YRO Facilities and Space Planning

Recap of 10/8 meeting

Present: Glasmire, Hill, Altier, Cockrill, Ramos, Davis, Braverman

Absent: Brown (excused), Shea (excused), Entrician, Guerra

Glasmire opened the meeting by asking everyone to introduce themselves. Glasmire reported that Ric Brown, Chair of the group was called away to a meeting and would not be able to attend this meeting.

Glasmire gave some brief background regarding the YRO planning structure and workgroups along with an overview of the issues to be addressed by our workgroup. Ramos provided a copy of the workgroup report for 00/01, which included the following "remaining planning issues" for 01/02 and beyond:

- Building usage during summer
- Additional costs for utilities, maintenance and custodial services as more buildings are used
- Classroom assignment issues (e.g., concentrating classrooms in specific buildings to minimize utility and maintenance costs)
- Library utilization
- Faculty offices in buildings without air conditioning
- Scheduling maintenance when buildings are in use during summer
- Possible displacement of current summer activities (e.g., NYSP, Boys State, Academic Talent Search, Sports Camps)

Glasmire noted that the task of our first meeting should be to identify other planning issues, clarify the existing issues make sure that our list was as complete as possible. Future meetings will enable us to prioritize the issues (i.e., summer 2002 vs. longer term) and develop recommendations for dealing with the issues.

Altier asked whether specific resources would be forthcoming to support expanded use of facilities in the summer. Glasmire noted that additional resources come in the form of additional per FTES marginal cost allocations and not specific allocations for YRO. As our enrollment grows because of additional summer FTES, program centers must request resources via the normal budget process to fund additional costs associated with YRO. Hill noted that some costs (e.g., utility costs) are fixed and may not be able to be supported with marginal FTES funding. Glasmire noted that some additional resources were provided to the campus in the current budget for increased energy costs, but not specifically because of YRO expansion.

Ramos asked whether food service venues should be something for our group to address. Glasmire noted that this was being handled in the Student Support Services workgroup, but that some issues would overlap our group if adding food services meant keeping buildings open longer or providing access to power sources for vending carts, etc. Altier and Davis noted that it's important to know the location of buildings that will be open to place the food service operations in the best locations. With respect to the issue of "concentrating classrooms in specific locations to minimize utility and maintenance costs", David noted that the University Union will be expanding their summer hours next summer. It would be helpful if classroom usage could be consolidated into buildings that are in close proximity to the Union.
Altier brought up an issue concerning a memo from the C.O. requiring each campus to reduce energy consumption by 15% over the next five years (using 00/01 as the base year). He noted that our campus has reduced energy consumption by about 30% over the past ten years, largely because of significant modifications to the energy "systems." We have done about all that we can to run our systems at peak efficiency. Replacing boilers and chillers is the only other way to improve the efficiency of systems. He estimated the cost of replacing these systems at $9 million, noting that it would take 30 years to recoup the investment. Other energy conservation measures involve such things as turning off the hot water during summer and turning off air conditioning in specific buildings at 4 pm. Some accommodations were made in 2001, on a case-by-case basis, where these conservation measures were not possible, but as we expand our use of facilities in summer, these "exceptions" may become the rule. If we expand our summer programs and bring more buildings "on-line" during the summer, it will be very difficult to achieve the 15% energy reduction. The group agreed that these two system wide initiatives are in conflict (i.e., 15% energy reduction and expansion of year round programs).

Ramos noted that the university has attempted to consolidate evening and weekend classes in the summer into buildings where air conditioning is planned. This has been possible, but is becoming more difficult with expanded courses offerings and the need for specific lab facilities that are only available in certain buildings. Hill noted that labs are becoming more specialized and we may need to consider more flexible labs that can accommodate a variety of disciplines. Ramos suggested that we should clarify the policy with respect to building use guidelines (i.e., which buildings will be open with air conditioning and which will not). Is the University in favor of running air for whatever lab classes are offered, no matter what the cost to run air, or should courses be scheduled within the framework of the energy use building guidelines? If depts. choose to hold a course after hours, should the policy be clarified that they will need to be held without air? Ramos gave the following example: KINS course in SLN teaching lab taught on Wed. after 4pm and on Sat. Since the building is closed after 4pm and on weekends, there is nothing else scheduled in the building, and the dept. indicates that they must schedule the course at these times, what is the University's expectation? Do we indicate that the course will have to be held without air? Otherwise, we run air for all five floors of this building to accommodate this one class. We may need to develop policy that requires departments to schedule courses to coincide with the parameters defined for a specific building during the summer (e.g., not available for scheduling after 4 pm.)

Regarding the issue of building maintenance and facility upgrades in a year-round environment, Altier noted that these activities could continue, but would need to be scheduled on weekends and other "down" times between semesters. This will result in higher costs for maintenance and upgrade projects. Hill noted that maintenance and minor capital projects need to be planned in advance if they are to be scheduled during the summer. Departments begin planning for summer schedules in October of the previous year and they need to be aware of any major summer projects by October so they can schedule their lecture and lab space accordingly.

