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ABSTRACT

Information relating to the installation of a PLATO-IV computer terminal is presented. This terminal is connected to the University of Illinois' PLATO system, making it possible for personnel associated with the Computer Aids to Teaching Project to keep in touch with the development of the large-scale PLATO system. Problems associated with the authoring of programs, with their modification and adaptation to new hardware systems and differenct universities, and with the cost of developing computer-assisted instructional (CAI) courses are discussed. Also offered are details on a workshop and seminar run in conjunction with the Project and information about a CAI summer workshop for teachers held at the State University of New York at Stony Brook. (LB)

Computers And Teaching

An Interactive Newsletter

4
Mar.
1973

At the top of the news, a PLATO-IV terminal has arrived and is functioning in room E1-316. It is connected to the University of Illinois' PLATO system via a dedicated phone line. It will be in operation whenever the workroom is open and PLATO is "up".

The Hazeltine-2000 terminals will still be connected to Northwestern's CDC 6400. Because there is no physical link between the two systems, an "author" must obtain a printout of a LINGO/HYPERTUTOR lesson and enter the lesson at the PLATO terminal before it will run on that system. We will do some experimental transfers this month. Eventually we hope to develop the capacity to make the transfer on computer cards, or on tape.

The primary reason for installing the PLATO terminal is to keep in touch with the development of this large-scale system. We also want to know whether lessons developed on that system can be transferred to our own courses with a minimum of "conversion" to suit the tastes of the local professor. Thus, we expect the bulk of the time on the terminal to be taken up by students exploring lessons.

However, we are also interested in training a body of teachers and students to write TUTOR-IV lessons, and this will require a substantial amount of time on the terminal. Because the terminal is a very scarce resource, we will probably have to arrange a reservation system for at least part of each day.

Each of the "authors" of programs on our terminal will be keeping a detailed "log" of his activities, including the amount of time spend planning each lesson, the amount of time in outlining the lesson on paper and the actual time spent entering the TUTOR-IV code to produce the final lesson. When the lesson is being tested, detailed accounts of debugging time and student time will be kept, and we will attempt to reconcile these records and produce a final "cost" figure in terms of hours of time spent on each lesson we produce.

As early as possible we will attempt to gain access to existing lessons so that our authors may modify or adapt them to their own courses. Although I do not personally feel much modification will be required, many professors think that they would not be willing to accept "wholesale" a lesson written by someone else, and we will have to study this phenomenon to determine how prevalent it really is.

In connection with cost-effectiveness of our own professors, we also wish to see whether lessons developed here can be put together in a fashion such that they could be easily spread to other universities. The whole problem of the distribution of costs arises here - will there be "royalties" paid to authors of PLATO programs to pay for their time ? (Don Bitzer, director of PLATO, says "yes", but <u>when</u> is not yet answered.)

I will have more to say about the problems PLATO presents in further newsletters. But, the greatest problem for all of you out there who would like to have a PLATO terminal of your own is still <u>cost</u> - now running about $6000 per terminal.

WORKSHOP/OPEN HOUSE

A combination workshop/open house will be held March 26-30. We extend an invitation to all who have not yet seen computers in action in education to drop in and see both LINGO/HYPERTUTOR and PLATO-IV at that time.

Demonstration sessions will be repeated each afternoon at 2 and 4 pm. These will be "live" demonstrations tailored to the interests of the people attending. Each will last about an hour, and the remaining time will be devoted to further explanations or the running of additional lessons. Both LINGO and PLATO will be demonstrated at each session. You need only attend one of the ten demonstrations to get a good idea how computers can be used in teaching.

Author sessions will be held for groups of three or more individuals who wish to learn how to write their own lesson materials for PLATO or LINGO. These will last about 2 hours and must be scheduled in advance by calling us at 492-5367. (You set the date and time). The one-hour demonstration should be taken in on the same day.

A second workshop/open house is now scheduled for the week May 7-11, and if the format is successful, we will repeat it every two months.

RESOURCE PERSONNEL WORKSHOP at S.U.N.Y. StonyBrook

This summer, fifty teachers from across the country will assemble for a three week workshop at S.U.N.Y.-StonyBrook (on beautiful Long Island, New York), to study the use of computerized simulations in the teaching of Biology and Social Studies in high schools. We have the responsibility of selecting two university and eight high school participants for the Chicago area. These teachers will spend July 9 to 27 at StonyBrook, with the staff of the Huntington II project as outlined below.

The basic purpose of the RPW is to train college and high school faculty in the classroom use of the Huntington Two simulations in biology and social studies. These participants will return to their home institutions and serve as resource people for colleagues at their own institution and at neighboring institutions.

