

Listening-Learning provides convenience

Students can dial lecture tapes



President Nixon's Watergate tapes may be the big rage in Washington these days, but on campus a different kind of tape is usually in even greater demand.

Since its founding in the summer of 1969, the University's Listening-Learning Services have received more than a million calls for tape-recorded lectures and supplementary class recordings available by dial access from 150 stations at 12 campus locations.

From its main office in the basement of Pinchot, Listening-Learning now provides 160 programming channels and soon will add 32 more.

Listening-Learning Director Willard Martin said the service, formerly the language laboratories under the College of the Liberal Arts, handles tapes for about 40 courses a term.

Students in courses requiring listening-learning use are notified of specific assignments by their instructors. Weekly directories showing the three-digit dial numbers for each lesson are provided at the dial stations in Pattee, Pollock Undergraduate Library, Sparks, Pinchot, Rackley, the Music Building and Ritenour Health Center.

The individual student's call is picked up by the programming source in Pinchot through a computer which directs the call to the proper recording channel. The tape begins to play immediately when this connection is made.

Since an unlimited number of students can listen to the same tape simultaneously, some calls may connect with a tape already in progress. The student can dial the same tape again if he needs to hear the entire program.

Martin said some channels

keep the same program an entire term, while others may be available for only a week or even a single class session. Content of the tapes range from class lectures recorded by telephone to recordings of plays for drama classes. Tapes may run as short as nine minutes for foreign language lessons or up to 75 minutes for full-period class lectures.

Some tapes, however, are available only on a time clock schedule, which plays tapes from beginning to end at six specific times a day. Times are listed in the dial directory.

According to Martin, Listening-Learning stresses two major points: service to the University community and individual learning.

"Whether a teacher needs a tape for one day or a whole term, we want him to know that the facilities are here," Martin said. "We're here to support the resident instruction programs here and on the Commonwealth Campuses."

Martin stressed that all services are provided at the request of departments and instructors. This is especially necessary for taping class lectures, he said.

"Some won't permit us to tape lectures because they're afraid the student won't get the full benefits or that they won't come to class," he said. "Others are eager to use it—often by popular demand in their classes. But we don't record anything without permission. We're not in the bugging business."

Martin also said the service is designed for convenience to student interests and time schedules. All Listening-Learning tapes are available to the dial access stations 24 hours a day. In addition, attendants are on duty at the programming source to handle problems weekdays

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from 8 a.m. to noon, 1 to 5 p.m., and 6:30 to 10:30 p.m.; and Sundays from 6:30 to 10:30 p.m.

The system is never turned off deliberately during the regular term, Martin said, and technical problems causing a shutdown rarely occur. Since a computer problem in 1972 which forced intermittent service for nearly six months, service has not been suspended for more than an hour at a time. Martin said shutdowns now usually occur only with electrical power failures.

Martin said Listening-Learning is prepared for physical expansion almost on demand. "Once the day comes when our facilities are

not sufficient, we can justify adding more," he said.

"We install our facilities with the possibility of expansion in mind," he added, pointing out that the service has more than doubled its facilities in the past five years.

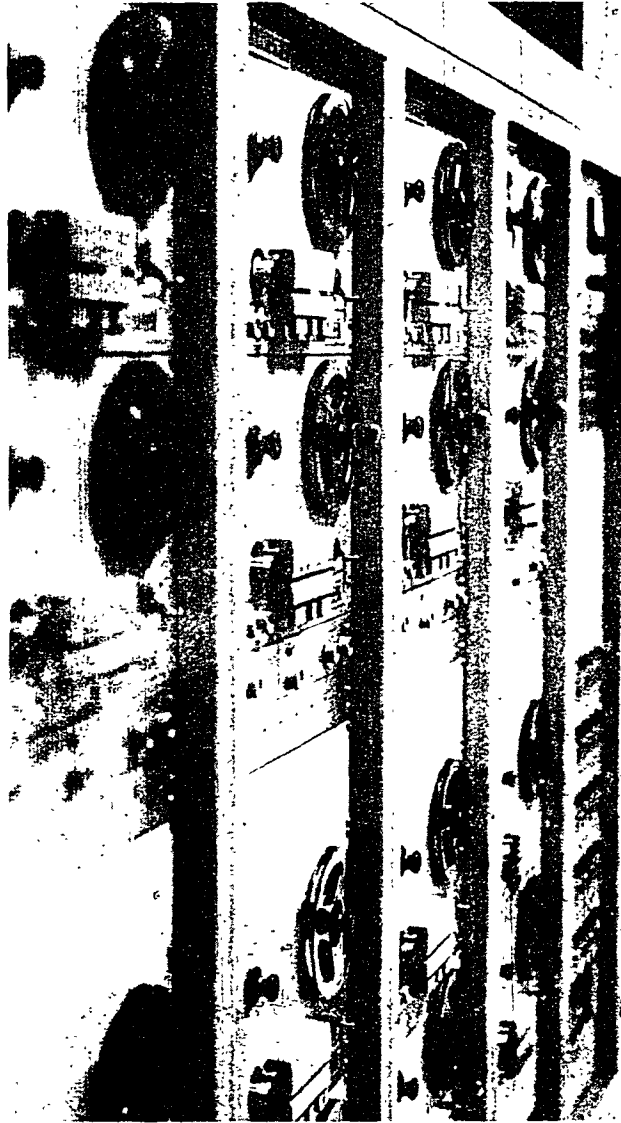
Listening-Learning's present plans for expansion concentrate on a new Learning Center in 10 Human Development, scheduled to open this term. Originally a facility for exclusive use by the College of Human Development, the unit came under the direction of Listening-Learning last Winter Term.

The new unit signifies a shift in Listening-Learning

from strictly audio services to audio-visual equipment, Martin said. It will add 40 new dial access stations as well as equipment for videocassettes, eight and 16 mm film projection, film strips and slides with audio cassettes. In addition, the center will contain two conference rooms, which instructors may reserve for classes or small groups.

Listening-Learning makes no charge dial access use or labor. However, departments using the facilities must pay for whatever materials they use or for installing telephone recording lines where none exist.

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Vicious circle?

STUDYING AT THE UNIVERSITY can be a little less vicious with the help of Listening-Learning Services' audio aids. Attendants in Pinchot are available for help with the dial-access system.

Photos by Carol McCloskey

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