

## GSA Special Meeting: Tech Issues

Thursday, October 28, 2010

The meeting focused on identifying existing printer problems (in terms of proper protocol for when the printer breaks down, printer reliability, and printer/toner effectiveness), and discussing solutions to these problems.

- Seth Abrams presented results from the tech issues survey.
  - 21 surveys were completed.
  - EVERYONE has been inconvenienced by the printer not working in the grad lab.
  - The Faculty Printer is not generally viewed as a long-term solution. No one has been told not to use it, but there have been some understandable frustrated looks.
  - People would use the grad printer if it worked (free is good).
  - Conservative estimates are about 5000 pp/week in printing for grad students.
  - Finally, we've had the printer go down at key times without any ability to print reliably elsewhere. It has caused quite a stressful situation.
  - These results suggest the need for technology that is not only powerful enough to meet the needs of grad students, but also reliable enough. It raises the possibility of a back-up printer in the grad-lab to prevent downtime when the printer inevitably breaks.
  
- Mike Mansfield, from the GVPT department, acknowledged these issues and stated that the department is committed to making sure that the printing needs of the grad students are met.
  
- Jesse Mathewson, our GSA tech liaison, provided an update on the toner problem.
  - As many of you probably experienced, the toner needed to be replaced on about a weekly basis. The toner cartridges we've been ordering for the new Lexmark only print 7500 pages, compared to the ones for the old HP which handled 20,000.
  - This problem can be easily resolved by using a high yield toner cartridge. From now on, we will be ordering only high-yield print cartridges. These will print 25,000 sheets each.
  
- We also discussed what went wrong with the last printer problem and clarified steps with Mike Mansfield for what to do if the printer breaks down again. The prolonged printing outage was the result of a confluence of unfortunate events, including ordering the wrong toner cartridges, failure of the front office to seek help in due course, and communication problems at various levels. If we make sure to follow the procedures below, all future problems should be addressed ASAP.
  - **If the printer is out of toner:**
    - Go up to the main office and either ask the work study undergrad students at the front desk for a replacement cartridge or get the cartridge yourself (once you know where they are located).
    - If you notice that we are getting low on cartridges, notify the work study students at the front desk and ask them to order a replacement. They are in charge of ordering cartridges.
  
  - **If the printer is broken, you have 2 OPTIONS:**
    - **OPTION 1 - TELL THE STUDENT WORKERS IN THE MAIN OFFICE DIRECTLY and THEN EMAIL JESSE TO LET HIM KNOW THE PROBLEM HAS BEEN REPORTED.** Go up to the main office, let the student workers know the printer is broken, and ask them to put in a work order. The student workers are in charge of placing work orders for the printer. Then email Jesse at

[jmathewson@gvpt.umd.edu](mailto:jmathewson@gvpt.umd.edu) to let him know the problem has been reported. Jesse will help monitor the status of the problem. A technician should be out to fix the printer within 24-48 hours.

- **OPTION 2 - EMAIL JESSE DIRECTLY, WHO WILL THEN CONTACT THE MAIN OFFICE.** If you can't go up to the main office to report the problem yourself, email Jesse at [jmathewson@gvpt.umd.edu](mailto:jmathewson@gvpt.umd.edu). Jesse will report the problem to the student workers and will then monitor the status of the request. A technician should be out to fix the printer within 24-48 hours.
  
- DO NOT TRY TO GO THROUGH OACS. OACS does not service the printer; the department contracts directly with a service company. ALSO, DO NOT CONTACT ANN MARIE. The proper procedure is to go through the undergrad work study students at the front desk either by telling them directly (and then emailing Jesse) or by emailing Jesse to contact them on our behalf.
  
- The GSA will post these instructions above the printer in the grad lab. We will also post a "tech problem" sheet, to help keep track of when problems are reported to the front office/Jesse. Look for these printer problem instructions and reporting sheet to be posted soon.
  
- Lastly, we discussed some solutions for our general printing needs. **In very exciting news, WE ARE GETTING A SECOND GRAD PRINTER FOR THE GRAD LAB.** This printer will have the option to print \*double-sided\* automatically.
  - The new printer was delivered on November 4<sup>th</sup>. Jesse is working with OACS to ensure that the printer is up and running as soon as possible. We will have an update for you at the November GSA meeting or once more information is available.
  
  - It is important to note that one potential draw-back to getting this printer is that we will not be able to get a printer for the 5<sup>th</sup> floor as well. However, this may be a moot point, as it does not appear to be possible to get a printer for the 5<sup>th</sup> floor. At this time, there is no way to secure who can use/print to the printer. In other words, we can't ensure that only GVPT students, and not other students, will use the printer. Without being able to guarantee our exclusive use, a 5<sup>th</sup> floor printer is not a feasible option. Nonetheless, computers on the 5<sup>th</sup> floor easily can be configured to print to the Harrison suite (which is only a few floors down), and to the grad lab (several floors down, but still a good option).
  
- Finally, we'd like to thank Mike Mansfield for his help in addressing these tech issues. We also want to thank Jesse for continuing to serve as our tech liaison. And thanks to Seth for organizing the tech issues survey, and to the grad students who shared their input and ideas for how to resolve the printer problem. We hope that the clarified printing protocol and second printer in the grad lab will help ensure that all of our printing needs are met from this point forward.