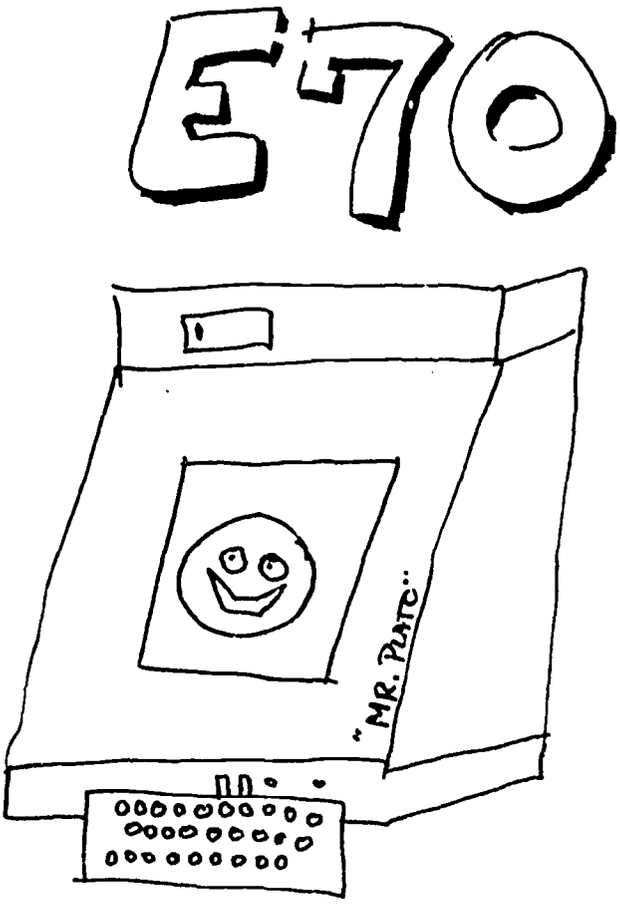
BASIC DATA
Dates: July 9 - July 27, 1973
Place: SUNY at StonyBrook, Long Island
Stipend: $100 per week ($300 total)
Travel: round-trip economy airfare from home to LaGuardia
Living: $35 per week room allowance, $45 per week meal allowance
High School participants' obligations: 1) Utilizing the Huntington Two materials in your own classes (requires use of a PDP/8e computer or Northwestern's CDC 6400), 2) Organizing at least three awareness conferences (one afternoon each); one at your school, and two at neighboring districts, 3) If possible, organize a workshop for presentation at your local or state professional society.

Two Northwestern faculty members will be participating, and will be available thru the year to help the high school teachers with workshops. Schools without a PDP/8e may arrange with Northwestern to use the CDC 6400 (prices upon request) through a teletype/phone hookup.

Teachers interested in participating may contact Jim Schuyler (492-5367). We will try to construct a tightly knit group which can reassemble during the 73-74 school year for discussions and further workshops. Because arrangements for the travel allowance must be made soon, we must hear from potential participants by March 31, 1973.

890 E70 - SEMINAR IN COLLEGE TEACHING
(COMPUTERS AND TEACHING section)

~~winter~~ quarter, 1973
SPRING



Northwestern's general graduate school seminar, E70 is offered to students in any department of the university each quarter. This section deals with the direct use of computers in the educational process.

Participants will be expected to learn how to use PLATO-IV or LINGO/HYPERTUTOR and produce a short computerized lesson during the quarter. This requires no previous computer experience.

In addition, each participant will be expected to explore potential uses of computers in their discipline and take an hour or more of seminar time to discuss these uses with other participants.

Thos parti ipants who are more interested in the implications of computerization may wish to participate in the writing of a short booklet describing societies of the future and how computers may or may not be used.

If you are interested in participating, you may contact Jim Schuyler (492-5367) or you may simply register for E70 and mark "C.A.T." (computers and teaching) across the face of the class card.

(Please post this page on your bulletin board- Northwestern people!)

FEEDBACK:

To request information, please drop us a letter indicating clearly what you want. We have a small promotional brochure on PLATO-IV, but no "authoring" materials or other publications- obtain them from C.E.R.L., University of Illinois, Urbana, Il. 61801.

To add a name to the mailing list, tell us whether to add to the "ideas" list or the "technical & ideas" list. The technical list is only for people who are or may be using our system. The "ideas" list is for people interested in impacts of computers on education and society.

You may obtain demo trations for classes or groups of people from outside the university by calling 492-5367.

An "ideas" newsletter will be published in April - containing about 10 pages of "articles" on various uses of PLATO in the university.

TO:

FROM: Computers and Teaching
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