UNIVERSITY OF LOUISIANA AT LAFAYETTE

STEP Committee

Technology Fee Application

V. L. Wharton Hall Editing Suite Computer Replacement and Distance Learning Access

Title

Mr. Patricio Salinas,
Dr. Michael Gervais,
Dr. William Davie and
Mr. Allen Latour

Name of Submitter
(Faculty or Staff Only)

Department of Communication

Organization

Title:	V. L. Wharton Editing Suite Computer Replacement and Distance Learning Access	Date:	07-15-2021

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Department/College/Org: College of Liberal Arts, Department of Communication

ABSTRACT (250 words or less):

The objective of this application is to purchase 11 Apple computers for students at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette to meet the requirement of fulfilling video production assignments via editing software. The new hardware will meet the current demands of their workflow, especially in terms of video production, graphic design, and multi-media journalism. By having trained professors/instructors and graduate assistants teaching students in various Communication and Moving Image Arts production classes as well as other majors, students will have the necessary facility to edit assigned video projects both during and after normal operating hours. This will benefit students who cannot afford their own computers or expensive editing software to edit their projects. Currently, the Department of Communication has maintained the existing Apple computers, dating back to August 2012, long past their five-year projected lifespan. Further, Apple has discontinued support and updates for the MacOS 10.13 High Sierra operating system as of December 1, 2020. This predicament has rendered the hardware obsolete and opens the door to a variety of hazards from viruses to issues of intellectual property. Due to the age of the computers and vulnerability, the university's Information Technology (IT) Services has ordered the existing computers to be removed from the network, preventing students from utilizing the editing system. Thus, their replacement is imperative: especially with the dual challenge of non-communication classes requiring video projects as assignments and an increase reliance on faster computer speeds needed to run the required editing systems.

Purpose of grant and impact to student body as a whole.

As the pandemic restrictions ease and students slowly return to face-to-face classes, many students will need computer access for video editing software to complete their required classes. Therefore, it is imperative that UL Lafayette invest in upgrading computers nearing the 10-year mark-- well beyond their expected five-year service lifetime. The most critical area of infrastructure upgrade are the laboratory work stations: 11 Apple desktop computers housed on the third floor of V. L. Wharton Hall. These units serve as lab facilities that Communication and Moving Image Arts majors need to complete video production assignments prescribed by their professor or instructor-- both during times when the university is open and after regular hours. As video production becomes a tool more widely used in other departments, these computers also would benefit the larger student population: those who hope to create video projects across disciplines that do not normally offer instruction or facilities in video editing.

In 2012, the Department of Communication obtained 30 Apple computers purchased with a Board of Regents Support Fund grant. A summer 2020 STEP grant was awarded to the department, replacing 19 of these computers in the Burke-Hawthorne 140 computer lab. Unfortunately, now that Apple has discontinued technical support for the original 2012 purchase, the remaining computers will have to be removed from the university's network. This scenario will prevent students from accessing the video editing software in the V. L. Wharton editing suites, located in rooms 323, 324, and 325. This development requires a prompt response, since the video editing computers are well past their point of expiration, which as noted occurs during the fifth year. If these outdated computers were allowed to remain on the network system, the hardware and software would be susceptible to viruses and students would run the risk of having their intellectual property compromised.

Currently, the Department of Communication collaborates with the Moving Image Arts major (housed in the Department of English). There are at least five CMCN/MIA professors and instructors who are adept at teaching video editing skills. In addition, the host department has trained graduate students to offer editing tutorials during open lab hours or by appointment. The graduate students would primarily assist outside of class time. In addition, graduate assistants can remotely assist students who are having difficulties with the editing software. The graduate assistants trained in video editing will set-up a virtual time and space schedule where editing or graphic design is reinforced as the student emerges competent in computer media editing.

In terms of faculty, they are trained in at least four different types of video editing software: Adobe Elements (which includes Photoshop Elements), Adobe Creative Suites, Avid, and Final Cut Pro X. The students enrolled in video production classes will have the ability to use professional-grade editing software-- Apple's Final Cut Pro X-- in the proposed editing suites.

