

requests shall be reviewed by the Academic Computer Lab Access
Committee (ACLAC). ACLAC shall forward its recommendations to the
Associate Vice President for final decision. Once a class has been approved
for "term-long" use, it shall not need to be re-approved each term. An
approved course shall undergo periodic review by ACLAC every two years
to insure that lab access is still essential to the instructional goals of the
course. Courses needing more frequent lab access than the parameters for
"ad hoc" but less than every class period fall into the category for "term-
long" use.

4. The instructor of a class or the chairperson on behalf of all sections of a class
may request a **formal exception** to the instructional mode (lab or activity
sections only) restrictions in III.A.1. The request must be submitted at least
two months before the class schedule for that term is due to be submitted to
Academic Affairs. The written request for "exception" shall include a
rationale with supporting documentation in the form of the proposed class
syllabus, the explicit goals for the computer-learning experiences, and
justification as to why the available alternative instructional modes are not
appropriate. The request must be reviewed and approved by the department
chair or program coordinator **and** the dean of the school/college prior to
submission to ACLAC. ACLAC shall make its recommendation to the AVP
Academic Planning who shall make the final decision. Once approved,
course "exceptions" shall not be required to undergo approval each term, but
shall be subject to "periodic" review as mentioned in section III.A.3. This
provision for exception provides recognition of the varied instructional styles
that faculty utilize and the need to encourage instructional innovation and
experimentation unconstrained by the course classification system.

B.   Provisions for "ad hoc use:"

  1. Requests for the use of a specific computer lab for a specific class session shall
     be made in writing. These requests shall be received by the Instructional
     Computing Supervisor by noon on Friday of the week preceding the requested
     use. The request should include a brief description of the intended instructional
     outcomes. This requirement allows lab staff to ensure that the appropriate
     software or network access will be available in the requested lab before a
     scheduling commitment is made. Requests to use software not installed on the
     server in the lab must be submitted at least two weeks in advance of the
     requested use in order to assure that software needs may be met.

  2. Should the lab be fully scheduled and not able to accommodate the requested
      ad hoc use, the instructor may contact the instructor of a "term-long" class
      scheduled in the lab to see if an informal accommodation can be made.

  3. Requests for "ad hoc" use **are not limited** in any way by the course
     classification designation, instructional mode, or topic of the class. Instructional
     and non-instructional computing workshops are considered "ad hoc" use.

4.   Off-campus groups may not schedule computer labs in the evening. Weekend
     use may not exceed four days per term, and may not be scheduled during the
     last four weeks of any academic term. This restriction is necessary to assure
     that adequate lab use opportunities will be reserved for students during the
     hectic "wind-up" to a term.

C.   Provisions for Computer Lab "open hours:"

1. "Open hours" are periods of time spread throughout the different morning,
     afternoon, evening and weekend modules during which a specific computer lab is

available only to individual students, faculty and staff for "drop-in" use. No "ad
hoc" or "term-long" use shall be allowed during "open hours" for a specific lab.
Access to stations is on a first-come, first-served basis. Provisions for time
limitations on use by any individual during any one period may be implemented
should demand for the lab resource require rationing. "Open hours" are
restricted to CSUDH students, faculty and staff.

2. The minimum number of weekly "open hours" for each lab shall be defined each
term before any reservations are made for "term-long" or "ad hoc" use. The
amount of time reserved for open hours for each lab shall be determined by
ACLAC based on recommendations from instructional computing services. The
time allotted for "open hours" shall reflect usage statistics from prior terms and
shall be adjusted during any term when demand requires it. "Open hours" shall
be defined and posted for each specific lab. Academic Affairs shall monitor
"open hours" use and may recommend adjustments where usage problems are
identified.

3. "Open hours" shall be maximized during the last four weeks of each term to allow
students increased opportunity to complete term assignments. "Ad hoc" use for
demonstrations, workshops, etc., shall be restricted to the first eleven weeks of
each semester.

IV. Conflict Resolution and Designation of Final Authority over Computer Labs

The scheduling of the computer labs is the responsibility of the division of Academic Affairs. The Academic Computer Lab Access Committee (ACLAC) shall serve as the body to recommend solutions to conflicts over computer lab use. The committee shall make recommendations to the Associate Vice President for Academic Planning who shall make the final decision in any dispute. The existence of this committee shall not, however, absolve faculty from first making an honest effort to resolve conflicting requests or needs in an informal fashion. ACLAC shall be responsible for receiving input from the Academic Senate, ACAC, deans or other sources in regard

to the operation of the computer lab policy. ACLAC shall be responsible for recommending any changes in the policy that require consultation through the normal policy-making processes of the university.

V. Identification of Other Approaches or Developments that May Enhance the Goals of the Computer Lab Access Policy

The eventual full implementation of the campus plan for LAN's and network access, especially the cabling of each classroom and lab, and improved access
to campus computer resources from off-campus, can be expected to take some pressure off of the scheduling of computer labs. These developments may empower faculty to integrate computing topics into their classes and reduce the demand for scheduled class access to the labs. Combined with increased Internet access through the campus LAN's and communications servers for off-campus users this development may reduce the burden on the labs. It is assumed that as faculty and students achieve more convenient campus computer or Internet access from their homes that more of their computing needs will be met without increasing demand on the labs.

VI.   Data Needs to Support a Computer Lab Access Policy

In order for the computer lab policy to develop its own legitimacy and to
maintain its credibility over time, it is essential that accurate data be gathered.
ACLAC will work with instructional computing services to develop the range
of needed data and review it once collected. Data on "term-long" use, "ad
hoc" use, and "drop-in" use is needed to fine-tune allocation strategies,
equipment and software replacement plans for the labs, staffing requirements,
and allocation of related institutional resources.