



## UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF THE PROVOST

April 4, 2005

TO: Chancellors, Deans, Vice Presidents, Vice Provosts, and Director of Libraries

FROM: David B. Thorud, Acting Provost *DB Thorud*

SUBJECT: Wireless at the UW

President Emmert and I are happy to announce that we are ready to move forward with aggressive deployment of wireless networking technology on the Seattle campus over the next three years, and to implement a funding model that will pay for the continuing maintenance and future replacement costs for this critical technology infrastructure on all three campuses.

In the view of many faculty, students, and staff on campus, wireless networking connectivity has rapidly moved from a luxury to a necessity. Representatives of all of these groups have indicated that providing wireless connectivity throughout the University of Washington should be a priority. Wireless connectivity has been implemented at both the UW Bothell and UW Tacoma campuses and has been built into most new buildings constructed in the last few years on the UW Seattle campus. A number of departments on the UW Seattle campus have installed locally operated wireless networks. The presence of multiple independently operated wireless networks results in the potential for confusion and inconvenience for users, however, and with multiple independently operated systems it is more difficult to ensure that critical security standards are systematically implemented.

These factors have led to extensive discussion over the last year in the Academic Technology Advisory Committee (ATAC), the University Technology Advisory Committee (UTAC), and the Board of Deans, and in other campus technology and budget advisory groups.

The resulting wireless networking implementation plan has a number of benefits:

- Widespread wireless access at all three campuses.
- Central 24/7 management of the wireless infrastructure as an integral extension of the wired data network.
- Operation of the wireless networking infrastructure to ensure consistency and the security of the University's data networks and information.
- Implementation of a sustainable funding model for maintenance and upgrade of the wireless network.

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The University Technology Advisory Committee has asked Computing & Communications to develop a three-year wireless connectivity deployment plan based on priorities established by ATAC. In addition, C&C has been asked to develop a plan for incorporating locally managed wireless access points into the centrally managed infrastructure.

As of the date of this letter, all new deployments of wireless infrastructure will be installed and maintained by C&C. In addition, once UTAC approves the policy proposed by C&C for incorporating existing locally managed wireless access points into the centrally managed infrastructure, compliance with this policy will be mandatory. Any exceptions to these procedures must be explicitly approved by UTAC.

There are significant initial capital costs as well as continuing operations and equipment replacement costs associated with the expansion of wireless connectivity. The initial capital costs, which are estimated at \$7,500,000, will come from three sources: central resources for wireless installations serving general academic space on campus; Student Technology Fee resources for student spaces on campus; and auxiliary enterprise resources for wireless installations serving auxiliary space (i.e., residence halls, the UW Medical Center, etc.). Working with C&C, the Office of Planning and Budgeting will coordinate with the Student Technology Fee Committee and with appropriate staff in auxiliary units regarding the financial contributions necessary to pay for the initial installation of wireless connectivity in spaces managed by these groups.

The costs of both maintenance of wireless networking infrastructure and periodic replacement of equipment will come from a \$2.40/month increase in the basic communications/telephone rate, which will be phased in over the next three years, with an \$0.80/month increase during Fiscal Year 2006, a second \$0.80/month increase during Fiscal Year 2007, and a final \$0.80/month increase during Fiscal Year 2008. The exact timing of these increases in each year will be determined later, to be coordinated with any other increases in the basic communications/telephone rate, and will depend on the pace of installation of wireless infrastructure. These increases in the communications/telephone rate will apply on all three campuses.

I wish it were possible to implement wireless connectivity without increasing costs to campus units. However, at this point there are no costs that disappear as a result of expanding our wireless connectivity. We must still operate and maintain the existing wired network, because it is needed for both present services and the expanded wireless network. The various advisory groups mentioned above believe that the future benefits of installation and central management of wireless connectivity justify the costs, and I agree with their conclusion.

c: Terry Gray, Computing and Communications  
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