NEWS

The Evergreen State College
Olympia, Washington 98501

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
August 21, 1971

Hewlett-Packard Company of Cupertino, California has been awarded a $136,500 contract for providing an interactive timesharing computer system for The Evergreen State College at Olympia, it was announced today by the college's Director of Computer Services Robert L. Barringer.

The California firm is one of four which submitted bids for supplying the system, which basically will handle academic computing when the new college opens September 27 to approximately 1,000 students. Development of the contract followed bid examination and procedural review between the college and the State Data Processing Coordinator, attorney general's office, and the Office of Program Planning and Fiscal Management. The contract cost will be paid over a 44-month period.

"For several years, Hewlett-Packard has been the acknowledged leader in interactive minicomputer systems," Barringer said. "We feel fortunate to be working with the firm, particularly in view of its corporate commitment to the education market. The University of Virginia pioneered with an H-P timesharing system in 1968 and the Stanford Graduate School of Business installed a system similar to ours last spring. In all, the company now has 150 installations throughout the United States."

Initially, the Hewlett-Packard system at Evergreen will support computer activity from 16 typewriter terminals and will have file storage for five million digits of data and program storage, Barringer explained. "By 1973, the system will be expanded to accommodate 32 concurrent terminals and file storage will be expanded as needed."

Terminals for the system--including teletypewriters; a plotter for curves, charts, and other graphics; a slow card reader; and two fast typewriters--will be rented by the college following competitive bidding, Barringer said.

Dick Nichols, Director
Information Services

All of the initial terminals will be located in the college library, four in faculty and administrative areas, the rest in spaces near the main lobby. Twelve of the initial terminals will be wired directly to the system's computer. The four in faculty and administrative areas will be tied to the computer through telephone lines. Terminals added to the system in 1972 and 1973 will be placed in the laboratory and seminar buildings.

"This interactive system, which serves many people concurrently through terminals tied to one large computer in the library, will satisfy all of our academic needs for computing," Barringer said. "Students's use of the system will flow from the requirements of their participation in Evergreen's Coordinated Studies programs or from needs that arise from individual or group Contracted Studies.

"With an interactive system, the course of the program may be changed while the computer is still working, providing considerable flexibility in modifying the program, and in working a variety of problem examples. Our system is designed to encourage as much individual use as possible and to remove much of the mystery that computing holds for most people. Initially, there will be no charge to users of the system. Access will be gained through special numbers assigned to students, faculty and staff.

"We expect that a large proportion of our students will use the terminals, encompassing a much broader clientele than those studying problems only in mathematically-oriented physical and social sciences. In addition to its very substantial capabilities in math, science and statistical processing, the system can handle alphabetic information as well and will be useful for simulation, data editing, and computer-aided instructional units.

Computer-aided instruction might involve student work on study units developed by faculty, assistance in development of a wide variety of special skills, remedial study, or mastery of more advanced kinds of material suitably presented in a computer format, Barringer pointed out.

"At first, our system will be best used for factual or highly-structured material, but we plan to expand its capabilities into less structured areas in future years," he added.

"The system is not designed to provide vocational training in the operation and programming of computers. It's primarily for the academic use of students, faculty and others on campus. Its capabilities may also include a few small administrative applications."

The college's main administrative and business applications will continue to use the large computer at the State Data Processing Service Center in Olympia, Barringer said.

"Our plans include a remote job entry terminal for use by both academic and administrative users," he added. "At present, we gain access to the off-campus computer by a courier service. The remote job entry terminal will allow us to attain a much higher level of service for administrative users and campus programmers by providing a direct electronic connection to the State Data Processing Center. This terminal also will make it possible for a faculty member to run a program at the University of Washington, Washington State University or other major computer installation without leaving the Evergreen campus."

Evergreen's interactive computer system was designed through the coordinated efforts of Barringer's staff, faculty members, library staff and the controller's office.

####