

Maag plugs into wireless tech.

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The Jambar

A wireless internet pilot project could pave the way for future technology advancements at Youngstown State University.

Although YSU administrators and students said the flexibility of wireless service could benefit their learning experience, they also agreed there were certain disadvantages of this system.

The pilot project began this semester with Maag library as its chosen site.

Maag Library director Paul Kobulnicky said the library was selected for the pilot due to its construction.

Concrete and other materials that could affect the success of wireless signals made the building the optimum place to start the test, Kobulnicky said.

Tom Doctor, director of Network Services, said wireless usage has been low, but that it was too early in the semester to judge the success of the pilot.

Kobulnicky said students

and faculty must have a CUE-mail account with the university and present their YSU ID with their library bar code in order to borrow one of the 20 available laptops. Each laptop has a three hour limit.

One of the main concerns with the wireless network, Doctor said, is security.

Doctor said that because the laptops are not plugged into an individual modem, many users have the same signal, increasing the risk of hacking information others may want kept private.

He added that the need for the wireless system was not urgent, but the university wanted to be prepared for the future.

"We wanted to get the heads up before the demand rose," Doctor said. "The pilot will be able to test what level of service it could afford users."

Another concern with going wireless is that it only has 1/10 of the speed of plug-in, Doctor said.

Junior Daniyal Mir said he would rather use stationary plug-in internet access than wait for a slower system.

"If the wireless internet is slower than the desktop, than I wouldn't mind being bogged down with one of those huge desktops," Mir said.

Junior Hanan Al-Nizami said that although he is unfamiliar with wireless, its reputation for low bandwidth would sway him to continue using a "normal computer" to access the web.

Though some students said the flexibility of a wireless internet would make up for what it lacks in speed.

Freshman Marissa Pecchia said she would use wireless because it would better suit her educational needs.

"Despite it being slow, it has more advantages, like being more mobile," Pecchia said. "It would make things easier."

Junior Naser Alwanni agreed, citing the versatility of wireless as a helpful asset around campus.

However, Alwanni said if he was in a rush, he would opt for a plug-in internet instead.

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