Another issue is that many programs (other than regular instructional programs) are competing for substantial portions of our available classroom space during the summer. Although we always give priority in scheduling to regular university courses, it is becoming more difficult to find the space for these other programs. In the span from mid-June to early August, many campus programs (not regular instructional programs) schedule 5 days per week, M-F 8-5, which results in heavy use of facilities for any given week. For example, we scheduled 48 lecture meeting patterns of M-F, 8:30 to 12:30 for are Academic Talent Search, 21 for MESA, 23 for CRLP, etc. Ramos indicated that we had about 160 classrooms in use for all classes and events in summer 2001. Ramos also noted that in summer 2001 she was not able to schedule any
community groups in classrooms during the day because none were available. This is the first summer that she has had this limitation. Hill suggested that we develop a spreadsheet that shows the classroom/lab usage by building, time of day and day of week, along with what specific program is using the room. This would provide a better picture of utilization and the proportion of our facilities that are taken up by programs other than regular instruction. Ramos will work on this for our next meeting.

Another issue related to building usage during the summer is that of faculty office space, particularly in buildings that are not scheduled for air conditioning after 4 pm. Glasmire noted that the College of Business faculty were concerned about student advising after 4 pm. because they have a large number of evening classes in the summer. Tahoe hall is one building where the air conditioning is cut off at 4 pm. Hill noted that faculty members often use the summer for research and other scholarly activities and access to their office is important for reasons other than advising. Although consolidating student advising services in buildings (or parts of buildings) with air conditioning may work, he does not believe that the same would be true for research activities. Glasmire suggested that the College of Business might be able to use their centralized advising office for evening summer advising if the building could be "zoned" to air condition just the first floor.

Although the group isn't making any formal recommendations at this time, a few recommendations were introduced that could be implemented for next summer.

- Ramos suggested that we could use 6 classrooms in the Library during the evening and Saturdays if the library expanded their hours. Since the library expanded hours last year to 9 pm. on M-Th, but expanding to 10 or 10:30 pm., we could schedule evening classes that end at 9:30 pm. If Saturday hours were expanded to 7:30 am - 5:30 pm., we could also use the classrooms for weekend classes. Glasmire and Hill noted that expanded access to the library would be beneficial to students as well, beyond the benefits of consolidating evening classes in a building that is already air conditioned.

- Ramos also suggested that we encourage departments to build course offerings in labs, including computer labs, that are compatible with the building guidelines, or have building guidelines that are compatible with the course offerings. When courses are offered outside the guidelines, we propose that air would not be provided. Although we are not likely to "force" departments, there needs to be more clear direction from the University as to an appropriate response when the two goals are in conflict. Lecture courses can be moved to other buildings to provide air, but labs cannot be moved to other facilities. Ramos proposes that the departments be advised that any lab courses planned outside the building and room guidelines, would not be provided with air, rather than increase the energy cost to provide air for one course in a closed building.

- Ramos also identified a possible solution to a problem of scheduling a specialized lab in Eureka hall (rooms 211/215) to reduce the need to air condition the entire building. She suggested that we create a similar lab in another building that is air conditioned after 4 pm., and on weekends OR provide a self-contained unit for these two adjacent rooms, whichever is more economical to develop. Altier indicated that he would have to look into the technical capabilities to determine whether a special "zone" is possible or whether a self-contained unit would be required. He did note that any special self-contained systems for the lab only would result in higher energy costs.

- Altier mentioned the possibility of "enclosing" the breezeway in the library to acquire additional classroom space. If this were done, it could result in more classroom space without requiring the entire library to be open for access to the classrooms. The group thought this was worth pursuing.
Glasmire asked the group about another meeting where we could develop some short-term (summer 2002) and long-term (beyond 2002) recommendations to put forward to the YRO Council. Glasmire suggested that the group review the recap of our 10/8 meeting and come to our next meeting with some suggested recommendations. We also agreed that any recommendations for summer 2002 should be done by the end of November so the YRO council can review them and take action in time for them to be implemented.

We tentatively agreed to meet on October 29 from 10:30 - 11:30 in RFC 215. However, when I checked Ric Brown's schedule, he will be out of town at a conference that week. I also checked Ric's schedule for Nov 5, the other alternative, and he's not available at the 10:30-11:30 time. Because of this, I'm asking LaTina, Ric's assistant, to schedule another meeting time before the end of October.

NOTE: Please review this recap and let me know asap if I mistated anything or left anything out. If I don't hear back from you by this Friday, October 12, I will assume that it's OK as is. Then I'll send a copy to the YRO Council (I always do that to keep them informed).

Meeting adjourned at 11 am.

Larry