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November 14, 2002

To: Trevor Blyth  
President, ASMSU

Devney Black  
Vice President, ASMSU

ASMSU Senators

Fr: Craig Roloff

Re: **Replacement of Current Network Services Fee**

The purpose of this memo is to request an endorsement from the ASMSU Senate for the replacement of MSU's current Network Services Fee, which is one of our mandatory student fees.

At present, MSU's Network Services Fee is pledged to the retirement of debt service obligations that were incurred with the purchase of our Banner administrative information system; and, this fee is scheduled to be "sunsetting" at FYE06, when all "Banner debt" has been retired.

I would very much appreciate ASMSU's support for replacing this **temporary Network Services Fee** with a **permanent Information Technology Fee**, effective immediately.

This change would not modify the current \$25/semester cost of the fee, nor its pledged use, throughout the upcoming fiscal years of 2004, 2005, and 2006. As a result the fee would, however, continue into the future beyond FY06, and would be subject to regular inflationary cost increases after FY06.

The specific purpose for making this change is to establish a stable, long term source of revenue that is dedicated for life-cycle maintenance/replacement of the University's central computing, networking, and administrative information system hardware and software.

Student services that rely on regular refreshment of the central information systems hardware and software include advising; registration; access to grades; transcripts; campus calendar; most Web-based student information resources; campus-based student e-mail, listservs, and Web pages; and even the new ASMSU online balloting system.

In the Spring of 1998 when the Board of Regents approved a set of Network Services Fees for the MSU campuses, the Regents were fairly reluctant to create a student fee that was dedicated for the purchase of central services information technology hardware or software. As a result, the Regents asked the University to accept a “sunset clause” that would remove the fee when the debt service was retired.

A year later however, the Regents approved a set of information technology fees for the UM campuses, with no restrictions or “sunset” conditions. The following is a summary of current information technology fees (per semester) within the MUS.

Missoula	Western	Tech	Helena	Bozeman	Billings	Northern	Great Falls
35.00	30.00	52.80	43.20	25.00	65.40	36.00	30.04

At present, all of the UM campuses have a permanent student fee that is dedicated for the purchase and/or maintenance of central services information technology hardware and software.

All of the MSU campuses have a temporary fee that is scheduled to be “sunsetting” in the very near future – despite the fact that the University has millions of dollars of hardware and software assets that require regular enhancements and/or replacements in order to maintain their reliability and functionality.

Last year we created a multi-year IT Capital Lifecycle Replacement Plan for our campus. However, its successful implementation is dependent upon this proposed Student IT Fee as an important source of funding.

Many of our existing central computers, servers and network systems are nearing the end of their useful lives. Some have begun to exhibit early signs of failure – and already, we have experienced difficulty in finding certain repair parts.

My hope is to be able to propose the replacement of our temporary fee to the Board of Regents later this winter – and if I do so, I would like the support of ASMSU for this.

Then, if the Regents approve this proposed replacement of the fee, our Information Technology staff can begin immediately to implement our detailed IT Capital Plan, knowing that, in FY07, there will be an added source of funding that can be relied on.

Thank you for your consideration of this important matter.

Cc: Geoff Gamble  
Allen Yarnell  
Mark Sheehan

c:MSU student IT fee