SAHCPO Report on the Print Optimization Project (POP)
for Faculty of Science meeting Sept. 21, 2015

SAHCPO (Science Ad Hoc Committee on Print Optimization: A East, B Hall, K Bethune, L. Aument) was formed by Faculty vote May 12, 2015 to “oversee remaining issues” with the project in Science. SAHCPO held 3 meetings (Fri. May 29, Mon. June 8, Wed. July 22), exchanged several e-mails, and did several investigative consultations: each within our own departments, and I with POP manager Ray Konecsni (several 1-on-1 meetings) and Arts faculty administrator Rose-Marie Bouvier (once). SAHCPO discussions focused on two issues: (i) the Print Optimization Project (POP), and (ii) FOAPAL use for each type of printing.

(i) POP is the consolidation of the number of printers/scanners/fax machines on campus, into larger MFDs (multifunctional devices), to reduce the overall costs of printing. The program assumes no net reduction of printing volume; the savings is almost wholly on ink toner, and is due to price advantages when buying in bulk for larger machines. POP was proposed around 2010 by Ray Konecsni, formerly of Printing Services and now in Information Services, who knew of the potential savings, and although he did presentations to many groups, POP was, to my knowledge, never approved by Executive of Council, or any other Council committee. Secondhand information has informed me that some form of POP was approved by the Board of Governors.

As of this summer, POP has been performed by virtually all University service groups (library, registrar’s offices, FGSR, …). However, half the Academic Faculties (Science, Engineering, Education, Business Administration) have not done any consolidations, and the other half (Arts, Fine Arts, Kinesiology, Social Work, Nursing) have only done partial consolidations. According to Ray Konecsni, he ran into much resistance and arguments, including with our former faculty administrator Audrey Perra.

Here are the details for Science: the University wants us to follow through with the assessment made by the independent consultants WBM (who, not coincidentally, are the vendors renting the new MFDs to the University). WBM recommends reducing the number of machines from ~207 to 30. (See attached “before-and-after” maps from 2011.) We point out three details:

(a) The estimated Fac Sci monthly printing costs (2011 estimates; paper/toner/machines/repairs) would change as follows: Fac Sci budget from $6540 to $6374, other University budgets from $5545 to $1387. Hence, as proposed in 2011, the university would be sharing only 4% of the savings with the Faculty of Science. (When I asked Ray in late June to explain this, he said he would have to consult with the University Executive Team; he never replied.)

(b) The WBM plans assume hallway locations are okay but the fire marshal nixed that idea, so room renovations will be required. The University is at the moment requiring that the faculties pay for this. The Lab Building is a major problem in this regard.

(c) Although POP was not supposed to affect research lab printers, the 2011 WBM analysis does (perhaps by accident) include most (perhaps not all) of these printers, and their consolidation.

Our Dean sent two emails to our Faculty last summer (July 20, and a correction on July 21) announcing that we would be going through with POP. This decision was made without consultation with us (SAHCPO). Later (mid-August) Lee and our Dean had meetings with university administrators and POP manager(s) and some plans were made for how to proceed this semester.

Discussion points:

A: Do you have any concerns with POP? (Specific placements might still be negotiated; discuss these with Lee.)

B: Do you wish to include your research areas in POP (i.e. give up your lab printer for a nearby POP machine)? [See FOAPAL discussion before answering this question…]
(ii) FOAPAL use for printing is, from what we can gather, very inconsistent within our Faculty. Regarding teaching/admin printing, we think Fac Sci members are variously charging Fac Sci, their departments, or their APEAs. For research printing, the responses we got included Fac Sci, APEAs, Tri-Council funding, or other research grants/contracts.

The University has been trying to enforce a ban on APEA use for printing since 2010. This was to discourage ongoing purchase of office printers and their expensive ink toner cartridges. One Council committee that was paying attention (ACRIC) pointed out the problem with having a ban in areas that have not yet undergone POP consolidation, and passed a rule (April 1, 2011) allowing APEA use in such cases. In reading between the lines of my e-mails with Ray Konecsni this summer, it sounds like he doesn’t mind APEA use on large POP MFDs since it does contribute to the cost-saving benefit of buying toner in bulk.

For printing related to teaching and admin: if we agree to proceed with POP, you will be expected to print on a POP MFD or at Printing Services, and there is no need to waste your APEA on these since a Fac Sci or department FOAPAL will be set up on these machines for you to use for the page charges. If your area won’t be optimized for awhile (e.g. Lab building), see discussion point A below.

For printing related to research: this issue is unresolved. In the Dean’s July 20/21 e-mails, he espoused the University’s new preference, that the University back out of any kind of support for research printing. The University now wants researchers to use either external grants for this, or APEAs on large machines (POP MFD’s or Printing Services). This shocked me, since for the past few years TriCouncil grant agencies (eg. NSERC Discovery) had already been backing out of the support of ordinary research printing, deeming this a University responsibility. Regarding TriCouncil (eg. NSERC) grant use, we have a recent (late August) clarification: they have now partially relented, and such grants can now be used for paper and toner, but not machine purchase/rental or repairs. This includes lab printer or POP MFD use.

Discussion points:

A: For areas not due to be optimized in 2015-16, how should teaching/admin printing on office printers be funded (APEAs, depts., Fac Sci)?

B: What level of support would you like to see from the University for research-related printing?

(i) Zero (Dean’s July 20 e-mail)
(ii) Only APEAs on POP MFDs (Dean’s July 21 e-mail)
(iii) None for lab printers, UofR/Fac Sci FOAPAL on POP MFDs
(iv) UofR/Fac Sci buys lab printers (but not paper and toner), and pays for portion of POP MFD per-page charge covering rental/repairs (but not the part covering paper/toner)
(v) Some capped amount (e.g. $300) per prof per year (like Staff Travel), for sum of lab printer and POP MFD use
(vi) other

Sincerely,
Allan East, chair
SAHCPO
#2 – College West Building (Level 0): Geology *CURRENT*
#3 – College West Building (Level 2): Geology *CURRENT*
#3 – College West Building (Level 2): Geology *OPTIMIZED*
#4 – College West Building (Level 3): Computer Science/Math *CURRENT*
#6 – Laboratory Building (Level 2): Biology/Dean’s Area/Physics/Chemistry & Biochemistry *OPTIMIZED*
#7 – Laboratory Building (Level 3): Biology/Chemistry

*CURRENT*
#9 – RIC Building (Level 1): Dean’s Area *CURRENT*
#10 – RIC Building (Level 2): Geology/Biology/Dean’s Area/Chemistry *OPTIMIZED*