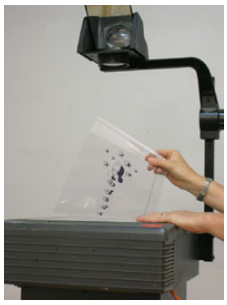
Overhead Projector Obsolescence



1. Background

The University of Victoria currently provides overhead projectors in a number of classrooms and also makes them available for loan from Audio Visual Services. A number of instructors depend on displaying information from transparencies as part of their course content.

2. Key Challenge

Manufacturing of commercial grade overhead projectors is decreasing as the global market for them declines in favour of document camera technology. Replacement components and bulbs are becoming more expensive to source and eventually will no longer be available. As overhead projectors stop working in classrooms, we may be unable to repair or replace them.

3. Solution

The University of Victoria is shifting away from overhead projectors and replacing them with modern document camera technology. To ensure instructors have the same functionality as overhead projectors, we are installing digital document cameras as we perform digital upgrades to classrooms. Document cameras offer the following features and advantages over overhead projectors:

- existing instructor materials on transparencies can still be used
- solid paper can be used
- can display three-dimensional objects
- easy to use, just power on; no need to roll into place and focus
- higher quality colour image with zoom
- greater energy efficiency and reduced maintenance

Some instructors use course materials that require two projection sources; for those cases the University has classrooms with two video data projectors which can display images from both the document camera and video data projector simultaneously.

University Systems will attempt to maintain, to the best of our ability, the limited number of overhead projectors we currently have in classrooms and equipment inventory, however since all are no longer covered by a manufacturer warranty repairs may not be possible. Therefore, we are moving to document cameras wherever possible.