



January 13, 2009

MEMORANDUM

To: Executive Staff
Deans Council
Chair of the Faculty Senate
Chair of the Academic Technology Coordinating Committee
President of the Student Government
Director, Financial Aid

From: David H. Perrin, Provost & Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs
Jim Clotfelter, Vice Chancellor for Information Technology Services

re: Laptop ownership requirement

UNCG's Student Laptop Initiative (SLI) has provided many benefits to students, but unfortunately, the national and State financial situation requires us to rethink all UNCG programs. This memorandum describes steps to be taken regarding the SLI.

Provost A. Edward Uprichard announced on February 25, 2005 that he was instituting a laptop computer ownership requirement for all UNCG full-time undergraduates. The Student Laptop Initiative began with a recommendation for all full-time incoming freshmen to purchase a laptop beginning Fall 2006, with the requirement in effect beginning Fall 2007. At the same time, UNCG began a significant expansion of the campus wireless network.

To support the laptop requirement, Information Technology Services (ITS) created a Laptop Support Center and negotiated contracts with Lenovo and Apple to allow students to purchase high-quality laptops at significantly discounted prices. From the launch of the student laptop sales site in May 2006, through December 2008, over 3,600 laptops have been sold through the SLI. The faculty on the Academic Technology Coordinating Committee have provided leadership in identifying hardware and software features that would be helpful to faculty and students across the campus. A number of faculty members have required that students bring laptops to class and are giving students in-class assignments and exams that require laptop use.

Due to anticipated State budget cuts, Academic Affairs in consultation with Faculty Senate leadership has concluded that the University can no longer afford to provide grants to assist the neediest students to make laptop purchases. Because the University does not want to continue a requirement for all undergraduates to own laptops without providing grants, Academic Affairs is

abolishing the university-wide laptop requirement, effective immediately. This will permit the University to save \$700,000 a year in Financial Aid grants.

Some academic departments will continue to require laptop ownership, and they will communicate this requirement to their students.

As the University committed to do, ITS will provide technical support for laptops purchased through the SLI for four years from purchase date. ITS will continue to provide a discounted purchase opportunity for students who seek appropriately-equipped, high-quality laptops at a reasonable cost. ITS also will continue to support use of the UNCG wireless network for students whose laptops meet recommended minimum specifications.

Overall, UNCG will continue to utilize technology in instruction, research, and student life, so as to enrich the academic and student life experiences.

Questions about technical support and laptop purchase opportunities can be directed to Kevin Latimer, ITS.