

Current State of Campus Support

We do not appear to have written policies regarding support for Mac users in an online, readily accessible (read: findable by Search) format. The general consensus from UM staff “support” respondents reveals that the level of support a department or campus user can expect would vary by who they know and who they ask for help.

Perceptions of Campus Support:

Of the technical staff support group questioned about Macs on campus, several responded that they usually try to help when asked, especially with regards to specific software questions. Hardware repairs were not mentioned by anyone.

Responses also mentioned that while the demand is not great in most departments, it might grow if more support were available. At this point, those offering support do not think the demand is overwhelming, but there is frustration for those who wish to use Macs and would like support for the associated software. For example, Jeremy Dennis stated that the demand might be more than we think it is, but not by much.

Comparative Information from Other Schools:

Finding information about Mac support was not as easy a task as simply “Googling” for it. Even by contacting IT departments from the UM list of peer universities was not always successful. The majority of responses came from joining a listserv which exists for IT support staff to discuss matters of user issues. The table below contains the summarized results from a query about Mac support at list members’ respective institutions.

Table of Contacts

School	Contact	Website	Info
Washington State University	Tricia Cox zenyatta@wsu.edu		-have labs -supports Entourage equally
Wayne State University	Geoffrey Sperl Helpdesk@wayne.edu Ac4434@wayne.edu	http://computing.wayne.edu	-have a fee based service for repairs, support OS X or higher only
University of Wyoming	Maggie Deming MDeming@UWYO.EDU		
Carnegie Mellon	Gretchen Beck		Fully

			supported , only OS 10.3 & 10.4
University of North Carolina Pembroke	Maureen Windmeyer maureen.windmeyer@un cp.edu	Online Form	UCIS will not actively hamper use of a Mac, but will not support it.
Loras College	Tom D. Kruse Tom.kruse@loras.edu		Subscribe to a phone support service only.
Rice University	Rick R.	http://www.rice.edu/it/resources/sla/	Fully supported.
University of Vermont	Bess Oland		Fully supported. Suggests we ask Apple to hire a student rep on campus.

University of Oregon	Chris Jones (from School of Architecture and Allied Arts)		Fully supported.
Oakland University	Theresa Rowe	Service Level Agreement	Fully supported, and their president uses Mac.
Princeton University	Steven Sather		Equally supported, exception of admin apps.
University of Notre Dame	Molly Gordon		Fully supported.
University of North Carolina Asheville	Mike Honeycutt		$\frac{3}{4}$ person devoted to support
Augsburg College	Erin Voss voss@augzburg.edu		3 yr. Applecare warranty.
Pacific Lutheran University	Margaret Crayton Margaret.worley@plu.edu	Platform Support Policy	Support for academic needs.
Vanderbilt University	Jennifer Keen		

Oklahoma University	Matthew Singleton	http://support.ou.edu	General support free. Advanced support is fee based.
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Ideas for Consolidating and Improving Current Approaches:

The resolution of the issue of Mac support on campus could be decided by the level of importance given to it, and the amount of money which could be allocated to be spent. Suggestions here are given by levels, which could be built on over time.

Basic Plan – To bring about an immediate improvement, an SLA (service level agreement) could be created and posted online. This would serve to clarify to what degree UM support staff will be responsible for serving Mac users. Even if no actual build up of current practices takes place, just having it in writing and readily accessible would be helpful to both LSPs and the community they serve.

Intermediate Plan – Create a group of LSPs, expert users, and interested parties who would be responsive to questions about Mac softwares and issues. This should be more than a casual, “understood” type of arrangement. The persons who are part of this group would be expected to respond within 48 hours to anyone from the UM community who requests assistance, even if it is just to say they need more time for research. The benefit to the group’s members might be paid training off-campus (New Horizons?) or other small “perks” relating to the tasks given.

Perhaps a special “Mac only” TAF grant could be made available, and this group would be the support for that.

Advanced Plan – Hire a “campus-wide” LSP who specializes in Macs.

Ideas for Research

---Poll alumni about Mac usage in their chosen field. Were they exposed to enough of the necessary skills/equipment/software while they were on campus? How would they rate their time here as far as getting them ready for their careers?

---Review job market needs pertaining to Macs “in the real world”.