On average, Broadcasting and Moving Image Arts students produce four video projects per semester using computers with the Final Cut Pro X editing software. Due to class schedules and remote instruction, many students opt to work on their projects after the university's normal operating hours. In addition, students from other disciplines, such as Public Relations and Advertising, can gain access to the video editing suites if their portfolios require video components with motion graphics. And, as noted, the video editing labs in V. L. Wharton are supervised by chief engineer Dr. Michael Gervais and graduate assistants. This personnel access opens the production lab to the entire student population. Some public awareness of the existence of the lab would be required to ensure UL students know of the

access to these computers. By attracting students to the video editing suites, students will also have the ability to utilize remote instruction platforms (such as Zoom, Microsoft Teams, and Skype) in a quiet, soundproof location. Also, with standard Microsoft Office products installed on the computers, work for other classes can be produced when other locations are closed or inconvenient.

 Finally, the facilities are fully licensed with the editing software Final Cut Pro X—which is regularly updated (no annual subscription is required). Yet, this cost savings is contingent on having computers that will facilitate the update through this proposed acquisition. In most purchasing scenarios, purchasing professional editing software at a student discount can cost upwards to $300 a year. This lifeline of computer acquisition is a win-win situation for this reason and others.

Projected Lifetime of Enhancement: 5- 6 years.

Person(s) responsible for

> **Implementation**: Dr. Michael Gervais, Chief Engineer for the Department of Communication and Allen Latour, Laboratory Technician for the College of Liberal Arts.
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> **Installation:** Michael Gervais, Chief Engineer for the Department of Communication and Allen Latour, Laboratory Technician for the College of Liberal Arts.
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> **Maintenance:** Michael Gervais, Chief Engineer for the Department of Communication and Allen Latour, Laboratory Technician for the College of Liberal Arts.
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> **Operation:** Department of Communication students and faculty will use the computers. In addition, students from other departments as well as undergraduates choose certain production courses as their communication elective.
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> **Training (with qualification):** Not Applicable

Discuss all previous funded STEP projects: In fall of 2016, the Department of Communication updated Burke-Hawthorne Hall 250 with funding for PC computers and printer replacement. In addition, to the SPSS Software Renewal and Vision Pro Software Installation. The amount awarded was $23,500. In spring 2019, the Department of Communication was awarded two grants in the amount of $20,000 for Audio Online Instruction and Annex Wireless Access Point (to provide internet services for audio production classes taught there). In addition, $2,235 was awarded for the Phantom 4 Pro Maintenance (warranty for video production drones – used by both Communication and Moving Image Arts students). In summer 2020, the Broadcasting program was awarded a $38,342 grant to replace 19 Apple computers. The purpose of the grant was to establish a Media Command Center for the Department of Communication; and, the grant also came from the Student Technology Enhancement Program.

Budget Proposal

1. **Equipment $19,569: 11 industry standard 24-inch iMac with Retina 4.5K display: Apple M1 chip with 8core CPU and 8core GPU – Silver.**

   Specifications:
   Processor: Apple M1 chip with 8-core CPU with 4 performance cores and 4 efficiency cores, 8-core GPU, and 16-core Neural Engine.
   Memory: 16GB unified memory.
   Storage: 512GB SSD storage.
   Gigabit Ethernet: Gigabit Ethernet.
   Two Thunderbolt / USB 4 ports: Two Thunderbolt / USB 4 ports.
   Two USB-3 ports: Two USB-3 ports.
   Mouse or Trackpad: Magic Mouse.
   Pro Apps Bundle for Education: None.
   Keyboard Languages: Magic Keyboard with Touch ID - US English.
   Accessory Kit: Accessory Kit.

   $1,859: 4-Year AppleCare+ for School iMac for the 11 computers.

2. **Software**   **$**

3. **Supplies**   **$**

4. **Maintenance**   **$**

5. **Personnel**   **$**

6. **Other** **$**

TOTAL: **$ 21,428**